



**PREMISES FOR VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION:
The Case of Congolese refugees in Norway**

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ABSTRACT

Third country resettlement and refugee repatriation are two of three durable solutions to the problematic of refugees.

Third country resettlement requires refugees to undergo a process of social integration, which aims at providing them the same opportunities, services and rights as the host population. This thesis gives two aspects of refugee's social integration process, outlining the differences between psychological integration and economic integration. Findings indicate that Congolese in Norway manage well economically, but social psychological integration is a struggle. Refugee repatriation have been characterised as the preferred solution in part because of it is believed to put an end to the refugee cycle, but also it is essential for post-conflict peace building of the country/ society refuge originated.

The thesis (1) examines the process and problematic around refugee's social integration of Congolese resettled in Norway; but it also (2) assesses the possibilities for a voluntary repatriation, exploring their reasons and aspirations for an eventual return to the Democratic Republic of Congo, or if staying in Norway is the ultimate option.

This research has relied on qualitative interview as methods, basing on the theories around refugees' social integration and the concept of voluntary repatriation.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

| | |
|---------|---|
| AFDL | Alliances des Forces Democratiques pour la Liberation |
| APP | Action Paix et Pain |
| CIA | Central Intelligence Agency |
| DDRRR | Disarmament, Demobilization, Repatriation, Reintegration and Resettlement |
| DRC | Democratic Republic of Congo |
| ECRE | European Council on Refugees and Exile |
| FRP | Fremskrittspartiet |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Products |
| IDP | Internally Displaced Persons |
| IMDI | Integrering og Mangfolds Direktoratet |
| IOM | International Organisation for Migration |
| MLC | Mouvement Congolais pour la Libration |
| MONUC | Mission des Nations Unies au Congo |
| MONUSCO | Mission de l'ONU pour la Stabilisation du Congo |
| NAV | Ny Arbeids- og Velferdsforvaltning |
| PRIO | Peace Research institute of Oslo |
| RCD | Rassablement Congolais pour la Democratie |
| RPF | Rwandan Patriotic Army |
| UDI | Utlendings Direktoratet |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNHCR | United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees |
| UNOPS | United Nations Office for Project Services |
| USA | United States of America |

Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION AND GENERAL BACKGROUND

The first and second Congo war have come to destabilize the Great Lakes region of Africa; a region which already was shaken by the Rwandan genocide of April 1994, the Burundi civil war and the long dictatorship of Mobutu. There is an estimated number of five millions (+/-) people who have perished directly and indirectly during the wars. Other effects of the conflict are the destruction of private and public properties, disruption and / or destruction of livelihood. The conflict has generated a significant population displacement; creating many refugees and internally displaced persons or IDPs (Robinson 2006)¹.

Most people fled to neighbouring countries such as Tanzania, Burundi and Zambia; other found their way to countries far away such as Malawi, Canada, Australia and Norway². This forced migration has led to significant changes in their lives; which becomes fundamental when the geographical, cultural, political and social contexts moves from an African (exile in neighbouring countries) to a Scandinavian (in this case Norwegian) context. As this thesis will demonstrate, some Congolese refugees in Norway present patterns such as high education, skills and social capitals that are important for their survival in their country of asylum; but this can also be translated to potential “brain-inflow” for their home country’s reconstruction and development; playing an important role in promoting dialogue in order to consolidate peace.

The United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) considers the Scandinavian sub-European region as critical for refugee protection. Through agreements with the UN refugee agency, the Norwegian authorities decide (yearly) an overall number of refugees to be resettled in the country. According to the Norwegian State Statistics office (SSB), there were 1478 Congolese migrants in Norway per January 2008 (Andreasen & Dzamarija 2008), and according to the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) the majority of them came as refugees since early 1998³. These newcomers are first settled in different municipalities throughout the country, but a significant number of them are intensively moving to Oslo and areas around. According to Kabuya (2008) Oslo and its surrounding is attracting Congolese settled in smaller municipalities because they emphasizes a better offer on the labor market and closeness to the Congolese communities in Scandinavia⁴.

1.1. The refugee problem

By the end of the Second World War much of Europe was in ruin and many of the European population, especially Germans, were homeless. This situation triggered the establishment of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees by the end of 1950 and later in 1951, the 1951 Refugee Convention putting in place laws and agreements to protect refugees⁵. The organization was set to be temporary, with a 3year term; but the second half of the 20th century decided otherwise. Palestinians expelled in 1948, then the Cold war' proxy wars in Africa, Asia and Latin America multiplied the number of refugees worldwide. The role played by the UNHCR became vital for people displaced by war. The organisation opened camps, working alongside with other humanitarian organization trying to alleviate human suffering from the effects of war and conflicts⁶.

The UNHCR report Global Trends (2008) says that in 2008, 42 million people were living in exile worldwide. Of them, 16 million are refugees and asylum seekers (including 4.7 million Palestinians) and 26 million displaced inside their own country. According to the report, the UNHCR assists 25 million people where 14 million of them are IDPs and 10 million receive effective protection. These numbers has been in reduction in part because of a significant number of people finds durable solution particularly through voluntary repatriation.

Gervase Cole (1985) states that the term refugee includes all persons who may be deemed to have been coerced for one reason or another to leave their country and or stay in another country". Preston (1999) refers to those refugees in defining repatriation. He says that "[repatriation] refers to the preparation for return, the process of return, the reception and arrangements for integration made immediately after arrival in the country of destination [origin]" (Black and Koser 1999:25).

1.2. Research questions:

The questions to be investigated in this thesis are:

- 1) Do Congolese refugees who live in Norway want to stay in their host country (country of resettlement) or do they want to return to their country of origin?

2) If the answer is that they want to return, on what conditions or under what circumstances would they actually do this, as far as they can assess that today?

Answering question 2, it is important to assess the background of refugees in order to understand the vulnerability and how this affect their assessment with regard to their return. This brings a sub question (3) aiming to investigate how do Congolese refugees prepare for a potential return?

These questions cannot be answered with a great degree of certainty, let alone by means of quantitative assessments of “probability calculations” that “x or y refugees will return in the course of z years”. For example, the proportion of refugees that actually return each year is hardly a good indicator, as the situation on ground in Congo is at best unpredictable. The only way to find out these questions, is to find out how refugees think and feel about this problem, what problems and opportunities they see in their new country and what problems and opportunities they see in their country of origin. It is therefore highly important to get hold of refugees’ own assessment of this, as unfiltered as possible. This thesis aims at being a contribution to the work of mapping and analysing the motives of refugees as regards return, and the assessments they make when they decide on whether to stay in their new country, or return to their country of origin.

The answers to questions 1 and 2 above will vary very much with the situation of the refugees, so the questions cannot be answered for the whole population of Congolese refugees in Norway. Further, since the state of knowledge as regards the problems involved is not yet on a level that allows for crystal clear questions, this thesis first and foremost aims at exploring the issues. However, I think the thesis will contribute to clarifying the questions involved, so that a questionnaire for a quantitative survey can be made on the basis of the findings in this thesis. Since the problems and issues discussed in the thesis are not limited to Congolese refugees, the thesis should also contribute to throwing light on these questions more generally, and should therefore also be useful in attempts to answer the same questions concerning refugees from other countries in other Western and/ or affluent countries more generally.

1.3. Structure of the Study

This thesis is subdivided into 6 chapters, followed by concluding remarks.

The two first chapters introduce the thesis, where I give a presentation of the study; brief

presentation and comments on the key issues to be addressed in this thesis (refugees views on repatriation) with a focus on refugees from the DRC. I also in this part present the Democratic Republic of the Congo with a focus on the chain of events that have generated refugees but also what has been done lately in order to re-establish peace and development in Congo. Chapters 3 and 4 are about the research methodology, which is qualitative interviewing. Here I outline the reason why I specifically chose this type of research method, how the research was designed and the different techniques of data collection and presentation.

Chapter 5 is the theoretical framework. This chapter and its sub chapters examine (1) the concept of refugees underlining the very question of who or when one is a refugee. Mainly, this part treats legal perspective since the discussions are drawn from the international protection regime, analyzing the UNHCR 1951 Convention relating to the question of refugees as well as some protocols on the same matter.

It gives insight into the concept of refugees, presenting the three, recognized types of forced migration (refugees under the UN definition, Asylum seekers and the Internally Displaced Persons or IDPs).

Further, the chapter presents three recognized durable solutions to the refugee problematic; local integration in the first country of arrival, resettlement to a third country and repatriation under the condition of voluntariness.

It also (2) analyses the issue of social integration of resettled refugees which is of concern in this thesis, emphasizing cross-cultural meetings with the host population. The discussions takes into consideration national and international agencies and/ or organisations involved in the refugee issues, whether it is on the legal framework (UNHCR, UDI...) or on the sociological aspects (IMDI, Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion).

In chapter 6, I analyse and discuss the collected data, in concert with the presented theoretical framework. In addition to the premises for voluntary repatriation, I also discuss and analyse the possible preparations made for repatriation.

Chapter 2: THE CONFLICT IN THE Dem. Rep of CONGO

The Democratic Republic of Congo, a country with a population of 70 million people is a landmass of 2.345.000 km², 80 times bigger than its former colonial power, Belgium. Formerly known as Zaire, the country has experienced political and humanitarian problems since its independence in 1960.

As from 1996, the country was engulfed in what is called the great war of Africa. Eight countries fought there and before it was over, more than 4 million are reported to have died directly or indirectly due to the war, the most of any conflict since the end of World War II. Adding to the loss of lives come the destruction of public and private infrastructures, destruction of livelihood assets, and more importantly, the displacement of large numbers of people outside the country's borders. There are still fighting's and dying and in some areas, two out of three women have been raped, warring militias force children to become soldiers and terrorize the population, people flee to internal refugees camps for safety. Most of these situations happen in the eastern part of country; mostly in the provinces of Orientale, North and South Kivu⁷.

Prunier (2009:187-222) argues that the war officially ended with the Lusaka agreement, followed by a series of accords (Pretoria, Sun city) that resulted in the deployment of the MONUC French for United Nations Mission to the Congo; the establishment of the transitional period that led to the country's first general elections in 2006.

This process is also to be associated with the return of those who fled the country not only from the two wars, but also from the post-independence troubles and the Mobutu era. The returnees are believe to be capable of playing a significant role not only in the democratization process, but also in reconciliation, reconstruction and so participating in the development of a country that have been torn apart in violent conflicts, preceded by a brutal dictatorship regime and other internal political and social troubles right after it gained its independence from Belgium (See Koser 2007:50).

DRC is the second largest country in Africa after Algeria. It is stretched on a territory of the scale of Western Europe, surrounded by 9 countries (Sudan and Central African Republic in the north; Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi and Tanzania in the east; Zambia and Angola in the south; Congo-Brazzaville in the west).

With its 11 large provinces (the capital city of Kinshasa included), DRC is a country with diverse ethnic groups, of an approximated number of 450 groups, each with its dialect but a more similar culture and tradition (note small differences). The entire population is of about 70.000.000 inhabitants, the majority to be found in the cities, all over the country, mostly in Kinshasa, Lubumbashi, Kisangani, Goma, Bukavu, Kananga and Mbuji-Mayi. Its soil is rich with minerals such as diamond, gold, copper, uranium and coltan. The country hosts the biggest part of the world's second largest rain forest and it is home of a unique wildlife bio diversity and many rivers, including the Congo River.⁸

I will now give a brief, chronologic presentation of the conflict in the Democratic Republic of Congo. In order to understand the conflict, one must analyse the geopolitics of the entire Great Lakes region of Africa with a start on the 1994 genocide in Rwanda.

Rwandan civil war and the 1994 genocide: Rwandan president Habyarimana's plane was shot down when he was returning from Arusha, Tanzania where he signed a peace agreement with the Tutsis lead rebel group. This triggered the genocide in which up to about 1 million Tutsis and Hutu moderate were brutally murdered in a matter of few months and the international community could not stop the atrocities. According to Turner (2007) the RPF (Rwandan Patriotic Front) rebel group led by Paul Kagame won the war and the genocide came to an end. Many of the perpetrators (Hutu soldiers, militias and high ranked officers) fled to neighbouring countries, mostly to the DRC heavily armed (Turner 2007:78-79). The security of the Congolese Tutsis was seemingly under threat⁹.

AFDL, KABILA and the first Congo war: Rwanda's security became a concern, due to the presence in Eastern Congo of the Hutu militias and military men devoted to fight the Tutsis and regain power and control of Rwanda. At the same time, Laurent Desiré Kabila was leading a very unsuccessful campaign to oust Mobutu from Zaire (DRC). The combination of this two situations led to the formation of the rebel group known as the AFDL (Alliance de Forces Democratiques pour la Liberation du Congo) and the first Congo's civil war (1996-1997) which resulted in the overthrow of late president Mobutu and a fundamental change in the geopolitics of the then Zaire and the entire region.¹⁰

Second Congo Civil war and the Lusaka agreement: following political tensions between Kinshasa and Kigali, months after Laurent Desiré Kabila become president of the newly re-

baptised Democratic Republic of Congo another rebel group formed in the Eastern part (the Kivus provinces) in early August 1998.

According to Prunier (2009) it is during this war that mass killings, extreme sexual violence against women, massive recruitment of children as soldiers, scenes of cannibalism occurs. During this war, the country got divided in three, and at some points in four geographical and political entities. But the main rebels group were the Congolese Rally for Democracy (R.C.D) pro Rwanda and the Mouvement pour la Liberation du Congo (MLC) led by warlord Jean-pierre Bemba, pro Uganda and Central African Republic. The Kinshasa government lost most of the national territory to these rebellions and relied on the military support of several allies. The situation developed to a continental war, known as Africa's World War. The war ultimately involved more than 8 nations, each supporting either the Kinshasa government or one of the rebel groups. Angola, Zimbabwe, Namibia, Chad, Libya, and Sudan were directly supporting the Kabila government with armaments and troops. Rwanda and to some extents Burundi supported the RCD; while Uganda and on a low scale Central African Republic supported MLC.¹¹

A series of negotiations between rebels, supporting nations and government led to the Lusaka agreement, signed on August 31, 1999; the main mediator to be South African president Thabo Mbeki and Frederick Chiluba of Zambia. But the presence of the super powers (Susan Rice from the U.S.A and Michel Dupuch from France) helped to get the parties to the negotiation table (Prunier 2009:187- 222).

“...The Lusaka Accord called for a cease-fire, the deployment of a UN peacekeeping operation (MONUC), the withdrawal of foreign troops, and the launching of an "Inter-Congolese Dialogue" to form a transitional government leading to elections. The parties to the Lusaka Accord failed to fully implement its provisions in 1999 and 2000. Laurent Kabila drew increasing international criticism for blocking full deployment of UN troops, hindering progress toward an Inter-Congolese Dialogue, and suppressing internal political activity...” Global security.org¹²

The Role of the United Nations: in the shadow of the negotiation in the Zambian capital; the UN Security Council unanimously adopted the resolution 1234 (1999), demanding an immediate halt to hostilities in DRC.

“ ... Stressing the need for the engagement of all Congolese in an all-inclusive process of political dialogue with a view to: achieving national reconciliation; holding democratic, free

and fair elections; and arranging for security along international borders.” (UN Security Council Resolution 1234,1999)

The Security Council press release of 09 April 1999 on its 15 paragraph states that: “The Security Council... *reaffirms its readiness to consider the active involvement of the United Nations, in coordination with the Organization of African Unity, including through concrete sustainable and effective measures, to assist in the implementation of an effective ceasefire agreement and in an agreed process for political settlement of the conflict...*”¹³

The UN deployment in the country is seen as the ultimate outcome of the Lusaka agreement. The first part of the 11th amendment under article III (Principles of the Agreement) states:

*The United Nations Security Council, acting under Chapter VII of the UN Charter and in collaboration with the OAU, shall be requested to constitute, facilitate and deploy appropriate peacekeeping force in the DRC to ensure implementation of this Agreement; and taking into account the peculiar situation of the DRC, mandate the peacekeeping force to track down all armed groups in the DRC. In this respect, the UN Security Council shall provide the requisite mandate for the peacekeeping force.*¹⁴

Chapter seven of the United Nation’s Charter (Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, breaches of Peace and act of Aggression) is the core to this deployment, mainly the Article 43 and Article 45.

