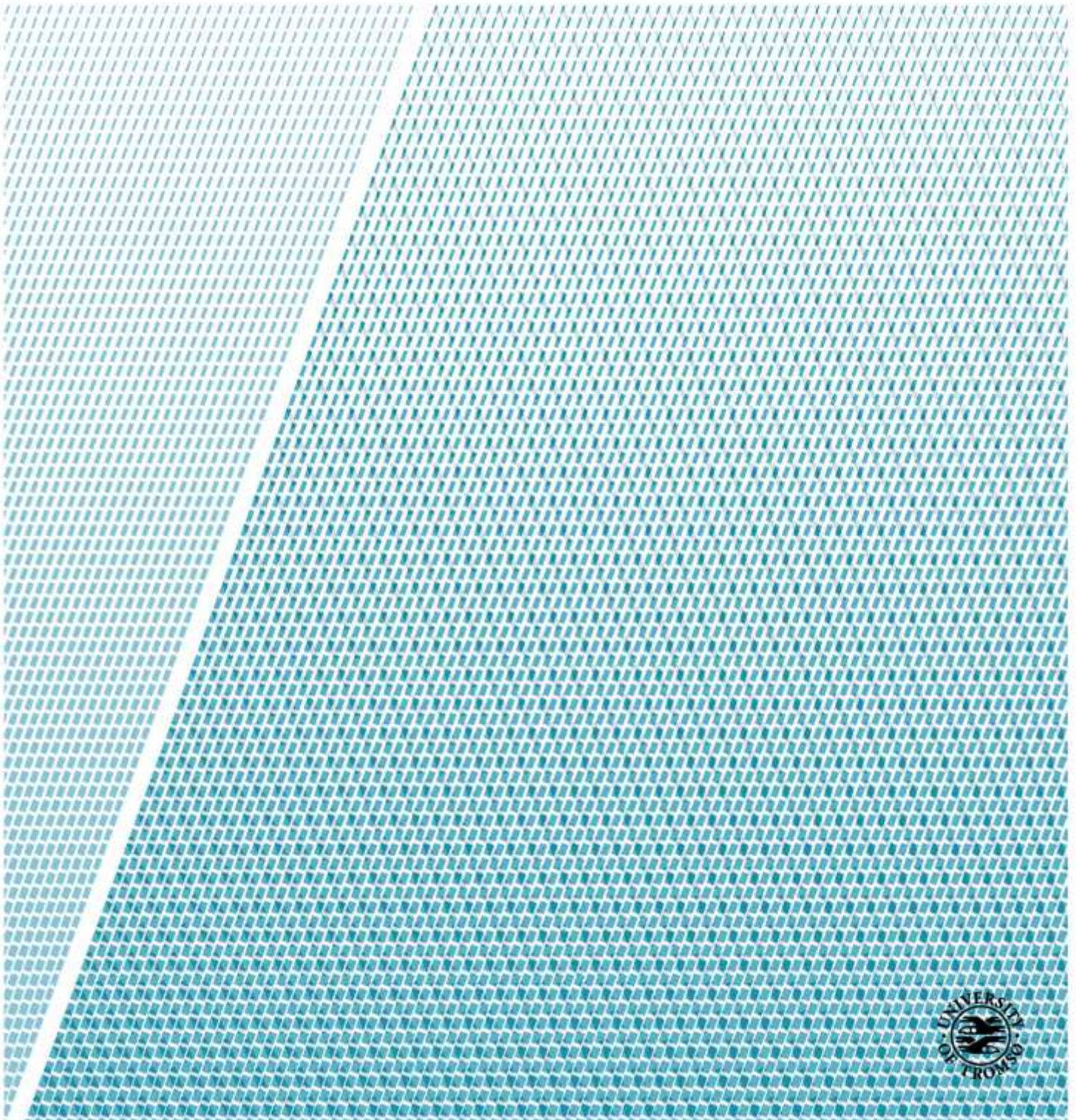# Local Integration of Refugees: Reflections from Liberian Refugees in Ghana

Anthony Agyemang Acheampong

Master's Programme for Peace and Conflict Transformation

June 2015

DEDICATION

To my father, Victor Owusu Acheampong of blessed memory and my mother, Mama Afua Pokuaa

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ABSTRACT

This study examines the local integration of former Liberian refugees in Ghana. The objective is to provide insight into the program based mainly on the reflections and views of individual refugees who are taking part in the integration program. This is done not only to gain a better understanding of the phenomenon, but also, ascertain the real impact of the integration program in the refugees' lives. To this end, the study draws on 14 qualitative interviews from integrating refugees, and officials in charge of the program. To review and highlight the type of resources refugees mobilize in their quest to be active members of the society, the concepts of social, cultural and economic integration; and social agency are used as conceptual framework for analysis.

The study findings indicate that, informant refugees are capable and creative people who do not necessarily give up on their lives, by virtue of difficult circumstances. They are knowledgeable individuals, who plan and work for better lives. This is manifested in how they have identified the local integration policy as presenting them with the best opportunities to achieve their self-defined goals and aspirations. In their integration, they have utilized opportunities presented in the integration package given to them, to facilitate their social and economic participation in Ghana. While this package is seen as helping the refugees, it is seen as deficient in the aids presented. Therefore it is incapable of ensuring the complete realization the refugees' goals. Nevertheless, the refugees have taken it upon themselves to reshape the programs, and devised other coping strategies in addition, to meet their needs and pursue their life goals.

Analytically, the study brings evidence to approaches to refugee policies, that the focus on the structural and organizational aspects of programs. It is suggested that for the program's effectiveness and sustainability, there is the need for refocusing policy discussions and practice from the 'top down' to 'bottom-up' approaches. In this regard, refugees through their performance (agency) actively contribute to the processes in which policies as local integration is defined, facilitated and accessed. Therefore it is important that their inputs are considered as integral part of these programs and decisions that affect their lives.

Keywords: Refugees, Durable Solutions, Local Integration, Social Agency

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CPA	-	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
ECOWAS	-	Economic Community of West African States
ECRE	-	European Council on Refugees and Exiles
EXCOM	-	Executive Committee
GRB	-	Ghana Refugee Board
NGO	-	Non-Governmental Organization
NPFL	-	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
UN	-	United Nations
UNHCR	-	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
OAU	-	Organization of African Unity

Table of Contents

Chapter 1. Background

Human beings, when faced with life threatening situations, flee their homes and seek protection within and outside the borders of their countries. This, among many other cases, has led to the emergence of the issue of refugees (Sesay, 2002). Indeed, the refugee problem has been a worldwide phenomenon, affecting populations in Africa, Asia, Latin America, Europe and North America (Nmoma, 1997). Among others, a major challenge that faces the world in the 21st century, is the increasing number of refugees around the world. The rise in this phenomenon, according to the UNHCR, has been the result of conflicts, violence, persecutions and human rights abuses in different parts of the world (UNHCR, 2013). The African continent, over the years, has been a major region, which has witnessed high numbers in refugee movements with its resultant effects. As Crisp (2000, p. 4) noted; despite making up about 12 percent of the world population, Africa contributes to around 28 percent (3.2 million) of the world's 11 million refugees. In addition, 9 out of the top 20 countries that produce refugees in the world, are African countries.

1.1 Refugee Problem in Africa

Africa make up one of the significant producers and hosts of refugee populations in the world. The continent is faced with natural catastrophes, such as droughts, famine, wars and conflicts, all of which, contribute to generating large numbers of refugee flows. However, among these causes, civil wars, ethnic strife, human rights abuses, coup d'états and oppressive governments have been pointed to be responsible for producing the majority of refugees on the continent (Nmoma, 1997).

Between the 1960's and early 80's, conflicts over decolonization served as a major cause of refugee flows in Africa (Rutinwa, 2002). In the early 1960's, when significant numbers of African countries were struggling for their independence from colonial rule, the refugee population stood at around 400,000 rising steadily to around 750,000 in the 1970's. By the 1980s when many African countries had attained self-rule, it was expected that these numbers would decrease. However, the number of refugees continued to increase at an alarming rate. As at the end of 1993, the refugee population on the continent was reported to have exploded to about 6,000,000 (Nmoma, 1997). This rising trend, as stated earlier, has been the result of renewed conflicts, which assumed new dimensions in the form of civil wars and state struggles. As a result, Africa,

considered the poorest continent in the world, continues to be plagued with conflicts and its accompanying effect of refugee flows (Essuman-Johnson, 2011).

The large number of refugees in Africa has meant that countries on the continent bear the major burden of hosting the large number of refugees. Indeed, the majority of African refugees have been hosted in the region, mainly in neighbouring countries, and in the refugee producing countries themselves. As noted by Rutinwa (2002, p. 3), there are four major refugee generating and hosting regions in Africa. Among these regions is the Great Lakes region, where conflicts in Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo and Rwanda have produced millions of refugees over the past decades. The 1994 Rwandan genocide, for example, which was waged in one hundred days between the Hutu and Tutsi ethnic groups, is known to have generated an estimated 2 million refugees.[1] Similarly, the Democratic Republic of Congo, with its ongoing conflicts for over two decades, has produced an estimated 500,000[2] refugees. Majority of these refugees have been hosted in neighbouring Tanzania, Uganda and Kenya.

Another region on the continent with significant numbers in refugee production is the Horn of Africa. Here, continuous armed conflicts in countries, like Somalia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Djibouti and Sudan, have resulted in millions of people fleeing for their lives. In Somalia for example, civil war, which started in the early 1980's, has generated around 1 million refugees, most of who have been hosted in neighbouring Kenya, Ethiopia, and Yemen.[3] In recent times, conflicts in South Sudan and Central Africa Republic also continue to generate refugees with an estimated 150,000[4] and 88,000[5] respectively in this region. Southern Africa, is also one of the regions, where thousands of people had to flee for safety during periods of struggle against colonialism and apartheid (Rutinwa, 2002, p. 4). Civil wars have also been major contributors to the refugee population in this region. The Mozambique civil war (1977-1992) and that of Angola (1975-2002) are reported to have generated around 1.7 million and 500, 000 refugees respectively exiling to Zambia, Congo, Namibia and South Africa.[6]

---

[1] http://worldwithoutgenocide.org/genocides-and-conflicts/rwandan-genocide
[2] https://www.refugeesinternational.org/where-we-work/africa/dr-congo
[3] https://www.refugeesinternational.org/where-we-work/africa/somalia
[4] https://www.refugeesinternational.org/where-we-work/africa/south-sudan
[5] http://www.unhcr.org/5399a14f9.html
[6] http://www.cfr.org/angola/repatriation-angolan-refugees-internally-displaced-persons/p5258