On November 30th 1999, the UN Security Council adopted the UN resolution 1279 deciding the creation of the United Nations Organisation Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo. This mission was not only to observe the upholding of the Lusaka Peace Agreement. It was an inclusive UN body with a “*multidisciplinary staff of personnel in the fields of human right, humanitarian affairs, public information, medical support, child protection, political affairs and administrative support, which will assist the Special Representative.*” (UN Resolution 1279, 1999)

The mission was not only a “military peace keeping operation”. With this resolution, the United Nations fortified its specialised organisations, mainly in the Humanitarian affairs. An example is the implementation of the Radio Okapi, a UN broadcasting radio that keep informing the national public on the major steps in the peace keeping, peace building process, national as well as international news. The situation of refugees and Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) became of great concern, and the UNHCR played and keep playing a major role in their assistance as “clash between militias” kept going on. One of the main goals of the Lusaka agreement was the formation of a transitional government leading to a general elections; a process of democratisation of the country. The United Nations, through bodies as

the UNDP and UNOPS... funded and monitored the processes leading to the successful general elections of July 30th 2006, the country's first free and fair elections that put Joseph Kabila as elected president.¹⁵

The deployment of MONUC did not occur at the dawn of the signatory of the resolution 1279. Of course some measures and more decisions to be taken in order to establish the MONUC in the country. It was confronted by some political events in the country between the signatory parties of the Lusaka agreement; each of them accusing one another of violating the agreement and then withdrawing or threatening to withdraw their signatories.

Any UN direct involvement in the DRC (or any country) is to be done by the head of state or political structure; this, in respect to the very right of National Sovereignty that all National States are entitled to. Article 2 of the UN charter (Chapter one) clearly states that: "*The Organization is based on the principle of the sovereign equality of all its Members*".

In this context, following the political dispute with other signatories of the Lusaka agreement, accusing one another of violating the agreement and then president Laurent Kabila suspended the UN deployment in the country.¹⁶

It took international pressure and huge efforts from mediators such as Ketumile Masire from Botswana and Thabo Mbeki; and some argue it also took the assassination of Laurent Desiré Kabila, in order to re-establish the legitimacy or save the Lusaka agreement, and to finally ratifying of the UN resolution 1279. The takeover of the presidency by Joseph Kabila, the son of Laurent Kabila, gave a hope and signal to a promising end of the war and the deployment of the MONUC. Diplomacy and high negotiations with the signatories of the Lusaka agreement led to the first serious UN troop deployment in the country, starting in the town of Kisangani (which witnessed a brutal war between Rwandan and Ugandan troops, and a series of militia attacks).¹⁷

The conflict in the DRC, somehow has its roots in the civil war and genocide in Rwanda. The Kigali government always stated that their militarily active presence in the DRC is to contain the threat of attack from remnants of the former Rwandan army and militia groups (FDLR) who participated in the 1994 genocide against Rwandan Tutsis and moderate Hutus.

This situation led to the UN resolution 1417 that extended the MONUC mandate and adding more troops (more than 5000) and with more responsibilities. Reinforcing the preservation of human rights, taking needed actions with regard to protect United Nations and Joint Military Commission personnel and equipment, ensure the safety of freedom of movement of MONUC personnel and protect civilians under immediate threat of violence. However the most important issue in this resolution was the Security Council full support of the DDRRR

program: the Disarmament, Demobilisation, Repatriation, Resettlement and Reinsertion of all armed group, foreign and national. The Congolese government, with full support of the United Nations, has launched a campaign to this effort. Amani Leo (Peace today) is the programme negotiating the DDRRR of militia and other rebel groups in the society or the national army. The programme emphasises negotiations, amnesty and awareness campaign as the right method to start with, but do not hesitate to employ the use of military force.¹⁸

Chapter 3. RESEARCH METHODS

3.1. Choice of method

In this study, I chose qualitative interviews as the main research methodology.

The reasons and process of repatriation are difficult to grasp through observations or quantitative methods. In order to explore the aspirations and assessments leading to a decision to stay in the host country/ country of resettlement, or return to the country of origin, it is necessary to give priority to the voices of those involved in the study. This complexity leads to the use of qualitative research interview as main method of data collection.

The aim of this study is to grasp the meaning people ascribe to their experiences of being a refugee, their general view on the life conditions in both the home and host country, and how they perceive repatriation as a durable and preferred solution for themselves and their kin.

Listening becomes the key output in the research mechanism.

According to Kvale (1996: 31), qualitative research interviewing seeks to describe and understand the meanings of central themes in the life world of the subjects. The main task in interviewing is to understand the meaning of what the interviewees say. As Kvale (1996:54) puts it, qualitative research interview “gives a privileged access to our basic experience of the lived world.” In this context, understanding repatriation from the interviewee perspectives becomes crucial.

While preparing the interviews, I conducted a literary review about refugee repatriation, in order to situate this study within the field and to relate it to other findings and approaches in the increasingly academic and humanitarian conversation that the present study aims to contribute to. Kvale (1996) refers to this as participating in conversations about conversations. He states: “In current philosophy, there is an emphasis on validity of knowledge to be constructed through a discourse. In this view, conversation in social science research is not limited to explorative interviews as preparation for the real scientific studies, but rather conversation permeates the entire process of social science inquiry. Research is conceived as conversation, with the subjects of a study, with the scientific community, and with a wider public. Social research becomes one mode of expanding the historical conversation of humankind” (Kvale 1996:295).

Kvale (1996:4) presents two metaphors for the research interviewer's role, based on differing epistemologies; the interviewer as a miner and the interviewer as a traveller. The interviewer-miner seeks to unearth the valuable buried metal understanding that knowledge to be from the interviewee's interior; nuggets of already existing data, ideally pure pieces of meaning, unpolluted by leading questions.

Contrary to this, is the interview-traveller who explores a landscape, entering into conversations with the people the latter encounters, listening to the stories from their life worlds. In this case, knowledge is constructed as "the potentialities of meaning in the original stories are differentiated and unfolded through the traveller's interpretations." (Kvale 1996:4). One of the forms of interview in this study is the narrative one which, according to Kvale (2007:72), focuses on the stories that the subjects tell, and on the plots and structures of their account.

Personal accounts are recorded here in order to collect the human dimensions on the refugee experience. Also, the narratives give better perspectives on the subject's view on integration in the host country and what factors that may be defining for his / her eventual his return. It is important in the narrative type of interview to carefully choose key informants. They will be a source of insight into the general background of the subject: life before flight, life in transit and life in the host country, in this case Norway. Efforts made both historically and contemporarily to deal with the status of refugee and how such processes are succeeding their goals. The process of determining who should be a key informant should be implemented in such a way that the opinions eventually offered will be likely to be representative of the widest range of views ensuring that, as far as possible, all of the multi-dimensional aspects of voluntary repatriation will be represented.

It is also sometimes useful to follow up the key informant interviews with depth interviews. These are also conducted with particular individuals, but with the intention of expanding on critical points or issues previously raised by informants (Rubin & Rubin: 1995: 24-25).

The depth interviews are used as a particular field research data-gathering tool and are designed to generate narratives that focus on fairly specific research questions. They are not designed to ascertain the informant's opinions on the larger scale issues but are targeted towards achieving specific insight on precise and relevant topics. This type of interview is personal and intimate, with an emphasis on depth detail, vividness and nuance (Alasuutari, 1998: 143-145).

The technique employed is relatively simple yet very effective. Sets of opening questions on biographical details that require just short unambiguous responses are followed by main

questions phrased in such way that they are open, easily understood and descriptive. This is in order to elicit understandings, feelings, key terms, and major features about people, acts, time, goals, expectation, motivations and experiences (See also Spradley 1979: 78-91).

3.2. Research Design

The different tasks of this qualitative research that conventionally have been understood as different stages that unfold in a certain order will necessarily be intertwined, and each of the stages will be revisited at many points throughout the process.

Designing this research process required me to use Kvale’s (1996: 88-89) stages of interview research:

- Thematizing, which aims at formulating the purpose of an investigation and describe the concept of the topic to be investigated before the interview starts.
- Designing, [...] which takes into consideration all seven stages of the investigation, before the interviewing starts. Knowledge and morality around the study are critical.
- Interviewing; based on an interview guide and with reflective approach to the knowledge sought and the interpersonal relation of the interview situation.
- Transcribing; aiming to prepare the interview material (both oral and written) for analysis.
- Analysing; aiming to decide on the basis of the purpose and topic of the investigation, and on the nature of the interview material, which methods of analysis are appropriate for the interviews.
- Reporting, which is to communicate the findings of the study and the methods applied in a form that lives up to scientific criteria, takes the ethical aspects of the investigation into consideration, and the results in a readable product.¹⁹

The following table gives a brief outline of the research design

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Collection | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Literature review - Localisation of key informants - Qualitative interviews |
| Analysis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Transcription - Analysis of the interview materials |

| | |
|---------------------|---|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Linking findings with theory on refugee repatriation |
| Presentation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Description and in depth analysis of the findings- Discussions of the findings |

Chapter 4. DATA COLLECTION AND PRESENTATION

4.1. Study location

I chose an urban area, mainly for the fact that most Congolese are gathered in cities. I chose the Oslo-area because Oslo is often regarded in the Congolese diaspora as the ideal place for jobs, integration, climate and closeness to the European continent (for their trips to Brussels, etc)²⁰.

According to the UNHCR; unlike closed camps, cities present obvious opportunities to stay anonymous, make money, and build a better future...²¹ Also, up to 50 % of the world’s refugees live in cities, and this has become of great interest to the UNHCR.²²

4.2. The Informants

I relied on my network of Congolese friends in preparations for key informants interview. Some of my interviewees arrived to Norway through the United Nations High Commission for Refugees; the so- called “quota refugees”. Upon their arrival they’ve been resettled in other municipalities in the northern, central and eastern part of Norway. After a certain period of time in the arrival municipality (mostly after being through the municipality social integration process) they move to Oslo or its surroundings.²³

Other came as asylum seekers and after spending a significant time in transit camps or “asyl mottak” they choose a municipality of resettlement. My informants chose Oslo and municipalities close to the capital.²⁴

They are represented in the following table and they are all adults with family and other responsibility.

| Refugee status | Males | Females |
|-------------------|-------|---------|
| UNHCR Refugees | 4 | 4 |
| Granted Asylum | 3 | 0 |

4.3. Language

Considering that the DRC is a multi-ethnic country with many languages and that my informants are from western (Lingala speaking) and eastern (Swahili speaking) provinces; I relied on my knowledge of both languages. Adding to this, I used also French, English and Norwegian during the interviews. This was necessary since it helped to create a comfortable situation for the interviewee and the interviewer, while conducting the interviews.

4.4. Ethical Considerations

The research process has been dealing with ethical considerations, based on Kvale's 7 stages of qualitative interviewing (See also research design).

Thematizing; considering the sensitivity of the topic and implicating interviewee's background, history, and future plans. In the designing part, I had to provide enough information to the interviewee about my research project, aiming to obtain their consent. The place and content was also a decision matter, with regard to my interviewees.

While conducting interviews, it required me to be sensitive and actively to listen and to consider the consequences of participation.

On the transcribing part, the main task was to secure the confidentiality and being loyal to the statements. I analysed the interviews considering how deeply and critically the interviews can be analysed. This meaning that I had to check descriptions, my understanding and quotations with the interviewees, and having done so, integrate their feedback in my final transcript.

I verified by securing the knowledge as well as possible; and then to report. This by securing confidentiality and transparency, although with a clear consideration of the possible consequences of publishing results for the interviewees and the groups they identify with.

I had also to take in consideration the fact that my interviewees are from a war torn society. Risks of reviving traumatic memories had to be dealt with carefully, so that they don't get flashbacks and had to relive their pain in ways they may not be able to handle quickly.

Identity may be threatened or troubled, even cause bigger affliction. I had therefore tried to make very clear that participating in the research was voluntary and that the interviewees could choose to not answer questions or to stop the interview at the time they feel uncomfortable.

Research involving vulnerable groups, in this case immigrants are of specific concern. The consequences of the study considered both on an individual and group level, the latter

considering group as not only immigrants but also families (core and large) ethnicity, and geographical attachment (provinces and regions in the Democratic Republic of Congo). As presented by Brox (2009), researching on immigrant groups may suffer from a sort of political correctness that mutes controversial findings and inhibits the drawing of potentially valid conclusions that might present the researcher as holding an anti-immigration stance. In this case, one of my interviewees asked directly, wondering if I am advocating for repatriation, on a special assignment from the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration.

4.4.1. Validity

Since the goals and theoretical underpinnings of qualitative research are different from those of quantitative research, the understanding of key concepts like validity, reliability, generalizability and objectivity that have been applied to quantitative methods cannot be transferred or applied to qualitative methods directly. Ignoring these issues altogether, on the other hand, can lead to, as put by Kvale (1996: 229), an extreme “ subjective relativism where everything can mean anything”.

Seeing that validity has to do with whether the claims of a study actually reflect the phenomena of interest, the question of validity raises the philosophical questions of what truth and reality is. Humanbeings have no direct unpositioned access to reality. Kvale argues that theoretical positions within postmodernism and social constructivism advocate for the social construction of knowledge, in a move “from knowledge-as-observation to knowledge-as-conversation” Kvale (1996: 239). It is understandable here that validity is or can then broadly be linked to defensible knowledge claims, to “the degree to which [research] is accepted as sound, legitimate and authoritative by people with an interest in research findings” (J.A. Smith, 2008: 235).

I shall follow Kvale’s principles of checking and theorising.

Validation by checking simply means to check for and identify possible social desirability biases; working validation into the research process by drawing on the grounded theory approach, especially in coding and discussion; and checking my understanding and their quotes with the interviewees. Validating by theorising implies working the analysis into an attempt at theory development inspired by the grounded theory approach (Kvale 1996).

These attempts should not make the research difficult since I am not researching mainly on repatriation as a whole, but rather on processes that may influence repatriation. The importance of making knowledge processes transparent can hardly be overstated. My critical

and realist stance here implies accounts in light of this, and still, I will tell the stories and statements as they were presented to me. The outcome may be that I come up with contradictory statements, but they do not necessarily constitute ‘truth’ versus ‘non-truth’. Assuming that we live in an often-contradictory world, the coherence criterion for truth or validity is challenged (Kvale, 1996).

4.5. Challenges and advantages

One of the challenges I met during the interviewing process was the challenge of transparency. Hollway and Jefferson claim that interviewers using qualitative methods too commonly assume that their participants are telling it as it is, an assumption with two major problems: (1) the transparent self- problem; assuming that participants know themselves and why they do what they do; and (2) the transparent account problem, assuming that participants are “willing and able to tell this to a stranger interviewer” (Hollway and Jefferson, 2000: 3). In a more appropriately questioning approach, I have come to acknowledge non-transparency and use my everyday communication skills, the subtlety and complexity with which we interpret each other’s accounts rather than taking them at face value, while evaluating what the informants say about the aspirations to repatriation or giving a story on their experience of life as a refugee.

Even though I view the relationship between people’s experiences and their accounts as complex and non-transparent, still, I see it as real and relevant. In the same way that people understand each other in everyday interaction, I consider my informants as psychosocial subjects; that is, as shaped in profound and relevant ways by their own life story (life in a brutal dictatorship, war and refugee experience) and personal and social identity (social class, self-esteem, upbringing, etc) (Hollway and Jefferson 2000).

One could ask why the researcher should know any better than the interviewee; the latter is after all the informant giving sources to the research. Still, even if a researcher wants to express the interviewee’s perspective as directly as possible, one cannot actually have direct access to that perspective. Hollway and Jefferson (2000:3) state that “if we wish to do justice to the complexities of our subjects an interpretative approach is unavoidable. It can also be fair, democratic and do not patronising, as long as this approach to knowing people through their accounts is applied to the researcher as well as the researched”. It is understandable here that the interviewers as much as their interviewees are psychosocial subjects who cannot fully know themselves and how subconscious material affects their behaviour. Hints of

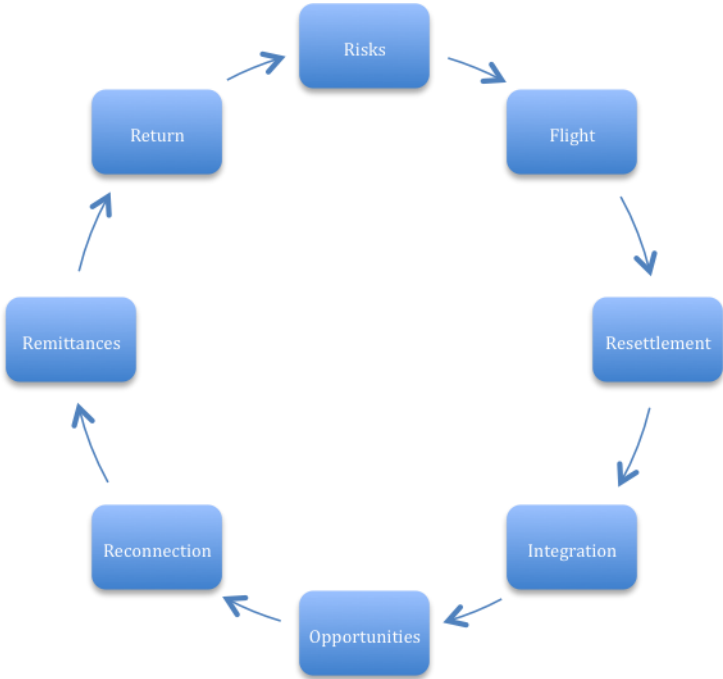
researchers' own history relevant for the interview situation are often more accessible through feelings than words. Being a war refugee from DRC myself, I was deeply moved by my interviewee's stories and I have to recognise that strong sympathy and over-identification with my informants could have endangered the necessary critical distance (Kvale, 1996). Of the advantages, this research has led me closer to the Congolese community in Norway. It helped to find the Congolese in me and helped to clear identity problems that I previously have had to deal with. Spending time with Congolese with the same history and often background as me was moving and encouraging, giving me insight in what the diaspora or community is doing for the home country.

4.6. Data presentation

I present my findings in concert with the presented theories in this work (refugee, repatriation and social integration). The analysis and discussions are anchored into theory and supported with quotes by my informants, translated into English by me; the original statements being in French, Swahili, Lingala and/ or Norwegian. Some of the quotes have been adjusted from oral to written language "in harmony with the specific subject's general modes of expression" (Kvale, 1996: 170), to do justice to the interviewees and how they would have wanted to formulate their views in writing (UNHCR's world refugee day 2010).²⁵

Chapter 5. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The process of fleeing, becoming a refugee (status) and the repatriation can be summarised in figure 1.



DRC

NORWAY

Fig1. The circle of flight-resettlement-potential repatriation.

This circle is divided in two, where the first half (from risks to integration) gives the basis of the refugee theory and the second (from opportunities to return) focuses on the theory of repatriation.

5.1. The Concept of Refugee

Research on refugee phenomenon is quite new. Most of studies on the matter do not distinguish the different categories of people fleeing war, conflict and other reasons for exile. Stein (1981) argues that “although the refugee problem has existed for a long time and has created great suffering for refugees and major difficulties for those who have tried to assist refugees, there has been little refugee research which might relieve the suffering of the refugees and assists those who try to aid the refugees” According to him, research on this matter is simply sporadic, unsystematic, isolated and cursory²⁶.

Kunz (1981) divides refugees into three types; *the majority identified refugees* being those whose opposition to events (politically and social) at home is shared by the majority of their compatriots; secondly, *the events-alienated* refugees who are in that situation because of past discrimination, people whose marginality was latent or suppressed but came to the fore in a sequence of events; third is *the self-alienated* category who for various individual reasons or philosophies have no wish to identify themselves with their home nation.

In the first category (majority identified) are those who no matter how far they are from their country of origin do follow the events (politics, social, economy...) of the country/ society. As I will demonstrate later, locally integrated but also resettled refugees fits very well in this part. They are after all “forced” migrants who as Kunz (1981) show have deep ties to where they come from. They keep in touch with their communities and family by remitting money, getting involved in projects, and are concerned about all kind of developments at home. The Congolese living in Norway are a good example to category, and the following chapters illustrate this.

Refugees in the second category are, as put by Kunz (1981) often embittered in their attitudes to their former compatriots. According to Kunz (1981) “the ambivalence of those in this group derives from their original desire to be identified with the nation, and their subsequent realisation of their rejection by the nation as a whole, or by a section of its citizens”. This situation echoes problems linked to questions of statelessness, or as Aquilline (2011:73) portrays it, ethnic identity and citizenship. The examples to use here are the one of Ivoirité in Cote d’Ivoire, but more efficiently is the people of Banyamulenge (eastern Congo and Rwanda) who are in a way unwanted by both those states, marginalised and have been source of an unending conflict between the two nations (Kimenyerwa 2009).

The third category is about those who “might retain some attachments to the panoramic aspects of their homelands, but their attitudes overwhelmingly shaped by ideological considerations and their departure is a logical result of their alienation” (Kunz 1981:42-43). According to Kunz, the refugee is a person who leaves his country against his will, his goal is to return but community ties with his home may be broken during the exile. Kunz then creates a list of motivations that one have in order to flee his country because he believes that the refugee phenomenon is linked to identifiable, recurrent causes; and figure 2 may represent this.

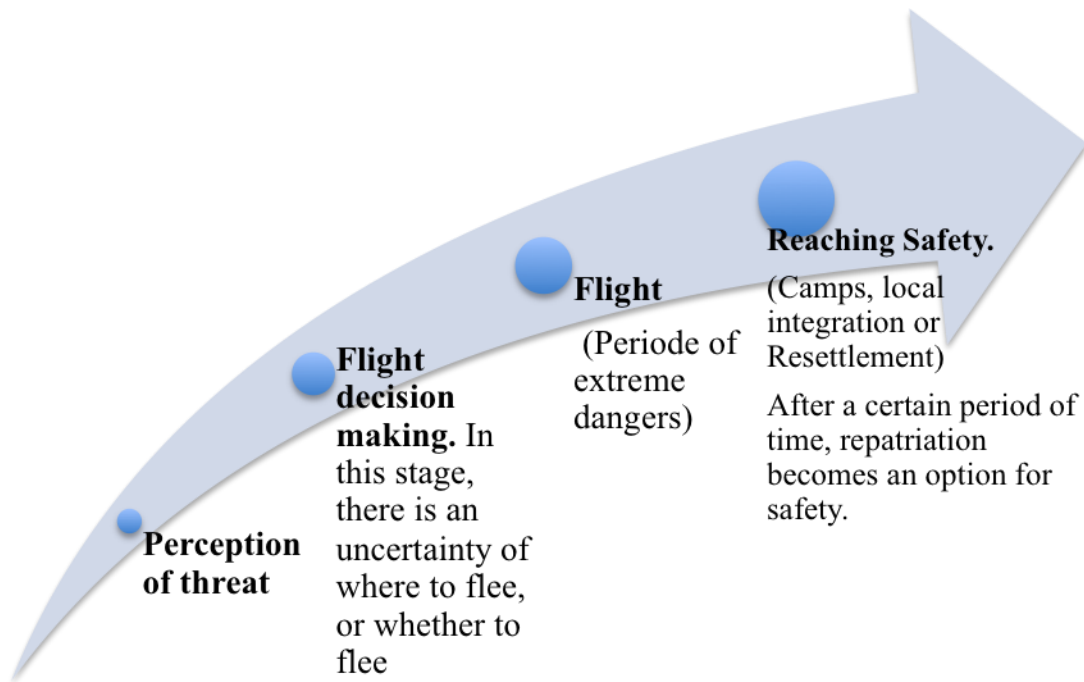


Figure 2. The stages of refugees experience.

When safety is reached, the refugee enters a period of “behaviour change”. Different steps for integration and/ or acculturation are taken, emphasising changes in habits and customs. The individual gains a different perception of situation, in the home country, his environment and even future. This is due to the effects in the whole refugee experience.

This model is adapted from the stages of the refugee experience outlined in Stephen Keller’s Uprooting and Social Changes (1975)²⁷

5.1.1. Definition

The diversity of situations calls for a well-founded definition because the term “refugee” in common parlance designates any involuntary displacement of population due to war, famine or natural disaster. But the definition adopted by the United Nations in 1951 is much more restrictive.

As presented by Chimni (2000) the 1951 convention on refugees considers refugee as

“any person [as a result of events occurring before 1 January 1951] [and] owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the

country of his former habitual residence as a result of such events, is unable or owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it.” (Chimni, 2000:2)

The definition speaks for itself. The 20th century was particularly dominated by disasters like events of civil wars, genocides, and in many countries political systems that oppressed freedom of speech, political opposition, etc. Cambodia, Rwanda, Darfur, Zaire (later DRC) are a few examples where the given definition is relevant. It also echoes the need of survival and safety as our most basic needs, portrayed by Maslow (1943).

But, although inclusive as it is presented, the definition only points mainly to persecution or fear of persecution leading people to flee outside their country of origin. But it lacks consideration of those who flee but remain in their country, the Internally Displaced Persons or IDPs. Stein (1980) agrees and says that the 1951 Convention’s definition of the refugee “does not include displaced persons who have not crossed an international boundary nor does it include those who fled, internally or externally to get out of the way of war or civil strife. Laws and treaties limit the refugee experience or behaviour and these legal distinctions are relatively unimportant”. According to Stein (1980) the category of ‘refugee’ is (for social scientists) to be defined by trauma and stress, persecution and danger, losses and isolation, uprooting and change of the refugee experience²⁸.

5.1.2. Internally Displaced Persons

D. Mooney (2003) defines internally displaced persons as “[... those] who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalised violence, violation of human right, natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognised state border” (Newman and Selm 2003: 164).

Chimni (2000) distinguishes refugee and IDP only by the fact that the first one crosses the border and seek protection outside the country and that the IDP is the one who remain in the country (of persecution) but change residences due to causes that are or may be common with the refugee. Then the causes may not only be persecution or fear of persecution, but natural disasters, human rights violation, famine, etc as well (Chimni 2000: 390-391).

One senses the advocacy (by critics) for IDPs to be of concern, if not included in the 1951 definition, since they may be denied assistance and protection just because they did not cross the border.

But as Cohen (1998) demonstrates, the international protection system has come with guidelines addressing the issue of IDPs. As the author says, “guiding principles set forth the rights of IDPs and the obligations of governments and insurgent forces in all phases of displacement [...] offering protection before internal displacement occurs, during situations of displacement, and in post-conflict return and reintegration” (Hampton, 1998:3-4)

5.1.3 Asylum and asylum seekers

Although the 1951 convention does not mention the word asylum, the word has become more and more used, in refugee discussions.

A definition that may suit this terminology is that asylum is a legal protection accorded by a State/ Country to a person that fled his country of nationality, for reasons similar to those of a refugee; as defined by the Convention of 1951.

According to Chimni (2000: 82-87) the term asylum seeker emphasises persons seeking refuge not through the UNHCR, but directly to a chosen, preferred country; where one thinks security and protection will be guaranteed.

The principle of non-refoulement implies on this matter. As Chimni (2000) puts it, the Article 3 of the 1984 convention against torture states that: *“No State Party shall expel, return (refouler) or extradite a person to another State where there are substantial grounds for believing that he would be in danger of being subjected to torture.”* It continues adding that *“for the purpose of determining whether there are such grounds, the competent authorities shall take into account all relevant considerations including where applicable, the existence in the State concerned of a consistent pattern of gross, flagrant or mass violations on human rights”* (Chimni 2000:85).

Unlike the refugee who is not only protected by the 1951 convention but also is provided with basic means of life such as shelter, livelihood²⁹, etc; measures for the asylum seeker are often controversial and of discussion. For example, Van Selm (2003) shows how asylum seekers (in the USA) were detained in detention facilities and prisons. She also pinpoints that the consequence of this is the fact that those fleeing [potential] prosecution ends up to be considered as criminals (Newman and Van Selm 2003:70-71).

After presenting and analysing all these concepts, one can conclude that, an “all-inclusive” definition of the word refugee (asylum and refugee) may be the one adopted by the Organisation of African Unity in 1974. According to the A.U; the term refugee applies to “every person who, owing to external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events

seriously disturbing public order in either part or whole of his country of origin or nationality, is compelled to leave his place of habitual residence in order to seek refuge in another place outside his country or origin or nationality” (Stedman & Tanner 2003:139).

It is the term “seek refuge” that shows the connectivity and similarity between refugee, asylum seeker, and the IDP.

5.2. The Durable Solutions for Refugees

As I have mentioned in the introduction part, the UNHCR has developed the concept of “durable solution” for refugees. This concept emphasises three solutions for the case of refugees: permanent settlement (also known as local integration) in the first country the refugees arrived in; resettlement in a third country and voluntary repatriation (UNHCR, 2003)³⁰.

The mentioned solutions are considered to be durable in the sense that they seek to put an end to the condition of refugees, and their international need for protection. Having said that; local integration and resettlement are applied when the circumstances that caused people to flee persists and seems intractable. On the other hand, voluntary repatriation is taken into consideration when the causes of refuge have ceased and there is no longer a threat to the refugee.

Given the fact that this paper is about repatriation of resettled refugees, I will give an in-depth presentation of resettlement and later repatriation itself

Before I go further into the details, it is important for the reader to clearly differentiate local integration as a durable solution, with concerning refugees on the kinetic level; and social integration as a process in which the resettled refugee (dynamic level) have to go through in order to fit in his new society (See 5.2.1 on resettlement).

5.2.1. Local Integration

Kuhlman (1994) says that this form for durable solution is “integration in the country of first refuge [...]” He continues arguing, “it may be regarded as the goal of the settlement process (and if it is achieved), the refugee problem can be considered solved” (Chimni 2000:343).

In this case, the refugees flee to their neighbouring countries and to some extent may opt to remain there. Local integration allows refugees who cannot or do not wish to repatriate the possibility to enjoy the freedoms and livelihood they lost in their home countries. In terms of

local integration, refugees are according to Jacobsen (2001:15) de-facto integrated when they are not in physical danger; are able to sustain livelihoods through access to land or employment and can support themselves and their families; are socially networked into host communities so that intermarriage is common; ceremonies like weddings and funerals are attended by everyone; and there is no distinction between refugees and hosts.

Defining local integration, the UNHCR³¹ provides three inter-related and specific dimensions; being the legal process; from which refugees are granted a progressively wide range of rights and entitlements by the host state that are broadly commensurate with those enjoyed by its citizens (a). Economic process in which the refugees become less [and non-] reliant on State aid or humanitarian assistance and become self-reliant and endeavouring sustainable livelihood and subsequently contributing to the economic life of the host country (b). Social and Cultural process (c); which concerns acclimatisation³² of the refugees and accommodation by the local communities that enables refugees to live amongst or alongside the host population. This comes without discrimination and allows refugees to actively contribute to the social life of their country of asylum.

(a) The legal process is when the refugee is pursuing, negotiating and/or demanding the rights to stay in the country, which may result in a temporary or permanent permit; or at some extent a citizenship.

(b) The economic process may be explained in Campbell, Portland and Musyemi's view on economic livelihood of Congolese refugees in Nairobi. They argue that refugees in urban areas are an asset and not an economic burden to the host state. The refugees blended in the society, relying on their skills in diverse activities (music, kitenge trading and tailors, barbershops and hair salons), which tend to be appreciated by the host population³³.

(c) This process varies and depends on the length of stay of the refugee and the above given Nairobi example implies here as well.

The local integration can be seen as the easy, most feasible durable solution since it emphasises regional integration, where lifestyle, customs, etc of people across borders are very similar to each other. It seems easy for a Congolese refugee to integrate in Burundi, Congo-Brazzaville, Zambia, Tanzania or any of the other neighbouring country, where obviously he or she will speak the same language (Swahili or Lingala), eat the same type of food, etc. Also, returning home from those countries is most feasible, often requiring only basic assistance from the international community (Schmitt 2010).

The case of Congolese in Nairobi reveals the feasibility in the refugee problematic lying in the concept of local integration. The authors deplore also the lack of focus to this seemingly forgotten but very efficient solution.