West Africa, also constitutes one major region with significant records of conflicts and human displacements. As a region which was relatively free from conflicts, it transformed to a conflict theatre from the early 1990s, by virtue of post independent struggles and civil wars in many countries (Essuman-Johnson, 2011). These conflicts in some cases, overflowed into neighbouring states, recording millions in refugee flows. The five neighbouring states of Cote D'Ivoire, Guinea, Guinea Bissau, Mali, Liberia and Sierra Leone dominate the headlines when it comes to conflicts and the resultant effects of refugee flows in West Africa. Civil war which occurred in Sierra Leone (1991-2002), for example, has been marked as one of the most brutal wars in post-colonial West Africa. This war recorded over half a million refugees most of whom sought refuge in Liberia and Mali.[7] In Cote D'Ivoire, political crisis, which started in 2002, rendered the country unstable for years, culminating in post-election crisis in 2010. The situation in the country has led to over 93,738 civilians seeking shelter in Ghana, Togo and Liberia.[8] Similarly, in recent times, Mali has been struggling with political crises, which began with a military coup by opposition Tuareg militias in 2012. As at 2013 retribution attacks carried out between opposition forces on civilians in the country, had resulted in some 211,000 refugees fleeing the violence for safety in Burkina Faso, Niger and Mauritania.[9]

1.2 Liberian Civil War and Refugees

Liberia is one West African state, which suffered from a lengthy and brutal civil war for 14 years. The country enjoyed political stability and steady economic progress for decades after its establishment in 1847 (Nmoma, 1997). However, conflict inflicted devastating effects in human losses and displacements, as well as, huge infrastructural losses. This left the country in tatters. Further, the war spilled over into neighbouring Sierra Leone, with repercussions throughout the West African region (Jaye, 2009).

The war occurred for the most period between 1989 and 2003, and was split into two periods; 1989-1996 and 1999-2003. While it is often analyzed from the point of an ethnic conflict, ethnicity

---

[7] http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/sierra_leone.htm
[8] http://reliefweb.int/report/c-te-divoire/west-africa-s-refugee-and-security-crisis
[9] http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e484e66.html

was only one aspect of a wider complex of factors, which also included struggle over control of the national political space (Essuman-Johnson, 2011; Jaye, 2009).

Liberia was led and declared a republic by a group of freed American slaves who were resettled in the region in the years after Britain declared slavery illegal. This group, often referred to as Americo-Liberian, formed about 3 percent of the country's population with the rest from different indigenous groups.[10] The Americo-Liberians, presided over all state affairs with a one party system for decades. They profited from a hegemonic rule based on the systems of clientelism and patronage, at the expense of the indigenous population (Nmoma, 1997; Sawyer, 1992). In 1980, a coup d'état led by Samuel Doe, saw a member of the indigenous population become the president of Liberia for the first time in the country's history. However, following a regime characterized by human rights violations, corruption and over-concentration of power, civil war broke out in 1989 (Nmoma, 1997). This started when opposition forces (NPFL) led by Charles Taylor tried to seize political power from the ruling Doe government.

The first civil war, known in Liberia as the "Taylor" war, ended with the signing of Abuja peace agreement in 1996. Charles Taylor was subsequently elected into office as president following peaceful elections in 1997. However, in July 1999, hostilities resumed after the then president Taylor, failed to ensure peace in the country. This renewed violence lasted until August 18, 2003 when the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was signed in Accra, Ghana (Nilsson, 2003, p. 8). Elections followed in 2006, through which, the country elected Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf as president. Charles Taylor was subsequently indicted by the Special Court for Sierra Leone, for his role in the country's civil war and is currently serving a 50-year prison sentence for war crimes.[11] Atrocities committed during the war included massive killing of civilians, sexual violence, forcible recruitment of child soldiers, extortion, destruction of the cultural heritage, looting and the destruction of property (Jaye, 2009, p. 4). It is estimated that some 250, 000 people lost their lives,

---

[10] The indigenous liberians consisted of several ethnic groups of which included: Kpelle (298,500), Bassa (214,150), Gio (130,300), Mano (125,540), and Kru (121,400). Other smaller groups consist of: Grebo (108, 099), Gola (106,450), Loma (60,840), Bandi (30,870), Kissa (25,500), Vai (24,000), Krahn (18,464), Mandingo (over 10,836), Del (7,900), and Belle (5,386).(Nmoma, 1997)
[11] http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-24537834

500,000 were internally displaced with around 850,000 people fleeing the country to seek refuge mainly in neighbouring Cote D'Ivoire, Sierra Leone, Nigeria and Ghana (Jaye, 2009, p. 5).

1.3 Liberian Refugees in Ghana

When the first group of Liberian refugees arrived in Ghana, alongside evacuated Ghanaian nationals in 1990, a National Reception Committee was constituted to address the needs of these refugees. This committee was made up of the Ghanaian Ministry of Mobilization and Social Welfare along with several NGOs (Porter et al., 2008). Further, the Ghana government was unprepared to cater for the large refugees, so it called upon the United Nations High Commission on Human Rights (UNHCR) for assistance. In accommodating these refugees, the government made land available at Buduburam, in the Gomoa District of the Central Region. The Budumburam refugee camp, as it came to be known, served as the settlement for the majority of Liberian refugees who flee the war to Ghana. Some are also known to have settled in a much smaller camp near the border with Cote d'Ivoire.[12]

1.4 The Problem of Protracted Refugee Situation

A major characteristic of refugee situations is the long period of stay in exile. Refugees are mostly met with short-term assistance and settlements by countries of first asylum and international organizations (Crisp, 2003). This is done with the understanding that, the conflicts in their countries will end within a short period so they can return. However, the protracted conflicts in their home countries, often make their immediate return impossible. This leaves the future of most refugees uncertain. In many cases, it also renders the situation of refugees one of a "protracted" nature (Dryden-Peterson & Hovil, 2004, p. 27). A refugee situation is defined as "protracted" when they have lived in exile for more than 5 years, and continue to do so without any immediate possibility of finding a durable solution to their plight.[13] As noted by Crisp (2003), refugees in such situations find themselves in uncertain predicaments, as they cannot go back to their home countries because, it is unsafe to do so. In addition, they are not able to settle permanently in the country of first asylum, because the host state is not in favor of keeping them on its territory

---

[12] http://www.unhcr.org/44c7783e4.html
[13] Executive Committee Conclusion on Protracted Refugee Situations, 2010. At: http://www.unhcr.org/4b332bca9.html

indefinitely. Furthermore, there is no possibility of resettling in another country, as no third country has accepted to admit and offer them with permanent residence.