Fielden and Crisps³⁴ agrees with them, and states that “Although local integration is always listed among the three durable solutions, in fact it is rarely used in cases of mass influx and has, in that context, almost become a ‘non-solution’”. They give another view of the situation basing their arguments on ‘successful stories’ of Guatemalan and Salvadorean refugees in Belize, Costa Rica and Mexico; Tajik refugees in Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan; Vietnamese refugees in China; Afghan refugees in India; Irian Jayan refugees in Papua New Guinea; and refugees from former Yugoslavia in Serbia and Montenegro. They argue “a combination of historical trends, the changing policies of governments and renewed efforts by UNHCR have all begun to strengthen the potential of local integration as a lasting solution for refugees”.

5.2.2. Resettlement

Chimni (2003) presents a clear distinction among refugee population. He refers to the kinetic model and the Dynamic model of refugees.

Lubckeman (2000) says that “in a kinetic model, forces external to and beyond the influence of migrants themselves are seen as determining migration behaviour entirely apart from the migrants own internal motivations”. Refugees in transit camps such as Kibirizi and closed camps as the Nyarugusu (both) in Tanzania are in this category.³⁵ Chimni (2003) argues that return in this model is made by assumption based on the political structure of the international system. Refugees here are treated as large homogenous group, with little attention to the differences between them (gender, class, generation or geography). Lubckemann (2000: 99) agrees; he says that this model “eliminate the need to investigate refugee behaviour altogether by reducing the interests of all forced migrants to a singular, universally generalizable, survival-utility”.

The opposite perspective is represented by the *dynamic model*, which, according to Chimni (2003) focuses on the demographic differentiation of refugees (returnees) by urban/ rural perspectives, emphasizing on patterns such as class and gender. Lubckemann (2000:99) says that in this model, “internal motivation is viewed as influencing migration behaviour and outcomes”. Return in this context suggests a form of incipient dual membership of both the host state and the state of origin, accommodating multiple identities and entitlement.

Chimni (2003) adds that “ *the fact that there is no clean break would encourage refugees to return because they would have alternative to come back to the host country, not as a refugee but for a limited period of time*” (Newman and Van Selm 2003: 206-208)

Third country resettlement is, according to Koser (2007) the final durable solution. It describes the process whereby refugees, usually from camps are resettled permanently in another country, almost always in the developed world.

In Norway, resettled refugees are known as “quota refugees” and according to the Norwegian Directorate of Immigration (UDI) the country takes up to 1200 each year. This is done in an agreed framework between Norway and the UNHCR which identifies those in “extreme urgency” of resettlement and protection³⁶. After a period of seven years in the country, the refugee is given the choice of either becoming a Norwegian national, remain in Norway as a foreign national or repatriate³⁷.

Resettlement is a key protection tool in the durable solutions framework. As said, it can be the only way to effectively guarantee the physical and legal protection of refugees. By relocating refugees to their “new home”, resettlement countries help the international protection regime and agree to equitably share the burden of asylum (UNHCR, resettlement).

Two trends are to be drawn from this solution. First, this form may not be the preferred, in the sense that (1) it enflames “public concern about asylum seekers and refugees in host countries, making it not a viable option” (Koser 2007:83). But (2) as I will later discuss, it is a good and even preferred solution since it may be a “gain factor” for the home country’s post conflict reconstruction (see discussion and analysis). In any case, just like the others solutions, it offers the refugee the opportunity and/or ability to live in security and dignity³⁸.

Gray and Elliot (2001) say that resettlement is generally referred to acclimatisation and the early stages of adaptation of the refugee in his new community. The debate around the concept itself is difficult but it draws the lines between assimilation, segregation, acculturation, multiculturalism, marginalisation, biculturalism and integration³⁹.

Refugee resettlement implies also that the host country addresses two needs of the refugees, the first being practical (accommodation and household effects, employment, financial support, language classes, access to health care and educational opportunities, information and tuition in laws, customs and practices of the receiving country, access to interpreters, etc.) Secondly (not always) personal needs which varies from family reunion, recognition and understanding of the trauma refugees have been through, access to appropriate mental health services, friendship-support and acceptance, to the ability to retain their own culture while

having the opportunity to make contribution to the new society (Norwegian Parliament report nr 17/ 1996-1997; Kabuya 2008; UNHCR Refugee resettlement; Gray & Elliott 2001).

Life in exile, as I am about to present is predominated by the process of social integration which can be seen as the [mandatory] strategy used by the refugee in order to adapt to his/her new environment, the place that he will not only feel at peace but also will have to function like those he/ she meets. In other words, it is about the relationship between the refugee (newcomer) and the host population. With regard to refugee resettlement, Stein (1981) say that “ the refugee is searching his way through a strange and frightening [new] society. The patterns of behaviour that sustained life at home are no longer sufficient. The refugee is uncertain about how to mobilise his resources to succeed in his new home” (Stein 1981:328).

5.2.2.1. Social Integration

I begin this segment by quoting Van Selm-Thorburn (1998) who says that “some of the temporary protection mechanisms introduced in Europe involve plans for gradual integration, preparing for a situation where return appears to become impossible, or where the length of stay makes a lack of integration into society an unnatural occurrence. Integration into the society in which one lives is at least a natural desire, if not always quite a natural phenomenon.” (Van Selm-Thorburn 1998: 158)

Defining or finding proper ways to define integration is not easy. The problematic around the concept is that there is not one proper definition of social integration. According to Kjeldstadli (2008:107) it can describe a condition where people in the minority can function/ work/ coexist on a par with the majority in the society, but at the same time keep their cultural background.

Eriksen presents a set of strategies used by a state towards minorities; and social integration can be the strategy that “consists in transcending ethnic nationalists ideology and adopting an ideology of multiculturalism, where citizenship and full civil rights are compatible with several ethnic or religious identities”(Eriksen, 2010:148-150).

In the Norwegian context and from the state’s perspective, integration process is to incorporate individuals into the community. In other terms, the process aims at interactions and dynamics between immigrants and the general population; between the majority and the minority in the society. The interactions are of great benefit to the refugees (Norwegian Parliament report nr.49/2003-2004).

But, although the idea of reciprocity is often cited in the Norwegian context, it is also often used in two different ways. The first interpretation is based on the fact that the majority and minority are, mildly said, “blinded” by each other’s ethnicity in their daily encounter. The second context offers a more normative way of reciprocity. It is an individual and independent choice or goal of people to interact with each other⁴⁰. From this perspective, it is understandable that a framework that suits the adaptation in this relation has rarely been specified.

Discussing resettlement, Stein (1981) portrays refugees as full of confusion and uncertainty and for that matter they are in a need for guidance. He claims: “ Without clear guidance from the host, refugees do not know what to do. This need of guidance is greatest in the initial stages of resettlement” (Stein1981: 328). The social integration process provides that guidance.

Angell (1968) states that: “... Social integration has been defined as the fitting together of the parts that constitute the whole society” (Kaladjahani 1997:116).

This definition echoes the position of the Norwegian Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion’ on social integration⁴¹. In this context, it is a process that aims to facilitate refugees and other immigrants to adapt and participate in the society. This emphasises language training, labour and housing market... through a settlement in a particular municipality.

Analysing Angell’s definition and the term “fitting together”, it becomes clear that integration is a social process in which both ethnic majority and minority on their own terms to participate as full and equal members of society.

This process involves a mutual understanding between the majority and the minorities, the latter to include immigrants. Baubock (1997) presents some of the problems or fears resulting from immigration. The author discusses factors such as language, religion in the cultural crash context. This often leads to the concept of ethnocentrism, which emphasises the view of other people and their way of life on the basis of one’s own cultural assumption, customs, values and beliefs (Baubock & al, 1997:11-15).

An important angle to see integration from is on the basis of [culture] differences, aiming at viewing on the macro level. From this perspective, integration is achieved when new groups [with their culture, values, etc which apparently are incompatible] are incorporated in the structures of the society, in that they achieve equal conditions for its development and existence (Lorentzen & Opdalshei 1997).

In relation to Social exclusion

According to the EU council, social exclusion refers “to when people are prevented from participating fully in economic, social and civil life, and/or when their access to income and other resources (personal, family, social and cultural) is so inadequate as to exclude them from enjoying a standard of living and quality of life that is regarded as acceptable by the society in which they live” (Todman 2004: 5) ⁴²

This type of social challenge emphasises a lack of belonging, the fact of not being accepted and recognized. People who are socially excluded are more vulnerable economically and socially, and consequently they tend to experience a feeling of diminished life quality.

Kabuya (2008: 20) demonstrates that migrants, refugees and other minorities experience exclusion from the mainstream of the community... An inclusive action that would take place under the umbrella of social integration is the key against this problem. Patterns such as language, knowledge on the society, job training, education, etc. are the incentives to a more equal opportunities for all the people, refugees included in the society.

In relation to Assimilation

In some respects integration is understood on in the context of affiliation (or belonging). This approach focuses on the ties that an individual have with his family, local community, city, etc (Lonrentzen & Opdalshei 1997). The concerned is here informed about the duties and what the group (community, family...) expects from him/ her. Integration is then seen from the individual's ability to cope with the group, which in this case is the host community. This perspective is to be seen as assimilation.

Basing on Magerø and Simonsen (2005:146), Kabuya (2008:9) says that ... “this strategy [assimilation] implies that there is a dominant norm for people to follow in order to be accepted as member of a given society, and this strategy therefore signals that some people have to change so as to be like the main group.”

Assimilation is then the process making minorities more similar to the majority; emphasising the loss of their individuality, identity and cultural values; while the process of integration being a mutual adaptation for immigrants and majority. Eriksen (2010:150) describes assimilation as one of three options chosen by national and non-national minorities in a response to state [majority] domination in a society. He points to factors such as race and ethnicity that makes it difficult for some to assimilate and then remain excluded, as is the case for Afro-Americans in the USA. In this context, Park (1950) speaks of absorption (in Kaladhani 1997:117-118). It is understandable that this (absorption) is the endpoint of

assimilation; the question is whether this is feasible for resettled DRC refugees in Norway for example.

Stein (1981) sees three basic trends or models in his discussion of assimilation: The characteristics of the three models can be shown in the following table:

| The Melting pot model | The host-conformity model | Cultural Pluralism |
|--|--|--|
| The native and the refugee are changed and merge into a new and supposedly better society. | The refugees have to become like the native, majority population and completely accept and incorporate the dominant culture. | The refugee will acculturate to the dominant pattern particularly for politics, play, education and work, but will preserve his communal life and much of his culture. |

Model adapted from Stein (1981) views on assimilation, basing on Milton Gordon (1962) three models of assimilation.

Magerø and Simonsen (2005:147) differentiate between assimilation and integration, stating that society consists of different groups that are supposed to live together in mutual respect, while assimilation is a one-way process, where one group unilaterally adapts to the expectations of the other. They continue arguing, “in an integrated society, diversity and multiculturalism are viewed as positive and stimulating”.

In the discussion part, I give a deep presentation of social integration, dividing the concept in two; the first being Economic Integration that implies concepts of assimilation, biculturalism and ethnicity. The second is Psychological Integration where economic activities are seen as the easy way to fit [well and quick] in the society.

5.3. The Concept of Voluntary Repatriation

A definition to the term would be to repatriate, as to send or bring back to their own country⁴³. From this perspective, repatriation emphasises either forced and/ or voluntary return. Voluntary repatriation of refugees is, as said earlier the most preferred, but it is also the most discussed and presented in regard to the durable solutions to the refugee problem. But as Chimni (2000) demonstrates, forced and other various spontaneous forms for repatriation does occur in many parts of the world. He says that “ countless individual refugee and sizable groups of well organised refugees return home in the face of continued risks, frequently without any amnesty [or] a repatriation agreement or programme [...] and without an end to the conflict that caused the exodus” (Chimni: 2000: 374-381). And in other cases, political oppression that triggered exile as it is the case of Rwandan refugees who were expelled/ forced to leave Uganda in 2010. In this case, the New York times reported (according to human rights groups and the UN) that the Uganda police [...] lured asylum seekers and refugees with promises of food, before surrounding them and forcing them onto trucks back to Rwanda; causing injuries and death to some to some of the refugees⁴⁴.

The UNHCR, through its handbook on Voluntary repatriation puts in place some main factors to be taken in consideration if a return is to be considered as voluntary. (UNHCR’s Handbook on Voluntary Repatriation, 1996), (UNCHR’s Handbook on Repatriation and Reintegration, 2004:36)

- As it lies in the terminology, the return must not be a forced one, as well as there must not be barriers preventing them for returning to their home country.
- The conditions that caused the refuge must have changed significantly so that those who have opted for repatriation are returning in dignity and fully secured. These conditions must be lasting and sustainable; but also within the framework of legal safety (no discrimination nor persecution), physical safety (safe routes, no attacks...), material safety (sustainable livelihood, access to basic services)

The European Council on Refugees & Exiles (ECRE) defines voluntary return as the process, which has been put in place by conventional refugees (UNHCR refugees) having the legal right to stay in the host country. This decision has to be made with no pressure, there must be clear legal safeguards in place and followed. (ECRE’s position on return: 2003: 4)

Black and Koser (1999: 3) illustrates that repatriation is the “optimum and most feasible durable solution to the refugee crisis. According to them, it emphasises the end of the refugee

cycle itself. Also, repatriation has become an important political theme of both refugees' host countries and countries of origins, but also a key point in the UNHCR system.

As said earlier, the "voluntary consent to return constitutes the cornerstone of refugee protection in the process of repatriation. The significance of individual choice becomes a very important safeguard against forced return of a refugee.

The UNHCR⁴⁵ is clear on this matter. It states that repatriation is no longer under the umbrella of voluntariness (and thus not considered as preferred, durable solution) when:

- Host country authorities deprive refugees of any real freedom of choice through outright coercion or measures such as, for example, reducing essential services, relocating refugees to hostile areas, encouraging anti-refugee sentiment on the part of the local population.
- Factions among the refugee population or exiled political organisations influence the refugees' choice either directly by physically pressuring them to return, or indirectly by activities such as disinformation campaigns about the risks of remaining in the country of asylum or dangers related to returning home.
- Certain interest groups in the host country actively discourage voluntary repatriation by disseminating false information including incorrect promises of assistance, economic opportunities or improvement of the legal status.

Ensuring sustainability with regard to repatriation has come to be of concern. According to Chimni (2003), sustainable return is simply a situation, which ideally assures returnees physical and material security and consolidates a constructive relationship between returnees, civil society and the state (In Newman & Van Selm 2003: 200-201).

From Chimni's (2003) perspective, four types of insecurities are to be dealt with: physical, social and psychological, legal and material. The eradication of these facilitates the process of peace-building, but also reconciliation which refers to the consolidation of constructive social relations between different groups of the population, including parties to the conflict.

Refugee repatriation emphasises also refugee reintegration in their home country, once returned. According to Chimni (2003), reintegration is the process that enables formerly displaced people and other members of their community to enjoy a progressively greater degree of physical, social, legal and material security (in Newman & Van Selm 2003: 201).

From the UNHCR perspective, for repatriation to be sustainable and thus truly durable solution to the refugee problem it is essential that the need for rehabilitation, reconstruction

and national reconciliation be addressed in a comprehensive and effective manner (Newman & Van Selm, 2003:202). In this case, it is understandable that human and material resources are vital to ensure that sustainability. This entire process is not only of concern in the country of destination (origin), but it has its roots in the country of asylum.

As I will demonstrate later, the preparations for return are or can be the measures taken in order to meet the challenges linked to repatriation such as employment, property claims, etc.

5.3.1. Problems with repatriation

With different cases, Black and Koser (1999) describe refugee repatriation as a migratory movement of people to post conflict societies. They illustrate this with regard to country such as Cambodia, Afghanistan, Mozambique, etc.

Chimni (2003) portrays a post conflict society as “the one that continues to experience high levels of social conflict, violence, human rights abuses and large-scale displacement”. The term post conflict, according to the UNHCR indicates war torn societies that are undergoing some form of transition towards a more peaceful and stable situation (in Newman & Van Selm 2003: 197-198). In these societies, economies are wrecked by years of war, famine and or military dictatorships which lack infrastructure and management skills... they can not overnight adjust to the changing dynamics of the global economy.

Also, they make difficult for refugee to return. Among other challenging issues to address, property rights, statelessness and integration are difficult for the state to tackle (Chimni, in Newman & Van Selm 2003: 208-210).

Peace Building, which can be seen as prospects for a sustained, equitable development becomes the key set to solve the problems facing those societies. In the case of refugees, conditions inside the country of return must at least resemble to a state of normalcy.

5.3.2. Repatriation and Peace building

In his Agenda for Peace, former UN Sec Gen. Boutros Boutros Ghali defined peacebuilding as “action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse into conflict” (Biersteker 2007)⁴⁶.

Milner (2008) acknowledges the importance of peacebuilding in post conflict societies. In relation to countries such as Haiti, Burundi, Afghanistan and Liberia, he says, “armed conflict

has the potential to re-emerge and become more protracted if active steps are not taken to build a sustainable peace” (Milner 2008: 2)⁴⁷.

According to Chimni (2003), organisations set to promote refugee repatriation recognises the importance of process of peace building and their involvement in development activities is just an attempt to consolidate their acknowledgment to repatriation as the preferred durable solution to the question of refugees (in Newman & Van Selm 2003: 206).

Linking refugees repatriation and peace building in the country of origin, the International Peace Institutes suggests that refugees in exile [can] develops educational and livelihood skills that are essential for peace building in their country, upon repatriation⁴⁸.

The repatriation’s reconciliation factor in Post conflict Cambodia is an example. According to the UNHCR, development projects such as road construction made it easier for people (returnees) [cross ethnic lines] to meet and get to know each other. In this example, “road projects crossed faction lines “and “rehabilitation had a reconciliation factor” facilitating the reconciliation and integration efforts by both national and international actors in Cambodia⁴⁹.

In this context, peace building in post- conflict societies becomes essentially of domestic issues. As the Cambodian example shows, international agencies can (and should) support local actors’ struggle to rebuild their communities, but it has to be on the “demand” of the local, possibly former belligerent who have to take the first step. The success or failure for the peace building process will depend on the choice, resilience and the determination of the population as they are returning (or about to return) to their respective communities or in some cases, new ones.

In the case of Mozambique; returnees made a vital contribution to the transformation of the Angonia region; pushing the belligerent (Frelimo & Renamo) to a halt (or reduce) of armed combats and afterwards a peaceful coexistence. This case shows that despite the presence of many unresolved problems affecting [or may affect] returnees, return has been indispensable in improving relations (inter-ethnic and or political) Juergensen (2000: 23-25).

5.3.3. Repatriation and Reconstruction

From brain drain to brain gain

The refugee flight is often associated with the concept of brain drain, as Adams, jr demonstrates in the World Bank policy research working paper on International migration, remittances and Brain Drain.⁵⁰ Among those who flee are certainly high ranked government

executives, university students, doctors, engineers, etc and their return is seen to be vital for the post-conflict society.

According to the BBC (British Broadcasting), Africa has lost a third of its skilled professionals in recent decades and it is costing the continent \$4b dollars a year to replace them with expatriates from the West⁵¹.

Brain drain can be defined as Net loss of a country's highly trained and skilled manpower through migration⁵². Brain gain or brain *inflow* is the opposite.

Reconstruction and peace building needs a solid human capital and the brain inflow (from returnees or import) may play a big part. Repatriation can also be considered as supportive to democratisation, state building and development (in the framework of peacebuilding) of post conflict societies, such as the DRC which has been torn apart by violent armed conflict, preceded by a brutal dictatorship and other internal political troubles right after independence (see introduction part).

The international community acknowledges the importance of migrants in development and in the fight for poverty reduction. Presenting their key findings, the fourth coordination meeting on international migration states that “Skilled professionals in health and other sectors should not be prevented from migrating. Developing countries, with the support of donor states, must invest in the development and expansion of their skilled labour forces and provide them with incentives to stay at home in terms of wages and working conditions” (Summary of the report of the Global Commission on International Migration, 2005)⁵³.

PRIO's report (2010) presents efforts, acknowledgements and facilitations within international organizations, refugee's host nations and the UN system towards immigrant's potentials in development actions and policies. The report says: “ the European Commission, for instance has recognized diasporas as being actors of home country development and identified a number of initiatives and recommendations to facilitate their direct involvement [...] African migrants were explicitly (...) given an important role in the promotion of sustainable development...” (PRIO, 2010:7)⁵⁴.

Chapter 6. THE INTERVIEWS. PRESENTATIONS AND ANALYSIS

Charles (not his real name), an informant says that *“going back home is a must, but on the following conditions: The total end of the war and security of the people and their goods.”*

Gabriel, another informant agrees and says that:

“Going back... I’d say it is even relative. It is a wish to go back, but how to go back that is the problem, I have to be prepared. I really wish to go back yes, but in order to do something. Not like going for pleasure or vacations.”

He continues arguing that:

“Like... a person who wants to give his stone in the reconstruction of the country, but I have to be ready for it. Not only to go back, drink, party... no no, but going back with my stone of reconstruction.”

This chapter and the next one analyse and discuss the factors that leads to the desire of returning home, on what conditions return is feasible; and the measures taken by respondents in the preparations of a possible return.

Discussing refugee return and development, Ghosh (2000:185-186) underlines that two measures has to be taken in consideration if repatriation is to be successful for both the individual and group and the destination. He states that *“... return could occur following a moderate period of stay abroad when the migrant has saved, in keeping with the original intention, a pre-determined amount of money to meet a specific purpose back home such as building a house or other assets, capital investment, risk diversification (...)”* *“The two measures seen as vital for the return is “the aptitude and preparation for the returning migrants and whether or not the country of origin provides a propitious social, economic and institutional environment for the migrants to use their savings and skills of productivity”*

Basing on the informants, the concept of social integration is the natural first step to analyze in *their*, I would say *“abstract”* wish to return home.

6.1. Refugees' Social Integration in Norway

Social integration is a vague concept, but one would agree that it is broadly used in the often-problematic relationship between the majority and the minority in a society.

Kaladjahani quotes Angel (1968), defining social integration as “the fitting together of the parts to constitute the whole society” (1997:116).

Refugees, who from various reasons have come to resettle in Norway fall automatically in the category of minority in the society. In the Norwegian context, social integration becomes a process aiming to facilitate refugees and other immigrants to adapt and participate in the society. This emphasises language training, labour and housing market... through a settlement in a particular municipality.⁵⁵

Social integration is widely regarded as a process that will help avert social illnesses such as exclusion, discrimination (in all sectors of society), to a more inclusive approach of immigrants in the society (Kabuya 2008: 10-12). This emphasizes that immigrants would have access to a steady source of income, access to care and leisure, good housing conditions, etc.

Social integration in the Norwegian society is the process aiming to facilitate refugees and other immigrants to adapt and participate in the society⁵⁶.

When asked on social integration, an overall response from the informants regards positively the process in which they went through, the period of introduction to Norwegian society (the so-called “introduksjonsstønad”).⁵⁷ Julien for example expresses this saying:

“You know, we come from a French speaking country, and here people don't speak French at all. I had to give all I could in order to learn the Norwegian language. It helped to continue my studies, gain job and overcome some of discriminations... although Norwegian people are not easy to talk to, at least with the fact that I could speak their language made me closer to them.”

When asked on his view on the Norwegian social integration system, Prosper says:

“It took me about 2 years to learn Norwegian and when I was done, I started to speak it correctly because speaking it meant to be in touch with the local community. One can be expert on a language, but the very important was to be able to communicate with the local population.”

He continues arguing on how he got his job:

“Well... at first I had to study the Norwegian society, how things work here. It helped me to be fully integrated, and when I was done with the introduction programme, (2

*years) I went to the NAV office where I took courses in public transportation and when I was done with it, I got a driver licence which facilitated me to have a job...
...What helped me was the fact that I forced myself to learn the language. And it is not an easy one since I've never heard it before, even some alphabetical letters were by then difficult to pronounce. And the other one that helped me to integrate was that I learned how the society here works, and it is very different than ours at home. Another problem and reason was the climatic conditions, but I learned that if other people do survive here, I too would make it."*

Analysing the respondents' general view on integration brings me to divide this concept in two, where the first and according to Prosper and Julien is the economic aspect of social integration. Here, the motivations to fit in the society are boosted by a high desire of productivity. The second concept is, as I will present later the psychological aspect, where identity, discrimination, home longing and feelings of non-belonging in Norway play a major role into slowing the process of social integration.

6.1.1. Economic Integration

Kaladjahani (1997:18-19) outlines two approaches on economic integration. According to his first approach, "immigrants are economically integrated if their present occupations in the new country correspond to their last occupations in the original country."

This approach is in concert with an informant who wishes to remain anonymous. I call him Mr. X who was teacher and head master of a school before fleeing to Norway.

"It took me about 8 months to learn Norwegian, thanks to my career as language teacher in Congo (French and English) but it was difficult when I tried to translate or saying the timing and clock and I learned that a language doesn't translate another."

He continues saying that:

"After that I started to work as a teacher in Ungdomsskole (middle school), I did this for 7 years..."

Analysing Mr. X and Kaladjahani's first approach on economic integration, it is understanding that the immigrant, in this case the Congolese refugee, arrived in Norway with a certain level of education and skills that would permit them to "jump start" an income generating activity in Norway, right after completion of the language training.

Kaladjahani's (1997) second approach claims "an immigrant group is economically integrated if it enjoys the same socio-economic status and economic standard of living that is generally enjoyed by the population of the host country."

This approach echoes the question of "what if your former job or skills are, mildly said 'irrelevant' in your host country? The natural way to go would be to seek for another occupation, acquire new skills in order to fit in the society. And that's exactly what Prosper, a former teacher and peacemaker did. He states that after completion of the language training he went to the NAV (Norwegian Labour and Welfare Organisation)⁵⁸ office where he took courses in public transportation and after that, he got a driver licence which facilitated him finding job. Commenting on life satisfaction in Norway, he says:

"Yes I am, starting with being evangelical is a vocation tied to my strong faith. Driving busses as well, since it helped to integrate as well, it helped me to buy a house to be well established in this part of Oslo (Bærum), which is regarded as expensive to live in. We don't live like barons, but we are very happy, satisfied with being blessed with this life."

The social economic Integration can be understood as a search for the refugees to be accepted and participate in the society. As Geddes (2005) demonstrates, immigration has come to create antagonism debates and anti-immigrations feelings in host countries, where people see immigrants as threatening their welfare state (Guild & Van Selm 2005: 159-161).

Julien, who work as a Bank officer, tells his experience and his views:

"Well... you know there were some people, African friends who were discouraging, saying that although you study you'll not have the job because of racism and discrimination in this country; but it didn't stop my ambitions. I really gave much of myself in order to be in this position, having this title. Because I was saying to myself that if I don't get a job here, tomorrow or after tomorrow I will go back home. And from there I can help my country with the help of the studies that I undertook abroad. And as when my friends were telling me to not to go to school, for me it was a total encouragement. And I multiplied my efforts in order to come to the end, and with God's help, I am really satisfied. I did many kind of jobs such as cleaning, distribution of newspapers, dishwashing... and look at me now."

In his work on social integration of Congolese refugees in a southern town of Norway, Kabuya claims that 31 % of his respondents says that "labour market is discriminatory with

invisible barriers”(2008:38). And as much as 81% believe that neither they nor their children have the “the same opportunities or right to access services as Norwegians” (2008: 51).

Discrimination has long been a key locking door of immigrants in their new countries. In relation to jobs, Wrench and John claims that discrimination does occur when migrants or ethnic minorities are accorded inferior treatment in the labour market or in the workplace, relatively to the nationals or whites, despite being comparably qualified in terms of education, experience or other relevant criteria (Wrench 1998: 8).

My informants share this view, expressing the harshness of getting a decent job, even after taking higher education in Norway. Again, Mr. JULIEN tells his experiences when he was asked if it was difficult to find a job:

“Yes, wasn’t easy. Really that one I cannot miss to make a parenthesis on it. When I was done with my studies, I looked for internships. At first I fallen at the... the other one of insurances matters... Storebrand. I supposed to do 6 months there and after one month they told me sorry, the system that guaranteed your placement is no longer feasible here, and We kindly ask you to try another place. I left that place and applied at Nordea. It took practically 4 months before I got the official letter. They were telling me, see... there are many applicants, please wait... I was putting pressure on them and I think when they saw how determinate I was, they then told me that I wasn’t guaranteed a placement but when we need extra help, we can always call you even 2 times a week and we will see what’s to come after. And when I started, I did everything just to demonstrate my determination, that I am capable of doing the job. So, I did 4 months as an intern and when I was done; they told me that they’d call me in not so long time. After two weeks I went back as they called me. I started on a one to two days a week and after 2 months they told me we have an empty spot, you work first as temp (vikar) and after a good period of time I got the job and it is now two years.

As they say in Lingala, “Luka na logique yako zua (Seek with the hope of gaining). Generally, if you have ambitions it brings you to what you want, although the road might be difficult, one often gets there.”

6.1.2 Psychological Integration

The psychological aspect of social integration is to be drawn upon culture, individual and/ or group identity; but is also depending on social illnesses such as discrimination.

Concepts such as assimilation, biculturalism and ethnicity are to be taken into consideration when one discusses social psychological integration of immigrants in their host society. Stillwell and VanHam (2010) state that assimilation has come to dominate the process of integration, implicating immigrants/ ethnic groups and host majority as following a straight line convergence, becoming increasingly similar to the majority population in norms, values, behaviours and characteristics over time.

My respondents, as earlier demonstrated, are fairly well integrated on the economic side; earning income and participating in the local communities they live in. But their integration on the social psychological side is not fully accomplished in the sense that many of them present resilience or resistance to adopting some of the Norwegian culture, values and behaviours. For example, Mr. X who wanted to continue his career as a teacher; had to abandon that profession (in Norway) because of the “lack of respect and consideration” from Norwegian teenagers towards him as a teacher and adult. He says:

I found it very difficult to teach in Norwegian lower secondary because of the big culture clash that I encounter everyday there. You see, pupils here aren't like those in Congo. There are always issues linked to respect of the teacher, maintaining order in classes... I really didn't manage very well that job.

The concept of integration is tied with acculturation, which is according to Padilla and Perez (2003) the internal processes that immigrants experience when they come into direct contact with members of the host culture.

Nguyen and Martinez (2007) calls it the process of learning or adapting to a new culture. They present the traditional views of acculturation, being to assimilate, meaning here to reject one's ethnic culture and adopting the dominant culture. All this as efforts made by the minority (immigrant) to fit in the society.

But as Stillwell and Van Ham (2010) demonstrate, assimilation doesn't make it easy for immigrants to “succeed” in their host communities. They express the racial or ethnic disadvantages, arguing that the assimilation of many immigrants groups often remain blocked. They state that ethnicity can constitute a resource as well as a burden for achieving economic mobility [and] factors such as language and cultural familiarity frequently obstruct integration and both discrimination and institutional barriers (in employment or housing) block complete assimilation

The presented discussions can be well elucidated in analysing Clément's expressions on integration:

“We are here as refugees and in many ways not equal to the Norwegians. No matter how good we try to do like everybody, this society does not make it easy for us.

Referring to some of his friends and various people of immigrant background, he points at me saying,

“You are studying on higher levels of education. You are qualified and have all the assets to be a high ranked officer in government and other cabinets. But, your name and your skin colour make it difficult already. Too much discrimination in this country and it is painful for me who works as a cleaner, earning less than 20.000 NOK while I know that my education is worth a 30.000 NOK of monthly salary. It really is unfair, but what else can I do? I’m a foreigner here. It makes one think of other alternatives and returning home is one of them.”

What Clement expresses here is a feeling of not satisfaction, feeling of being treated differently than the average Norwegian and a feeling of not belong to the society. This points the concept of social identity, inclusion and exclusion.

Tajfel (1981) defines social identity as the aspect of an individual’s self-concept that derive from one’s knowledge of being part of categories and groups together with the value and emotional significance attached to those membership.

From this perspective, the Congolese see himself as part of the “Congolese family” in the bigger Norwegian society. Most of the informants are member of one or several Congolese organisations, such as “Kongo Allesammen” or “APP”.

This closeness evokes the concept of ethnic group as an identity bearer. Barth (1969) defines ethnic group as a population, which has a membership that identifies itself, and is identified by other, as constituting a category distinguishable from other categories of the same order. Ethnicity becomes a key component of identity. Eriksen (1997) says that ethnicity is an aspect of social relationship between agents who consider themselves as culturally distinctive from members of other groups with whom they have a minimum of regular interaction. It can thus also be defined as a social identity characterised by metaphoric kinship.