Protracted refugee situations are characterized by long periods of refugee restriction to camps, either directly or indirectly, and often with unsustainable means of livelihoods (see Crisp, 2003). Coupled with this, is the issue relating to the location of camps, which are mostly situated at poor border zones and isolated from cities and economic hubs of host countries. In some cases, these allocated areas may even be conflict zones, which place the lives of refugees under further threat. Refugees in such circumstances may also lack access to rights, education and health. This deprives them from achieving their human potential. Furthermore, they are left with few means to support themselves, which renders their survival overly dependent on humanitarian aid with no means of self-sufficiency. The problem of xenophobia, may also arise from local people toward refugees in host communities.

Protracted refugees situations are prevalent worldwide, but majority of such cases can be found in developing regions, of which Africa is prominent. As at the end of 2001, some 3 million refugees were reported to have found themselves in protracted situations on the African continent (Crisp, 2003, p. 2). These included about 400, 000 Angolan refugees in Zambia and the Democratic Republic of Congo, as well as, over 150, 000 Sierra Leonean refugees living in Guinea and Liberia (ibid p.1).

The Liberian refugee situation in Ghana presented one of a protracted nature, for which the UNCHR struggled over years to find safe and permanent solutions. In the early years of their arrival, material assistance was provided to the refugees at the Budumburam Camp under UNHCR's administrative direction, with the help of some NGOs. However, as the refugee situations became prolonged, international aid was significantly reduced. By June 2000, UNHCR withdrew all assistance to Liberian refugees (Dick 2002, p. 24). As a result, many refugees in the settlement had to fend for themselves.

Refugees' life at the camp over the years has not been free from challenges associated with refugee camps. Major problems of camp life reported in 2005, included unavailability of jobs, high cost of accommodation, education and other living costs (Porter et al., 2008, p. 9). To compound this

situation was the increasing hostility of Ghanaian host community towards refugees (Agblorti, 2011).

The debilitating plight of refugees in host countries in Africa, example of which is the case of Liberian refugees in Ghana, has drawn global efforts to address this phenomenon. At the policy level, the UNHCR, has provided three traditional solutions to addressing refugee situations. These measures, include Repatriation, Local Integration and Resettlement. These programs aim at helping refugees rebuild their lives in peace and dignity.[14] In the effort to address their plight, these durable solutions have been implemented for Liberian refugees over the course of their stay in Ghana. One of these policies, local integration, is the focus of this study.

1.5 Problem Statement

This study seeks to examine the local integration of former Liberian refugees in Ghana. It is about how these refugees are integrating in the Ghanaian community, with the assistance of the local integration package given to them. To this end, the study gives priority to the views and reflections of the beneficiary refugees about the integration program in Ghana. The study's position is that, in ascertaining the impact of local integration in refugees' lives, it is important to shed light on the program at the individual level of refugees themselves, whose wellbeing form the basis for such policies. This is because they are the main actors of such policies, and it is only by vocalizing their views that, the real impact of the program in their lives can be obtained (see Korac 2003). This will also give a better and broader understanding of their integration process as a whole.

Regarded as social actors who are best placed to articulate and evaluate efforts at responding to their own needs, refugees are often alienated from the policy narratives and the discursive practices concerning their lives (Essed, Frerks, & Schrijvers, 2004; Harrell-Bond & Voutira, 2007). Thus, by tapping into the reflections of Liberian refugees, the study also provides firsthand information about the diverse efforts made by the refugees themselves to integrate into, or be members of the Ghanaian society. Furthermore, the study provides insights into the aims and contents, of the integration program, as well as, ascertain the sort of policy outcomes that have been generated by

---

[14] http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646cf8.html

the program. Thus, through the personal and individual viewpoints of refugees, the study seeks to be a tool for understanding the local integration of Liberian refugees in Ghana.

1.6 Research Questions

The study is informed by the following questions:

- What are the aims and contents of the local integration program?
- What is the social background of Liberian refugees, who opted to stay in Ghana?
- Why did these refugees opt for integration into the Ghanaian society?
- What do these refugees integrating do for a living?
- What do refugees aspire to achieve in the Ghanaian society with local integration?
- What are refugees' reflections on local integration and its impact in their lives?
- What implications does the refugee reflections and experiences have for future integration programs?