It is the “us versus them” that is of interest here. As earlier presented, Clement expresses this in his views of integration in Norway. And his frustrations give him ground to hold even further with “his” Congolese family. Most importantly, is the feeling of not being able to achieve something big or being able to gain esteem in the Norwegian society. They are not included in the society, although they claim to be integrated. Also, the constant ongoing debate on immigration gives the feeling of not being welcome. Clement expresses this in the interview stating that:

“You know, they say that they give us protection, but Frp is the large opposition party in the parliament and their main message is to critically reduce immigration. They don’t appreciate our contribution to the society; immigrants are the ones working in main hospitals, taxis and bus drivers, not to mention teachers and other sectors of the economy. It is alarming that the Norwegian people can show that they don’t like us that much; but well... what can one do?”

Fangen and Mohn (2010: 160-161) agree with Clement’s statement. Debating inclusion and exclusion in Norway, they say that foreigners are systematically presented as suspicious by the Norwegian media. They mention that racism; discrimination and negative attitudes towards “non-western” immigrants are increasing.

Huitfeldt (1993:4) sees integration as a moral concept, from the host, majority society. In her discussions on social integration, she acknowledges the difficulties in that process and quotes Eriksen in saying: “First and foremost there are the cultural distinctive features that become part of the agenda for political reasons that contribute to the creation of cultural identity”.

Maagerø and Simonsen (2008) deplore the attitudes of some Norwegians towards minority groups. According to them, Norway is an open and multicultural society on the outside, but not really on the inside. They claim that graffiti saying “Norway for Norwegians” are to be found in many places in the country. As they put it, this echoes Marianne Gullestad’s view on Norwegian perception on immigrants. Gullestad states that “Norwegians still seem to suffer from a sort of xenophobia and that there is an obvious lack of reflexivity in the way people meet changes in the population structure” (Maagerø & Simonsen 2008:194). Analysing the on-going official debates, she found a lack of reflection in all groups of society, not only among right wing politicians, but also even among researchers in social sciences (Maagerø & Simonsen 2008). Huitfeldt (1993:4) agrees and says that many activities [in Norway] are reserved for refugees, and this means that there are drawn limits around a group of population.

The presented discussions on integration and how various informants’ views integration bring the question of on what level my informants are integrated. The following table gives an answer to that. It analyses patterns of integration such as language and connections as either instrumental in order to fit in the society, gain income, etc; or the same patterns to assimilate, to belong to the Norwegian society.

| Total Assimilation | Patterns | Next to 0 Assimilation |
|---|---|--|
| The individual is more or less totally assimilated. The “game changer” is abolition of racial and ethnic disadvantages (Stillwell and Van Ham 2010) | Identity and/ or Affiliation Language, Culture and Customs Values and Religion Belonging and or Longing Friends and network | The individual is selective and adapts instrumentally. Patterns such as Norwegian language and friends become instruments to succeed the economic integration. |

The neutral position according to this analysis is the concept of biculturalism, which allows the individual to incorporate both.

Hong (2000) argues that bicultural individuals are typically described as people who have internalized two cultures to the extent that both cultures are alive inside of them.

This has come to characterise some Congolese in Norway, my informants included.

It is the case of Gabriel who considers himself as a bridge builder (bro-bygger); a bridge between the Congolese and the Norwegian context. After presenting all the good developments that have taken place in Congo and that he is ready to return, he also adds:

“You know, I have family here in Norway; I have incorporated the Norwegian culture and speak well the language. Secondly, I don’t want to be ungrateful towards this country. I want to do something that will be beneficial for Norwegians, who hosted, formed and educated me as well; and of course to be beneficial for the place I came from. The question remains on how I can do that. It takes time and needs lots of efforts. I really want to be a brobygger! For example, Norway is getting more and more involved in Africa and in somehow, we Africans know better and we can work closely with Norwegians in Africa.”

6.2. Premises for Repatriation

In this chapter, I discuss and analyse the premises for repatriation, from the perspectives of my informants, taking into consideration their **reasons** for repatriation, but also the **problems** that hinders repatriation, presented by Congolese refugees in Norway.

6.2.1. Reasons for return

The reasons to repatriate are definitely not similar to the one of flight. According to my informants, the situation in the DRC is no longer as it was at the time of flight and despite the many problems the country still faces, repatriation may take place.

In fact, the UNHCR has conducted many repatriation operations for refugees living in camps in neighbouring countries such as Zambia (Schmitt 2010).

6.2.1.1. Peace building in the DRC

According to Berdal (2009:18) the United Nations definition of peace building is an integrated and coordinated action aimed at addressing the root causes of violence, whether the causes are political, institutional, military, humanitarian, human rights related, environmental, economic and social, cultural or demographic.

Jeong (2002:3) says that the nature of peace building can be characterised by the overwhelming demand for reconstructing societies crippled by serious long-term conflict.

In the context of DRC, the process of peace building started with the Lusaka accords, which called for a ceasefire, the deployment of a UN peacekeeping operation (MONUC), the withdrawal of foreign troops and the launching of an inter-Congolese dialogue to form a transitional government leading to elections (UN Security Council Resolution 1234).

This mission later changed into MONUSCO, the United Nations Organisation Stabilisation Mission in the DRC. Its mandate goes beyond the military that characterised its predecessor. It helps consolidate State authority throughout the country, develops effective measures to protect civilians, humanitarian personnel and human rights defenders; it supports the government to fight impunity, reforming the police. Also, MONUSCO is deep involved in providing technical and logistical support to the organisation of national and local elections, upon explicit request from DRC authorities⁵⁹.

Gabriel, one of the informant states that the developments taking place in the DRC are signs for a positive changes in the country, he says that *“people realise that it is now the moment to*

develop the country... I see there is a boom... on peace, development and democracy”. He continues saying that:

“On the political level, I never imagine that we in Congo could vote a leader. [...] the people who elects governors, chief of municipalities and president... Leaders are resulted from elections. There is separation of power, the representatives in the parliaments debates, creates laws... while previously we had a dictator who decided everything... yes the country is on the right path. [...] Freedom of speech is there; opposition parties are free, people talks what they want, criticises openly the government, [...] for example Mr. Kamerhe, [a respected opposition leader] who talks whatever he wants, no intimidations... it gives good signs and I really like that.”

Gabriel argues also that there still is much to be done in all sectors. He praises the reforms and improvements on the economic sector as well as on the judicial; but agrees that the social sectors is the one not improving as much as he would like it to. He says:

“It still negative on that sector, yes. But there are good indicators, for example free schooling of the 3 first years at primary level. But GDP speaking it is not everybody who has access to education or health, as I said it is still a long way. The economic situation is, I think the result of badly mismanaged social sector.”

My informants expressed a high desire to help their country and for that, they are involved in many small organisations (from political motivated to humanitarian actions).

Julien, who wants to return to be a politician, says:

I am very motivated to do politics, and I intend to start on the municipality’s level, where I was born, to help people to get out of their bad situation... I want to be present in the civil society help those in extremely need of basic things, really some good humanitarian actions.

Realising his potential for Congo’s development, Gabriel says:

I have education and networks here Norway, as many as other fellow Congolese. I believe that with those two tools we in the Congolese diaspora can do much in the development of our home country.

6.2.1.2. Opportunities in the DRC

Discussing the possible opportunities in the DRC, Clement claim that: *“it depends with one’s level of education. The employment opportunities in the country are almost non-existent for*

the main population. Given the facts that salaries are mediocre, establishing my own business is the most lucrative way”.

Julien would agree with Clement in the sense that he sees politics in DRC as a family affair and money related. For him, in order to succeed politically, one would have to convince by economic means. He says that:

“My father was a politician, but all these years in asylum have wiped him from the political scene of the country. In order to become a politician, my humanitarian actions will convince the public. I have income generating activities both here and at home that ensure the continuity of those actions. As I told you earlier, we are a network of friends and former classmates involved in helping rehabilitate street children. To be elected in a lower position, working for and with those in local municipalities, suburbs can't be difficult and that's where I intend to start my political career. If I succeed, well... then we can start talking about higher positions.”

Another informant, “Charles” invests not only in Norway, but in DRC as well. He says: *“I do send money for my economic activities”.*

Although he doesn't want to reveal what kind of activities, he is sure that the investments secures livelihood for his family at home and they will secure his livelihood at the time of return.

The presented projects by my informants confirm strong ties with their home country, DRC. As I will discuss later in the chapter on preparations for return, refugees and other migrants are, through various activities influencing their home communities, families and country in the social, economic and political sectors.

6.2.1.3. Psychological Integration in Norway

I have earlier demonstrated that Congolese in Oslo are economically integrated but are struggling with the identity dilemma, the feeling of not belonging to the Norwegian society. This feeling is powered by social illness such as racism and discrimination that they encounter in the Norwegian society.

To people like Julien, this situation boosts his ambition to return. Giving his thoughts on the Norwegian saying of “Borte Bra, Hjemme best”(good to be away, but best at home), he replies:

“I strongly support that saying. My friend I can tell you... there aren't any place on this planet; even if they give you honey every morning; but never... You can be poor, your brothers and sisters, neighbour can bother you... but it is preferable than being

abroad. We can naturalise ourselves becoming Norwegians or other, but... the place they buried your umbilical cord is the place one will never change.”

Clement argues:

“[...] in this country we will always be the followers. The people here will always see us as we need help; you know... they gave us asylum and protection, money... for them it is like we are parasites, living on the social security... again, they don't recognise our contribution to the society.”

Huitfeldt (1993) debates social integration in Norway and comparing it with USA and Canada, she says “Among other things we are concerned about a moral relevant homogeneity for our citizens. Our standards concerning social integration are rigid. Among others, we find extremely strict demands concerning documentation for competence, in order to get job here. Besides, refugees are assigned a status or identity as clients because they are refugees” (Huitfeldt 1993: 3-4).

It is also what “Salima” (not her real name), a family mother expresses; in her worries over the fact that her children will gain independence, be mature and go on with their lives. She says:

“You know, I cannot think of being in this house by myself, and absolutely not ending up in a retirement home. I know that my children will become mature and move out. The idea of meeting only on specific dates as Christmas vacations is... difficult to imagine, especially when we all live in this small country or even if they stay in Oslo. Therefore, by the time my youngest has turned 18, I pack my bags and go home. I have a bigger family there; hopefully my mother will still be alive so I can take care of her.”

Maagerø and Simonsen (2008:194) state that it is widely believed that home-grown extremism is a foreign concept in Norway although the general public is xenophobic. Although my respondents would agree with them, Alex whom I interviewed after the terrorist attacks of July 22, 2011⁶⁰ sees it differently. He says:

“You see, some people turn terrorists, driven by hate towards non-western immigrants. There is a feeling of not being accepted in this country; at least I feel that. But there is nothing to do; after all we are the foreigners. What hurts most is that many of us do exactly how the Norwegians want us to do: fully integrated, I even go skiing in Easter. Anyway... they can hate us as much as they like, one thing is sure: as

long as Norway is an oil rich nation, I'm not leaving this country, plus, I haven't done anything wrong to this country" [laughter].

6.2.2. Problems with repatriation

6.2.2.1. Physical and economic risks in the DRC

The informants praise the progress made in their home country since the official end of the war in 2003 and the first presidential and legislative elections since the country's independence. But most of them acknowledge the problems the country still faces in terms of security.

The centralised government uses the police and army to conduct arrests and even killings of opposition members, journalists and those who at different points are against the regime. There is arbitrary and unlawful deprivation of life; disappearances; Torture and inhuman, of punishment; as well as denial of fair public trial; and arbitrary interference with privacy, family, home, or correspondence⁶¹.

Congolese in Norway are aware of this; for example MR. X. He says:

"I miss my country very much, you know and I really want to go back; many of my fellow Congolese want to return. A State of Law is missing in DRC and that's makes it difficult to return.

Young people don't have the dream of returning; I can at least speak of my children. Norway provides everything they ever wanted and dreamed of. DRC lacks basic human rights, and the traumas of war make it difficult to think of returning. And there are many aspects to take in consideration such as child soldiers, mass rape, arbitrary killings and excessive banditries."

Clement discusses the murder of human rights activist Floribert Chebeya⁶² as an example of the patterns that may stop him from returning. He says that

"The fact that I will not be free enough to speak my mind and be able to exercise my freedom is the biggest hindrance to my repatriation. But I am not interested in politics or human rights activism. As long as I can have a job or thrive with my business, well... there are many other Congolese people living there and it is my country so... I think it can be all right."

Like many post war societies, DRC faces political and security instability. Clement says that: *“You know countries like ours are unstable. Sure we now elect leaders, but the spectre of war is still there. We all know that the Kivus aren’t secured yet and militias plunder villages and do launch military attacks close to cities. I’m not from places like Bunia or Walikale, and I can understand those who will not return there. I mean why return? You can build a house, establish a business, and all that but the militias may demolish the house and plunder your business.”*

Clement here refers to the ongoing crisis in the eastern part of the country, where warring militias regularly makes it difficult for people to live and turning many of them into Internal Displaced People. Even though the war is over and the country is largely pacified, there are still major security problems.

6.2.2.2. Physical and economic safety in Norway

Norway, as well as the Scandinavian sub region is considered by the UNHCR as critical for refugee protection and the CIA world fact book praises the country’s achievement in political stability, social economic development, human rights etc⁶³.

Once one of the poorest countries on the European continent, Norway is today the wealthiest in the world measured by per-capita income (2011 Human Development Index)⁶⁴.

Wealth has brought rapid change to the country's 4.9 million inhabitants. The country's cost of living is the highest in the world, as measured by the Economist's reliable Big Mac index (it costing nearly \$10 in Oslo, the most expensive capital on the planet). Its lowest-paid workers earn amongst the highest rates in the world, and residents enjoy free education up to tertiary level, socialised medicine and plentiful public transport (World Bank country data/ Norway)⁶⁵.

It is an attractive proposition to refugees - economic and political - looking for a better life, rather than protection and the country is increasingly becoming one of Europe’s fastest-growing asylum destinations (Statistics Norway/ Immigration and Immigrants)⁶⁶.

6.2.3. Repatriation: the premises

The economic opportunities and safety in Norway, weighted against the risks in the DRC, are strong reasons for my respondents to stay in their host country. The cost/ benefit analysis seems easy:

| STAYING IN NORWAY | RETURNING TO DR CONGO |
|---|---|
| <p>Benefits / Costs 1</p> <p>Many opportunities, less costly for the individual.</p> | <p>Benefits / Costs 2</p> <p>Not many opportunities and very costly to the individual.</p> |

However, lack of social psychological integration in Norway is, according to my respondents, an argument for return, and the question is further complicated if we take into account other needs as well. To a certain degree, my informants tell me that premises for returning are that basic human needs are met, and that the threats to these needs (which according to them occurs in the DRC) are under controlled.

This can be illustrated in Galtung's (1996:197) *theory of human needs* as shown in the following table:

| NEEDS | MATERIAL | NON MATERIAL |
|--------|-------------------|------------------------------|
| Strong | Survival (safety) | Freedom |
| Weaker | Welfare | Identity, esteem, belonging, |

Survival is perhaps the strongest factor to take in consideration for repatriation. Informants has stressed the fact that DRC has not fully recover from the war, the lack of human rights, arbitrary killings, banditry and arbitrary imprisonment... makes difficult to return (see US human rights report on DRC). Secondly is **welfare** which is considered as a strong need that would keep Congolese in Norway, but as I will discuss later, the preparations for return aims to create the welfare that the Congolese state doesn't provide. The lack of **Freedom** in the DRC as some informants have portrayed; results in countless breaches of human rights and is one of the strong factors that hinder repatriation.

Comparing these to my informant's quotes, the agreement between their words and Galtung's theory is astonishing. For example; Clement who discusses and weighs the opportunities in the DRC show well how premises for return actually work:

- (1) He realises that wages are low in Congo, (2) therefore he realises that starting his own business is probably the best way to earn a decent wage, but (3) is he sure that the conditions on the ground in Congo in order to do that safely are met? Among such conditions are personal safeties for self and family, but also the security of his house, production equipment and financial transactions (which can be further concretised to a functioning and predictable and non-corrupt state, etc). So, does Congo give these things a probability of improving, or not? If the answer is "no" or "probably not", will Clement actually move back to Congo?