1.7 Study Significance

Empirical studies tend to focus on the 'top-down' approach, that is, the structural and organizational aspects of integration policies and processes for refugees in their asylum countries (see Korac, 2003). Conversely, there is the lack of comparative research that focuses on the 'voices' of refugees themselves, who constitute the target group for such policies. As argued by Korac (2003, p. 52), programs such as local integration, aimed at helping refugees, are not mere medications that they take, in order to 'fit in'. Through their agency, refugees contribute to the processes in which integration is defined, facilitated and accessed. This to a large extent determines the effectiveness and sustainability of integration policies (Voutira & Dona, 2007). Thus, it is important that, refugees' input are made part of policies and decisions that affect their own lives, which suggest redirecting policy approaches to reflect the bottom-up model (Korac,2003,p. 53).[15]

The study agrees with this notion, and seeks to demonstrate it by providing empirical data on how refugees, through their ingenuity and performance actively contribute to the shaping and

---

[15] The bottom- up approach to refugee studies focus on refugees voices as actors and agents. With this approach their points of view are deemed as the better approach to effective program formulation and implementation (Voutira & Dona, 2007).

implementation of local integration policies. In the Ghanaian context, this will inform policy makers in seeking ways to make better, the formulation and implementation of future programs. The study will also contribute to policy and academic debates on bottom-up approaches to improving the local integration policy as a durable solution.

1.8 Definition of terms

The following concepts are defined as such, to make clearer their usage in the present study.

Refugee: A refugee as defined by the 1951 Refugee convention is one who "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 to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country."[16]

Former refugee: This is used to refer to someone who has held the refugee status but is no more considered a refugee by virtue of that status being revoked through cessation or by attainment of citizenship through naturalization. For the purpose of the study the term 'refugees' is used to refer to former Liberian refugees who are integrating in Ghana.

Host country/ country of asylum: This is a country to which a refugee seeks refuge from conditions in home country that pose a threat to his/her life.

1.9 Structure of the study

This dissertation is structured into six chapters. The next chapter gives further details about the context of the study, focusing on durable solution policies for refugees with emphasis on local integration. Chapter 3 focuses on discussions and reflections about the methodological issues of the study. In chapter 4, the conceptual framework of the work is presented. Chapter 5 deals with the data presentation and analysis. In the final chapter, summary and concluding remarks are given.

---

[16] http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c125.html

Chapter 2. Refugee Policies

In this chapter, I highlight on the three durable solutions for addressing refugee situations. These include repatriation, resettlement and local integration. Liberian refugees have benefited from these policies at different times during their stay in Ghana. However, for the purpose of this paper, emphasis is placed on local integration. With this focus, I further proceed to present the local integration program for Liberian refugees and how it is being implemented. Specifically, the components of their integration package, including the legal and socioeconomic aspects, are outlined. In all, this chapter attempts to outline the research context and the changing dynamics of durable solutions for Liberian refugees in Ghana.

2.1 Durable Solutions

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the lead UN agency primarily tasked with the responsibility of protecting and assisting refugees has provided three traditional solutions to addressing refugee situations. These measures are otherwise known as Durable Solutions. A durable solution for refugees is defined as a solution that allows refugees to rebuild their lives in peace and dignity.[17] The three durable solutions to refugee situations as stated earlier include, Repatriation, Resettlement and Local Integration. A refugee is considered to have secured a solution to his or her circumstance if s/he has been able to find a safe and permanent solution to his/her plight through one of these durable measures (Stein, 1986). Like many refugees in Africa, these solutions at different times, have been offered to Liberian refugees as measure to help them address their protracted situations.

2.1.1 Voluntary Repatriation

Voluntary repatriation, as solution to refugee situations, involves the return of refugees back to their countries of origin based on their informed and voluntary consent (UNHCR, 2013). It is facilitated by the UNHCR with the corporation of both host and home countries, as well as, other stakeholders, like NGOs. Repartriation is usually pursued when conflicts in home countries have calmed down or ended, and the atmosphere is considered safe enough for refugees to return. It is also used as a measure to address refugee situations when the cessation clause is triggered by the

---

[17] Ibid.

international community to end the status of a specific group of refugees. Voluntary repatriation has grown over the years to assume much preference internationally as most refugees prefer to return home once it is safe to do so (Crisp, 2004, p. 7). In addition, repatriation presents the preferred choice of remedy for most host countries as they also prefer refugees to return to their home countries in order to ease the burden of hosting them (Rutinwa, 2002, p. 2).

In Africa, repatriation has been used to help many refugees address their situations. In 1984 for example, it was used to facilitate the return of about 32,000 Ethiopian refugees from Djibouti (Stein, 1986, p. 8). Similarly, in 1993, the UNHCR oversaw the repatriation of some 25,000 Eritrean refugees in Sudan (Crisp, 2003, p. 7). There has also been similar return of Ugandan and Ethiopian refugees after conflicts in their countries ended (see Stein, 1986). For Liberian refugees in Ghana, the major repatriation exercise commenced in 2004, following improved conditions in Liberia and successful elections in 2005. This saw the return of some 3,500 Liberian refugees to their country (Porter et al., 2008, p. 236). Furthermore, in 2012, another repatriation exercise undertaken by the UNHCR and other interest parties, saw about 2843 refugees returning to Liberia.[18]

2.1.2 Resettlement

Third country resettlement also serves as a durable solution to address refugee problems. It involves, the resettlement of refugees to mostly developed countries. Over the past 50 years, millions of refugees have found a safe and permanent solution to their circumstance through resettlement in developed countries. In the late 1980's and early 90s, developed countries showed high degree of willingness to resettle large numbers of refugees from conflict areas (see Rutinwa, 2002). However, a change in asylum policies by these countries, after the end of the World war II and the Cold War, has seen vast reductions in the number of refugees being resettled in third countries in recent times (Stein 1986; Jacobson 2001; Rutinwa, 2002). Nevertheless, resettlement continues to be an important durable solution to protracted refugee situations despite the decline in numbers.