6.3. Preparations for Return

I have presented the premises, the reasons and what may be the obstacles to repatriation. Also, findings from the field show that most of my respondents are positive to repatriation, acknowledging the saying of "Borte Bra, Hjemme Best". The question is then to find how are they preparing to that "eventual" return to the DRC? This subchapter is supposed to answer that question. The data analysis brings into the discussion two concepts that are interlinked: education and remittances.

At first, informants regard education as the most important thing they can do, since it facilitates integration in the host community and, it can also be used constructively in facilitating voluntary repatriation in Congo. Depending on the level of risks at home or the level of integration in the host country; education becomes a tool for success in both respects. Secondly, education makes it easier to acquire remittances, which will help secure livelihood at home, at the time of return.

6.3.1. Education, human capital and social capital

According to Bourdieu there are three interdependent forms of capital: the economic form which is directly convertible into money, and maybe institutionalised in the form of property rights; the cultural form which, according to the author is convertible into economic capital and may be institutionalised in the form of educational qualifications. Last, the social capital

that is made of social obligations (connections), which is convertible into economic capital and maybe institutionalised in the form of a title (Halsey & al. 1997).

Education is often seen as an agent of change and a leading factor to [psychological] modernity, and development of human. Inkeles and Smith (1974) discuss education in connection with modernity. They state that “ Mounting evidence shows that... a modern nation needs participating citizens... (with) an active interest in public affairs, and who exercise their rights and perform their duties as members of a community larger than that of their kinship network.” In this context, education is the most powerful tool in order to achieve psychological modernity.

From this perspective, it is understandable that education is the pattern that leads to a modern society, which is characterized by cooperation between people and groups who are different by high demands for achievement and high competition in both formal and informal sectors, appreciation of a universal reward system such as certificates, credentials and connections; striving to acquire skills for future occupations, etc. (Fagerlind & Saha, 1983:92-99, 101-106).

Education (as well as health) are also see as crucial when it comes to developing human capital, although the second one is often overshadowed by the first (Woodhall 1997).

In her definition of human capital, Woodhall states that “... [it] refers to the fact that human beings invest in themselves, by means of education, training or other activities, which raises their future income by increasing their lifetime earnings” (Halsey & al. 1997:219). Education is then the key to creating, adapting and spreading knowledge. It is, as I will later demonstrate, fundamental to enhancing the quality of human life and ensuring social and economic progress.

On the other hand there is the concept of *social capital* which is, according to Bourdieu, the aggregate of the actual or potential resources which are linked to possession of durable network of more or less institutionalized relationships of mutual acquaintance and recognition, or in other words, to membership in a group which provides each of its members with the backing of the collectivity- owned capital...” (Halsey & al. 1997:51)

Connections, friends, family etc. are the key players for the success of an individual and an individual is and may be the key player for the rest of the group, as presented in figure 3.

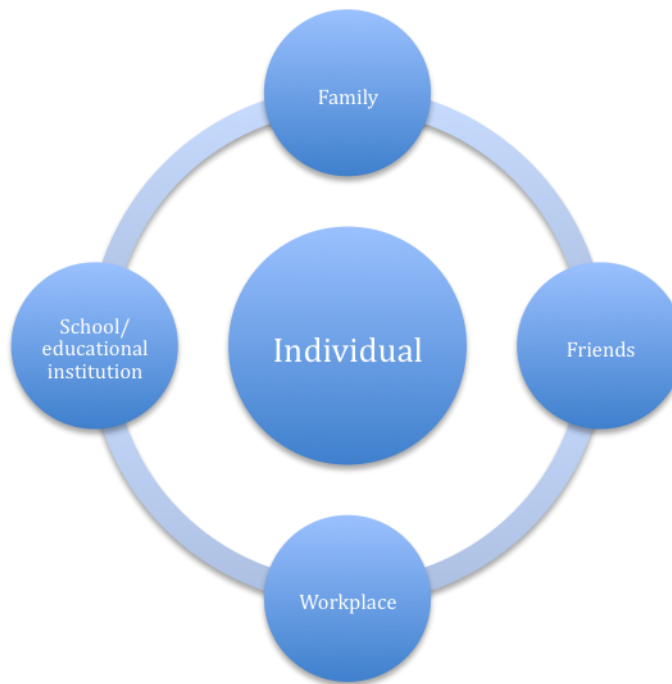


Fig 3, which is adapted after Bronfenbrenner's forces of socialization process at the micro, macro and meso level (1979: 16-42); puts the individual in the centre of each groups and the ring that connects the different groups and institutions in the society. According to Bronfenbrenner (1979) the group affects the individual and vice versa. This model is applicable for both Norway as the host country and DRC as the home country.

The presented discussions echoes Patrick's view on the importance of education, from the primary level (Norwegian classes) to the tertiary (University College). He says:

"Taking the Norwegian classes did enlarge my network of friends. I didn't have to only rely on fellow Congolese or other from the Great Lakes region, but I became friend with people from Soudan, Afghanistan, Irak, Chile, etc... Now as I am taking higher education, things have been even easier; like I got many Norwegians friends, which boosts my language training and in many ways has helped to get this part time job that I have".

It also echoes other respondent's such as Julien's⁶⁷ view on education. As he expresses it, many Congolese had to come quicker in the system and this by educational channels such as the mandatory Norwegian classes, followed by secondary school and later higher education.

6.3.2. Education and remittances: the role in the host and home country

Discussing social integration, Kabuya (2008:10-12) refers to education and language training as crucial for the success of Congolese refugees in Norway.

As refugees arrive in their host country, participation in the community is not only vital for their success in that very new environment, but also crucial for the host community in term of social, psychological, cultural and economic activities. Education will be the key player for the achievement of success (cultural, economic, psychological and social) for both the refugee and his host community.

Analysing Woodhall's definition of Human capital, it becomes evident that education is the prerequisite for economic, cultural and social capital. It plays a significant role in providing social protection (Halsey & al. 1997:219)

If remittances are to be sent at home, the refugee would need income that is sufficient enough for him to live and send home. Acquiring income implies labor market that requires skills and knowledge provided by education; and in this case, training or high education.

Evidence from my fieldwork supports this. When asked on how he is preparing for return, Gabriel says: "*Well, my first preoccupation was education and at that point I really am ready.*"

He adds: "*I have a good and well-paying job, which has enabled me to be involved in some income generating activities in Congo. Also, Together with some members of the diaspora here in Norway, I am doing business, which is beneficiary not only to me, but also to the local communities where we are operating.*"

I will discuss later more on the significance of remittances concerning repatriation. The discussion in this chapter can be explained by means of figure 4.

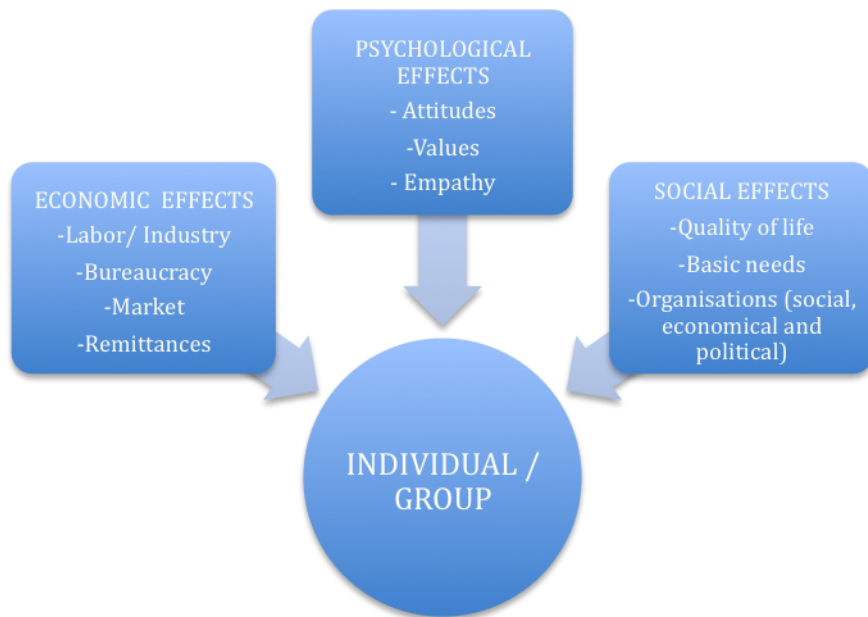


Figure 4. Effects of education on the individual and his environment (group and or society.)

I have earlier said that education is seen as a transformative force, an agent of change. Fig. 4 explains the co-relations between education and the social, psychological and economic aspects, and how these influence on a person, but also, home and host communities of the refugees.

The presented relations echo the concept of “transnationalism” which is described by Ellis and Khan as multiple ties and interactions linking people or institutions across borders of nations-states (Al-Ali & Koser 2002:169). This interaction is played on three major pillars, the economic, the political and the socio-cultural. This concept shows how much refugees are “in touch” with their home communities to which they send money (remittances) on regular basis. This tie to their home country put them in a potential power position on the above-mentioned pillars of transnationalism. It is the case of Eritrean refugees in Europe, as portrayed by Koser, where regular visits, remittances and advocacy for the Eritrean cause have not only deepened their links to the home community, but also given them remarkable status in the host communities (Al-Ali & Koser 2002:143-145)⁶⁸.

In this context through network and high education, refugees gain a political role to play both in the home country and the host community. According to Adamson, remittances generated by migrants or refugees in this context, constitute an economic power matching a potential political power (Al-Ali & Koser 2002:157-159).

It is the case of Kurd refugees who, from their host countries throughout Europe, managed to create a “groupe de pression”, a group of elites that are engaged and lobbying at higher

political level of the host country for change and transformation in their home country. (Østegaard-Nilsen in Al-Ali & Koser 2002: 186). From this example and perspective, it is likely that once their advocacy for change give positive outcome, Kurd refugees would return and be an “enormous” resource for their homeland. It is also the case of Guatemalan refugees in Mexico, who organized, acquired skills, got educated etc while waiting for their return; something they and many other refugees aspires to it; according to Rapone and Simpson (Essed &al. 2004: 135, 138-141).

The Eritrean and Kurd cases are interlinked in Julien prospect of being a political figure in his home community and or municipality⁶⁹.

Findings from the Namibian repatriation programme show that returnees with education were finding employment easier than other groups (Preston, in Black and Khoser 1999: 30).

Kabera (1989) says that refugees look at education with great hope and expectations. Given the fact that their homes, livelihood etc. have either been lost or destroyed and the fact that retrieving them would be challenging, acquiring education becomes in many ways the only hope to deal with whatever they may face upon return.

Kabera’s analysis of refugee cases in Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe show that, as he puts: “Refugees are placed in a very awkward situation. They have little say and material possessions are meagre. Uprooted from their motherland, they view educational attainment as, in most cases their only hope for survival and for earning a respectable livelihood, either in the country of asylum or after they are repatriated” Kabera (1989, introduction).

Repatriation as presented earlier may be the preferable durable solution for the refugee situation; and this not only for the refugees themselves and their host communities, but also for the home country, the society they fled from. When the situation in the home country tends to normalize, authorities in those countries come to favor repatriation, especially of those highly educated and highly skilled persons, because of the benefits the country/ society could draw from them (Ghosh, 2000: 109).

Koser (2007:50) underlines that [...] “a third way of potentially contribute to the development of the home country is by returning. Migrants (in this case former refugees) can bring home savings from abroad to invest at home when they return, often establishing small businesses, for example. They can come home with a good network of contacts abroad that can form the basis for small-scale trade and import-export activities... they can also bring back new ideas which can spur entrepreneurial attitudes and activities among the people with whom they settle on return.” From this perspective, it is clear that returnees have a stake in the

reconstruction and peace building of their societies. An example that supports Koser’s statement is the Palestinian Expatriate Professional Project that, according to the World Bank, aims to attract skilled and experienced managers and senior technical specialists from the Palestinian diaspora to fill management and technical positions in key Palestinian ministries and agencies.⁷⁰ The same way may potentially happen with Congolese refugees, especially since the desire to contribute in the process of peace building and reconstruction of their home country is strong; as shown in the discussions and analysis on the reasons for return⁷¹.

Education is also a significant producer of remittances, since it helps provide jobs with sufficient income from which remittances comes from.

According to the International Organization of Migration, remittances are “personal cash transfers from a migrant worker or immigrant to a relative in the country of origin. They can also be funds invested, deposited or donated by the migrant to the country of origin, including also in-personal transfers and donations (IOM and Remittances 2006). These transfers are at first seen as a sort of moral issue in the sense that the refugee is motivated by an intense obligation to help family and friends. But many does involve in social activities, helping their communities and by that becoming actors for development. DeMontclos (2005) is clear about the effects of remittances and he states “they can contribute to sustainable development since they are more endogenous than international aid”.

He continues saying that “through community networking, [they] can help to reduce poverty and other detrimental effects [...]” DeMontclos (2005: introduction).

This tie with either the family or friends or with the society in home country puts the refugee in a power position, as it is the case with Kurds and Eritreans as I earlier presented.

The presented concepts and discussions can be summarized in the following table, reproduced from Koser’s (2007:244):

| Activity | Home country | Host country |
|---------------------|--|---|
| Economic Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Financial remittances • Other remittances • Investments • Taxes | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Charitable donations • Donations to community organization |

| | | |
|----------------------|---|--|
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purchase of government bonds | |
| Political Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participation in elections • Constitutional roles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Political rallies and demonstrations • Mobilization of political contacts in host country |
| Social Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social contacts • Social remittances | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attendance at social gatherings • Participation in discussion groups |
| Cultural Activities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural events including visiting performers from the home country | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Education • Language training |

Source: Koser, K (2007) African Diasporas and post-conflict reconstruction: An Eritrean case study.

Chapter 7. CONCLUSIONS

This thesis addressed 2 main questions followed by a sub question: 1) do Congolese refugees in Norway want to stay in their host country, or do they want to return to their country of origin? If the answer is that they want to return, 2) on what conditions/ under what circumstances would they actually do this, as far as they can assess that today?

Answering these questions, one realises that there are three pillars on which the refugees will base his/her reflection or consideration upon:

1. The economic opportunities.
2. The psychological wellbeing, and
3. The survival or physical vulnerability.

The presented discussions and analysis could simply be summarised by means of Maslow's (1943) hierarchy of needs, emphasising the need for safety, need of belonging (or love), need for self-esteem and the need for self-actualisation.

For example, discussing peace building in the DRC, Gabriel and Julien as well as many others of my respondents have come to realise the potentials lying within them when it comes to rebuild their home country. This is an echo of Maslow's (1943) description of the self-actualisation need, which emphasises the desire for self-fulfilment to the tendency for him (or her) to become actualised in what he (or her) is potentially. This is the desire to become more and more what one is, to become everything that one is capable of becoming.

The desire to help their country expressed by the respondents can also be seen as a way of fulfilling the need of self-esteem which, according to Maslow (1943) leads to the feeling of self-confidence, worth, strength, capability and of being necessary in the world.

The expressions regarding psychological integration in Norway can be linked to the need for love, emphasising the emergence of love, affection and belongingness. Maslow (1943) says that "a person will hunger for affectionate relations with people in general, namely for a place in his group, and he will strive with great intensity to achieve this goal". Clement, as much as Alex and Salima, stresses the fact that Norwegians don't understand that integration should go both ways, meaning that ethnic Norwegians should also reach out to the refugee.

According to them, most immigrants do their part in learning the language, customs and rules, but the majority of Norwegian (see Huitfeldt 1993, Stillwell & VanHam 2010, Maagerø &

Simmons 2008 and Fangen & Mohn 2010) “slams their door in front of them”; expressing the fact that it is very difficult to get in touch with ethnic Norwegians.

The premises for return are linked to the need for safety which, according to Maslow (1943) is the need coming from the aspiration that an individual is to be protected both physically and morally. Maslow says that these are complex needs to the extent that they cover a shared objective: our safety and that of our family; and a subjective part related to our fears and expectations whether they are rational or not. This implicates among others the security of the body, employment, resources, morality, the family health, and property. In the case of DRC, according to my informants, safety and security need will include personal security, financial security, health and well-being.