---

[18] http://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/Country/docs/IOM-Ghana-Voluntary-Repatriation-of-Liberian-Refugees.pdf

African refugees from Somalia, Ethiopia, Congo and Eritrea have found a solution to their plight through resettlement in developed countries like United States of America, Australia, Canada, Sweden Norway and the United Kingdom.[19] Similarly many Liberians have found a solution to their plight by resettlement in these developed countries. However, the continuous decline in the number of refugees being resettled meant that, between 2007 and 2010, for example, just 118 Liberians were resettled to third countries.[20]

2.1.3 Local Integration

Local integration is also regarded as a policy, which leads to a safe and permanent solution for refugee situations. It refers to the settlement of refugees with full residence and legal rights in mostly their first countries of asylum. It involves the granting of refugees, rights and privileges, which ideally leads to their attainment of citizenship in host nations. Traditionally regarded as second on the priority list of durable solutions, local integration has fallen off the pecking order among durable solutions used to address refugee issues (Ferris, 1996). This has especially been limited in the years since the refugee problem became a worldwide phenomenon. Among other issues, this has been the result of the refugees' lack of preference for this solution, as well as, the change of asylum policies from permanent to temporary ones (see Rutinwa, 1999).

This regardless, local integration is argued to hold the potential of presenting refugees with a better means of finding a solution to their problems, and thus, has been utilized in some African countries (Jacobsen, 2001). The integration of some Mozambique refugees in Malawi and South Africa (Polzar, 2004), as well as, Congolese refugees in Angola (Fielden 2008) present examples. Similarly, in West Africa, the local integration of Sierra Leonean refugees in Guinea after the war in Sierra Leone ended in 2002[21], and Liberian refugees in Ivory Coast (Harrell-Bond, 2002), also illustrate cases of local integration being used as a solution to address protracted refugee situations. For most Liberian refugees in Ghana, local integration remained an unpopular durable solution for many years. In 2008 for example, a UNHCR attempt to promote local integration was met with protestation from the refugees (Omata, 2012a, p. 9). For most of them, resettlement in a third

---

[19] http://www.unhcr.org/4444afcc0.pdf
[20] http://thinkafricapress.com/legal/liberians-ghana-refugees-buduburam
[21] http://www.unhcr.org/4890898c4.html

country remained their preferred option, Liberia a poor second and integration in Ghana, a last and undesirable option (Agblorti, 2011, p. 5). As at the end of 2011, around 11,000 refugees remained in Ghana (Omata, 2012, p. 1). However, in the face of dwindling chances of resettlement in a third country and refusal to repatriate, the prospect of local integration became increasingly high.

2.2 The End of Refugee Status

In 2012, the international community invoked a cessation clause, which revoked the 'refugee' status for all Liberians around the world. This was essentially a decision, which meant that, Liberia after suffering two bloody civil wars, was safe and stable enough for its refugees to return home. As a result, Liberians recognized as refugees around the world were no more to be considered as such, under the protection of the UNHCR. For refugees who were still in exile, they had to choose between the options of either returning home or getting legal residence in their country of refuge.[22]

In Ghana, this decision led to some refugees deciding to return to their home country. A substantial number also chose to get legal residence in Ghana and be part of the Ghanaian society. According to the Ghana refugee board, about 4000 refugees applied to be locally integrated, with about 1000 deciding to go back to Liberia.[23] A further 1,000 applied to be exempted and continue to remain as refugees in Ghana.[24]

Subsequently the UNHCR with the assistance of the Ghanaian, the Danish and the American governments have presented to these now 'former refugees' who decided to be part of the Ghanaian society, an integration package. This is aimed at helping them rebuild their lives in their adopted country. The receipt of this package marks the last stage of the refugee status and beginning of a new life in Ghana, with ones destiny in his/her own hands. The local integration of some of those 4000 refugees once again is the focus of this study. In seeking to understand how this process is taking place I proceed to highlight on the integration package given to the refugees.

---

[22] http://nataliaojewska.com/bureaucracy-over-human-rights/.
[23] http://www.irinnews.org/report/96440/ghana-liberia-limbo-for-ex-liberian-refugees
[24] Ibid.

2.3 Components of Local Integration

The EXCOM Conclusion 2005 on local integration acknowledges that, local integration is a complex and gradual process, which involves distinct but interrelated legal, economic, social and cultural dimensions. These aspects of local integration are all important to refugees' ability to integrate successfully as fully included members of society.

Ghana, as a member of the UN and a signatory to the UN 1952 and the 1969 OAU convention on refugees over the years has exhibited friendly policies in hosting large numbers of Liberian refugees during the civil war. Among other solutions, the country has subsequently proceeded to put measures in place to facilitate the integration of Liberian refugees who have opted to integrate in the country, in accordance with international conventions.[25] Stakeholders to the integration program include: The office of the UNHCR Ghana as the facilitating partner, Government of Ghana represented by the Ghana Refugee Board, as well as, other state agencies like the National Health insurance authority and the Ghana Immigration Authority. The Liberian Immigration Authority and donor countries (US and Danish Governments) makeup the other stakeholders.[26] As reported by a durable solutions officer at the UNHCR office, the components of the integration package is as follows:

2.3.1 Legal Component

The legal dimension of local integration is interpreted as the granting of refugees secure legal status by countries in which they seek asylum. Refugees through this process are granted a wider range of rights established in the 1951 convention and other international instruments like the 1969 OAU convention.[27] This process sets the rules for admitting refugees and can be seen as the starting points for refugees' integration process. It establishes crucial and important conditions, as well as, lays the foundation and supports the other processes of local integration.[28]

---

[25]The 1969 OAU refugee convention for example states that "member States of the OAU shall use their best endeavors consistent with their respective legislations to receive refugees and to secure the settlement of those refugees who, for well-founded reasons, are unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin or nationality".

[26] Interview with GRB official (30/7/14)

[27] This includes rights ranging from civil, political, economic and social, to cultural rights and entitlements, which are commensurate to those enjoyed by the citizens of host countries.

[28] http://www.unhcr.org/4357a91b2.html

The legal component of the integration package mainly include the issuance of Liberian passports for refugees, who prior to the process, could only be identified with identity cards as proof of their status recognition in Ghana. Also included this aspect, is a two-year work permit for the refugees. The process involves a coordinated activity between the UNHCR with the help of the Liberian immigration authority and the Ghana immigration authority. The Liberian immigration authority is tasked with the responsibility of issuing passports to the refugees, after their registration and all verification requirements have been met. The passports after completion are handed to the office of the UNHCR in Ghana for disbursement to the integrating refugees in Ghana. After receipt of passports, refugees then proceed to apply for work permits from the Ghana immigration authority. The work permit is renewable after expiry in two years. The process is still ongoing with around 1500 out of the 4000 applicants receiving their passports. However, out of those who had received their passports, only 500 had received their work permits as at the time of interview.[29]

2.3.2 Social and Economic Components

The economic dimension of local integration aims at improving or giving refugees the opportunity to become self-reliant, in order to attain better livelihoods for themselves, and contribute positively to the local economy. The social dimension on the other hand, enables refugees to live amongst members of the host community and contribute to social life without fear of discrimination and intimidation. EXCOM (2005)[30]

The social and economic components of the integration program in Ghana mainly involves the training and equipping of former refugees with employable skills. There is also a health insurance package to help them address their health needs. Also part of this process, is cash disbursements, which is intended to assist refugees in rebuilding their lives.

With the skills training, a range of programs are available from which the refugees can choose based on their personal interests. These include Information Technology (I.T both software and hardware training), masonry, baking, beauty care, carpentry and electrical repair training. It is envisaged that, these programs will empower the refugees to earn income and attain sustainable

---

[29] Interview with UNHCR Official (5/6/14)
[30] Executive Committee Conclusion on local Integration (2005)

livelihoods in Ghana. Recognizing the potential difficulties to be faced by refugees in accessing the job market, refugee trainees are handed startup kits after completing their skills training. This serves as a means of empowerment as they can use the kits to start doing some sort of business on their own and earn some income, while they continue to search for secure means of income.

Refugees have also been given a one-year renewable health insurance package secured with the assistance of Ghana Health Insurance Scheme. The insurance is to be renewed by refugees upon their expiry to help them cater for their health needs.

The cash disbursement component involves cash hand out of between US$ 400- US$ 2,400 depending on family size. This component of the package was mainly funded by US and Danish governments to support the integration program.

2.4 Summary

This section highlights the three main durable solution used to address refugee situations with specific focus on local integration. In the case of Liberian refugees in Ghana, the durable solutions of repatriation, resettlement and local integration have been implemented for them at different times, to help them find a solution to their plight. While local integration remained an unpopular solution for the refugees, it gained prominence after the cessation of their refugee status. Subsequently refugees, who opted for it have been given an integration package. Included in this package is a legal component comprising of passports and working permits. There is also the socio-economic components which include, skills training programs, cash grants and a one year health insurance premium. These components of the package, together, are aimed at helping these refugees rebuild their lives in safety and with dignity in Ghana.

Chapter 3. Methodological Framework

This chapter discusses methodological issues. It focuses on issues as the study area, the choice of research methodology, informant selection, data collection techniques, and justifications for the utilization of the specific techniques. I further highlight on my social attributes, which were likely to have influenced my field decisions and the overall research outcome.

3.1 Study Area- Budumburam Refugee Camp

The Budumburam refugee camp, which is situated in the Gomoa District of the Central Region in Ghana, is the chosen study area. Located approximately 45 kilometers from the country's capital, Accra, it was established in 1990 mainly to host refugees, who fled to Ghana during the war in Liberia. After the war, most of the refugees who remained in Ghana continued to stay in the camp and its surrounding communities. These refugees, as per the UNHCR refugee policy, are the target of the local integration policy. The Budumburam camp, thus presented a good location for the study.

Originally, the settlement was created on a 140-acre parcel of land to cater for 5,000 refugees. However, due to the continued fighting in Liberia, the refugee population in the settlement overflowed to nearby villages, including Kasoa, Awutu and Feeteh. From a population of around 41,000 in 2005, the camp has seen steady decreases in population size, recording around 11,000 in 2009 (Porter et al., 2008, p. 236).[31] This has been the result of past repatriation and resettlement programs, through which, some of these refugees have found a solution to their plights. The camp has also served as place of shelter for some Ivorian and Sierra Leonean refugees but the majority of the population remain Liberians (Agblorti, 2011).

---

[31] Also see http://www.unhcr.org/4c08f2339.html

3.2 Choice of Methodology

3.2.1 Qualitative Methods

Qualitative researchers are not interested in causal laws but in people's beliefs, experiences and meaning systems from the perspectives of the people.(Brink, 1993)

The study adopted a qualitative approach to research. According to Limb and Dwyer (2001, pp. 1,3), methodologies applied in qualitative research *"explore feelings, understandings and knowledge of others through various means. They also explore some of the complexities of everyday life in order to gain a deeper understanding into the processes that shape our social worlds."* This study seeks to understand how refugees are integrating in their host country from their own perspectives. In view of this, and for the reasons outlined, I believe the qualitative approach suited my research. In trying to understand how the refugees are becoming members of their adopted society, I sought an in-depth, intensive and inter-subjective approach rather than an extensive and a numerical one (Limb & Dwyer, 2001),.