Safeties are set to be guaranteed by the state, and according to informants and other findings, the Congolese state is far from being a state of law, capable of delivering the safety and other services to its citizens, as Norway does.

This can be summarised in what I call the push factors to the DRC versus the pull factors to Norway; which are illustrated in the following table:

| PUSH factors to DRC | PULL Factors to NORWAY |
|---|--|
| <p>A) Psychological Integration Identity, belonging, culture, home longing.</p> <p>B) Need for esteem</p> <p>C) Need for self-actualisation</p> | <p>A) Need for Safety</p> <p>B) Social-economic integration</p> <p>1. Welfare: Free education, universal health care, social security</p> <p>2. Income generating activities: job, investments, status</p> <p>3. Physical and social economic risks in DRC</p> |

The sub question (more or less a third question) was about exploring how Congolese refugees in Norway are preparing for a potential return. The answer to this is that they value education (1) which gives them not only the skills and competence to acquire income generating activities in their host country; but it is also (2) essential for their economic and psychological

wellbeing once returned to the DRC. Education provides and enlarges their network in Norway, the network is essential for getting jobs which facilitates capital accumulation. Also (3), they keep close ties with their families and friends in the home country, to whom they send remittances; and stay tuned to the news and happenings in the DRC.

The combination of these three helps fulfill the needs for belonging, self-esteem and self-actualization, as long as freedom and the need for safety are provided in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

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8.1. End Notes

¹ <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1198921,00.html>

² UNHCR Global appeal 2012-2013. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/ga12/index.xml>.

Downloaded on March 15, 2012.

³ http://www.ssb.no/emner/02/sa_innvand/sa103/kap2.pdf

<http://www.udi.no/upload/Pub/Tema/Integrering/KompendiumFlyktn2004/Kongo.pdf>

⁴ See also The Norwegian Directorate for integration and Diversity (IMDI)'s report on Refugees resettlement in Norwegian municipalities

<http://www.imdi.no/Documents/Rapporter/Rapport20om20OFF.pdf>

⁵ History of the UNHCR. Retrieved from <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646cbc.html>.

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⁶ History of the UNHCR on the organisation's website.

<http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646cbc.html>

⁷ <http://www.time.com/time/magazine/article/0,9171,1198921,00.html>

⁸ <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/cg.html>

⁹ <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/1288230.stm>

¹⁰ <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/congo.htm>

http://www.worldlingo.com/ma/enwiki/en/First_Congo_War

¹¹ <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/congo.htm>

¹² Retrieved from <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/congo.htm>. Downloaded on January 12th 2012. See also the Lusaka accords retrieved from

<http://www.iss.co.za/af/profiles/drcongo/cdreader/bin/2lusaka.pdf>. Downloaded on April 15th 2012.

¹³ <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/1999/19990409.sc6665.html>

¹⁴ <http://www.iss.co.za/af/profiles/drcongo/cdreader/bin/2lusaka.pdf>

¹⁵ <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/page?page=49e45c366>

<http://www.unops.org/english/whatwedo/Locations/Africa/Pages/DRCOperationsCentre.aspx>

¹⁶ http://www.cartercenter.org/news/pr/drc_122606.html

<http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter1.shtml>

Prunier, Gerard (2009) P 227- 249

¹⁷ Prunier, Gerard (2009). P 265- 268

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/422847.stm>

<http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/congo.htm>

¹⁸ <http://www.un.org/News/Press/docs/2002/sc7483.doc.htm>

¹⁹ For this chapter, see also Flick, 2009: 87-127

²⁰ See also Immigrants location as put by Statistics Norway at

<http://www.ssb.no/ssp/utg/201201/06/> Downloaded on April 15th 2012.

²¹ <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/4b0e4cba6.html>

While thematising and designing the research, I had pre- interview session with key informants who suggested many Congolese they know who are or may be suited for the research. Also, they stated why they've moved to Oslo; to be found in the analysis part.

²² <http://www.unhcr.org/4b1e3c589.html>

²³ Introduskjonsstønad, UDI, UNE. See also the Resettlement sub-chapter in this thesis.

²⁴ For the reason of anonymity, I am not indicating the name of the municipalities

²⁵ <http://www.unhcr.org/pages/4bf4f2616.html>

²⁶ The experience of being a refugee, retrieved from <https://www.msu.edu/course/pls/461/stein/MNREXP1.htm> downloaded on January 12th 2012.

²⁷ The experience of being a refugee, retrieved from <https://www.msu.edu/course/pls/461/stein/MNREXP1.htm> downloaded on January 12th 2012.

²⁸ The experience of being a refugee, retrieved from <https://www.msu.edu/course/pls/461/stein/MNREXP1.htm> downloaded on January 12th 2012.

²⁹ See for example resettlement

³⁰ <http://www.unhcr.org/partners/PARTNERS/3f1408764.pdf>

³¹ UN High Commissioner for Refugees, *Global Consultations on International Protection/Third Track: Local Integration*, 25 April 2002, EC/GC/02/6, available at:

<http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/3d6266e17.html> [accessed 11 January 2012]

³² Here as the process of adapting to something new. See Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, 7th Edition (2005).

³³ Congolese refugee livelihoods in Nairobi and the prospects of legal, local integration. In *Refugee Survey Quarterly*, Vol.25, Issue2. Downloaded on January 10th 2012.

³⁴ Local integration, reviving a forgotten solution. Retrieved from <http://www.fmreview.org/FMRpdfs/FMR30/78-79.pdf> Downloaded on January 10th 2012.

³⁵ International Rescue Committee's Refugees in Tanzania: fact sheet, April 2007. Retrieved from <http://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/migrated/resources/070424-TZ-Refugees-Fact-Sheet-CP-RMJ.pdf>. Downloaded on April 15th 2012.

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³⁶ UDI Resettlement refugees. Retrieved from <http://www.udi.no/Norwegian-Directorate-of-Immigration/Central-topics/Protection/Asylum-seekers-and-refugees/Resettlement-refugees/> Downloaded on 15 January 2012.

³⁷ <http://www.udi.no/Sentrale-tema/Statsborgerskap/Hvem-kan-bli-norsk-statsborger-ved-soknad/>

³⁸ I will show in the analysis, Congolese refugees in Oslo and some Norwegian scholars questions the term dignity of resettled refugees in Norway.

³⁹ Retrieved from <http://www.dol.govt.nz/research/migration/refugees/refugeevoices/RefugeeVoicesLiteratureReview.pdf> downloaded on 15 January 2012

⁴⁰ Norwegian parliaments report nr. 49/ 2003-2004. Page 28-29 (Downloaded on January 10th from <http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/ad/dok/regpubl/stmeld/2003-2004/stmeld-nr-49-2003-2004-.html?id=405180>

⁴¹ Norwegian Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion, website.

<http://www.regjeringen.no/en/dep/bld/Topics/Integration-and-diversity.html?id=1138>

⁴² Todman, L. (2004) Reflections on Social Exclusion: What is it? How is it different U.S. conceptualizations of disadvantage? And, why might Americans consider integrating it into U.S. social policy discourse? (Italy).

⁴³ Oxford dictionary

⁴⁴ <http://allafrica.com/stories/201007271121.html> downloaded on January 16th 2012.

⁴⁵ 1996 UNHCR's Handbook on Voluntary Repatriation

⁴⁶ Prospects for the UN Peacebuilding commission; retrieved from <http://www.unidir.org/pdf/articles/pdf-art2630.pdf> downloaded on January 11th 2012

⁴⁷ Refugees and the regional dynamics of peacebuilding, retrieved from http://www.munkschool.utoronto.ca/assets/files/Publications/2008_milner_contro.pdf downloaded on January 11th 2012.

⁴⁸ Draft by rapporteur Paul Romita, International Peace Institute, on the event entitled Refugees and the Regional Dynamics of Peace building. This took place on May 3-4, 2010 and this draft published in April of the same year.

⁴⁹ Repatriation (special report) 1993: 19

⁵⁰ International Migration, Remittances and the Brain Drain- A study of 24 labour exporting countries. Retrieved from http://www-wds.worldbank.org/servlet/WDSContentServer/WDSP/IB/2003/07/08/000094946_03062104301450/Rendered/PDF/multi0page.pdf downloaded on January 15th 2012.

⁵¹ Retrieved from <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/africa/1605242.stm>

⁵² www.businessdictionary.com/definition/brain-drain.html#ixzz1jTeCYp9u

⁵³ http://www.un.org/esa/population/meetings/fourthcoord2005/P09_GCIM.pdf

⁵⁴ Retrieved from http://www.diaspora-centre.org/DOCS/DIASPEACE_Delivera.pdf downloaded on Jan 25th 2012

See also the Norwegian Migration-Development report (2007). Retrieved from http://www.regjeringen.no/nb/dep/ud/dok/rapporter_planer/rapporter/2006/migrasjon-og-utvikling.html?id=106624 downloaded on January 25th 2012.

⁵⁵ The Norwegian Ministry of Children, Equality and Social Inclusion: Integration and diversity. See also, “introduksjonsstønad” at the Norwegian Directorate of Integration and Diversity

⁵⁶ See also discussions on social economic and social psychological integration

⁵⁷ The Norwegian Directorate of Integration and Diversity (IMDi)

⁵⁸ Retrieved from <http://www.nav.no/In+English>. Downloaded on April 15th 2012

⁵⁹ <http://monusco.unmissions.org/>

⁶⁰ BBC's profile of Anders Behring Breivik. Retrieved from <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-14259989>. Downloaded on April 15th 2012.

⁶¹ US department of State: 2010 report on Human rights in DRC.

On the date of June 25th 2011, while I was conducting my field work, I was invited to a symposium organized by the organization Action Paix et Pain; where members of the Congolese civil society and the catholic church from the province of South Kivu gave prospects on the security situation in the province but also in the country. According to them, that situation as well as the one on human rights is alarming.

⁶² The most prominent Congolese Human Rights activist and president of the NGO “La voix de sans voix”. See US department of State press statement of July 04th 2010.

⁶³ UNHCR country: Norway, CIA world factbook: Norway

⁶⁴ 2011 Human Development Index

⁶⁵ World Bank Country Data indicators: Norway

⁶⁶ Statistic Norway: Immigration and immigrants

⁶⁷ Referring to Julien's own words on integration process.

⁶⁸ The example is of similarity to my respondents, see discussions on education and remittances

(Gabriel's example: building bridge between Congo and Norway)

⁶⁹ See discussions related to the Opportunities in DRC

⁷⁰ World Bank's Palestinian Expatriate Project

⁷¹ See Reasons for return.

9. APPENDIXES

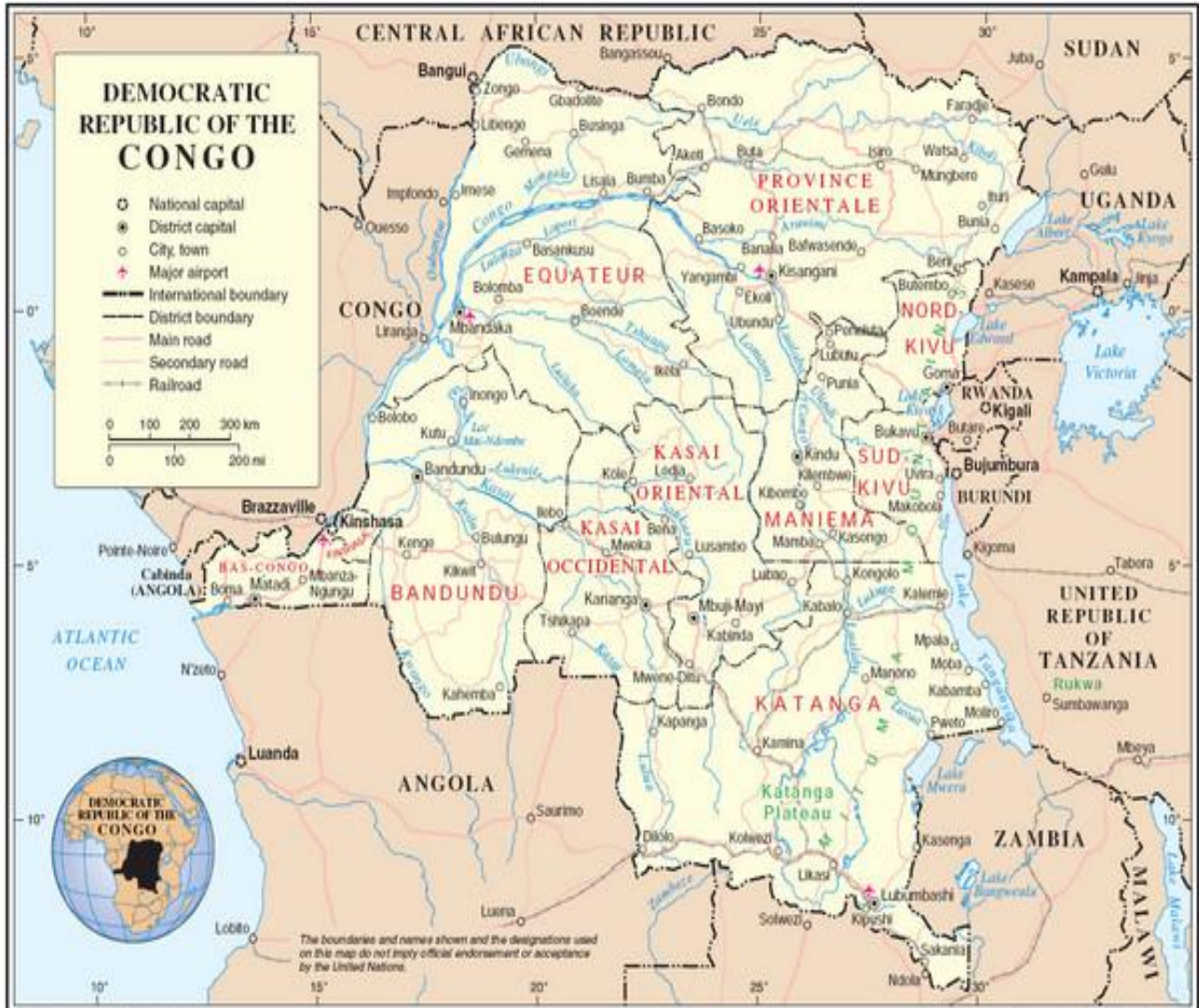
9.1. QUESTIONNAIRE

- a. Age, marital status
 - b. Do you have children, if yes, how many?
 - c. Do you have other dependents?
 - d. What is your level of education
 - e. How long have you been living in Oslo
 - f. What is your occupation?
-
1. Where in the DRC you come from (province, town)
 2. What was your occupation before you fled the country
 3. Why, When and how did you flee the country
 4. Did you choose Norway as your country of asylum? Can you explain please?
 5. How long have you been living in Norway (when did you arrive in the country)
 6. What are your views on social integration as it has been for you
 7. How long did it take to learn the language (do you manage it well?)
 8. (If working, have worked) how did you get the job?
 9. Is the job satisfying? Income, work conditions, etc
 10. Was it easy to get the job? If yes/ no can you explain why?
 11. Does the income satisfying or you have other income generating activities?
 12. (If not working) what may be the reasons of your unemployment?
 13. What do you do in your free time?
 14. Do you have friends?
 - a. If yes, Congolese only?
 - b.
 15. Are you part of any organisation (Congolese as well as Norwegian)
 - a. If yes, can you tell me more about them?
 16. Do you have family in the DRC?

-
- a. If yes, how big is it and are you in regular contact with them?
 - b. How do you keep in touch with them?
 - c. What role do you play in the family?
 - d. Do they depend or rely on you? Lets say, economically?
17. What about friends and network on the DRC?
18. Are you happy and satisfied with your life in Norway?
- a. How different is your life in Norway to the one you lived in DRC?
19. People say “Borte Bra, hjemme best”, how does that sound to you?
20. Would you consider moving back to the DRC?
- a. If yes, what may lead you for such consideration?
 - b. If no, what are the reasons?
21. If yes, are you prepared for the return? And in that case, can you explain how you are preparing for that?

Thank you very much for your time and the fruitful conversation!

9.2. Map of the Democratic Republic of Congo



9.3. Map of Norway