The qualitative research process has variously been described as iterative, emergent, simultaneous and flexible (Crotty, 1998) . An important feature that characterizes much of qualitative research is the flexibility of its methods (Holliday, 2004, p. 723). Whereas it is not an easy act for the quantitative researcher to change his/her questionnaire, unless it has been completely questioned, a qualitative researcher in his/her interviews, will not see this as a problem. In the course of my research, this flexibility did not only guide my choice of informants, but also helped in identifying the appropriate methods to use. In the process, I reformulated my research problem and readjusted my objectives to reflect the realities in the field. I employed interviewing as the main method of enquiry. This was also supplemented with direct observation. My secondary data was sought from the existing literature on human displacement.

3.3 Informants

3.3.1 Informant Selection

The study targeted Liberian refugees, who have opted for the durable solution of local integration in Ghana. With the aim to obtain in-depth data from the refugees, the criteria for recruiting informants for the study was simple. Informants had to be 18 years and above. The snowballing technique served as a basis for selecting informants. Noy (2008, p. 330) notes that, this sampling technique involves the researcher accessing informants through other informants. Its main value

as a method, lies in dealing with the difficult problem of obtaining informants where they are few in number, or where higher levels of trust are required to initiate contact. Having no prior knowledge of any person in the study, I faced the challenge of identifying and recruiting informants for my study. Thus, the snowballing technique was appropriate as I identified other informants based on the information and help from my initial field acquaintances.

Gaining Access

In conducting research, an unexpected difficulty which may arise, is the researcher's ability to gain access to the field. Finding the right individuals to interview can be challenging for the researcher, especially when they are not connected to the study area. This task can be even more difficult if it is about the private lives of people (Johl & Renganathan, 2010, p. 42). In this study, where the focus was on ascertaining how refugees are integrating from their own perspectives, the issues discussed, to a large extent, involved private issues. It was more about how these people, as individuals, are personally negotiating their paths to be part of the larger society. In assessing such information, Wasserman and Clair (2007) opine that, it is important for the researcher to gain the trust and acceptance of informants. This facilitates their openness, which improve the depth and quality of the data collected. As Feldman et. al. (2004) note, in such situations, it is beneficial for researchers to use gatekeepers, whether as individuals or organizations, who can help recruit informants. Approaching the study area with this in mind, I went to the office of the UNHCR Ghana, where I hoped to get help in identifying some initial informants, and with their help, proceed to identify others in the field. This was done because, as the main facilitating agency of the integration program, it held records on the names and addresses of those refugees taking part in the program.

I was able to schedule an appointment with the Durable Solutions Officer at the office of the UNHCR in Accra. Upon sharing my study intentions with her, she agreed to grant me an interview about the program from the UNHCR's point. Further, she provided me with the phone numbers of five refugees, whom I could talk to about the program. I called each of the suggested persons, informing them about how I came by their numbers and asked if they could participate in the study. While four agreed to participate in the study, the other one was unreachable. I then proceeded to schedule different appointments to meet them individually at the camp.

I suspected that using the UNHCR might have influenced the initial four informants in accepting to participate. This, I realized later that, by coming with the UNHCR endorsement, they might have taken me for an official who could directly channel their views about the program to the agency. In clarifying this perceived misconception, I honestly identified myself as a Ghanaian student in Norway, who was only there to learn about and from them. Since Norway has also served as a resettlement country for some of the refugees on the camp, the knowledge that I was a student from this country might have heightened their views and raised their expectations to some extent. However, I made it clear that I was in no way linked to this, and their participation in the study was not going to earn them any material benefits. The only benefit I could provide was to contribute to the understanding of their integration process intellectually, and to policy formulation. Assuring them about the importance of their "knowledge" was very important. In the subsequent sessions with the other informants, I also took them through similar briefs about my study intentions, and what their participation entailed. This proved useful as it reflected in their attitude during interview sessions.

Before proceeding to the camp to meet the informants, I also went to the office of the Ghana Refugee Board for permission, which is a requirement if one sought to carry out fieldwork on the camp. I was also able to interview the director of the organization, from whom, I sought the organization's perspective as the government representative, in the integration program.

Feldman et. al. (2004) note that, researchers often make use of their acquaintances in the field to identify and gain access to informants. During my conversations with the initial four informants obtained from the UNHCR, one man who claimed to be a former welfare officer at the camp took keen interest in my work. It was through him that I identified and recruited the other nine informants. Taking into consideration that the issues were about the private lives of informants, there was the potential of informants' uneasiness during discussions. Thus, I saw the need to establish good rapport with participants as this would help in gaining their trust and encourage them to be forth coming with their views (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree, 2006, p. 316). In this regard, the help of this person whom, they themselves know and trust, vouching for my presence helped in achieving this end (Johl & Renganathan, 2010). Together with him, I approached and engaged other potential informants for the study.

Also, Miles and Crush (1993, p. 85) observe that, the interpersonal context of the interview, which includes power dimensions of age, sex, and class can significantly affect the content and nature of the information from research subjects. It is thus illusive for researchers to claim that they are objective and neutral collectors of facts. With a 'familiar' person taking on the mantle of introducing me to informants, I believe it helped reduce the power asymmetry that came with my status. The impression I got was that, most of the participants were comfortable and open in sharing their views about their integration.

However, identifying research participants was not overly a smooth process. Indeed, in many instances, the people I approached were not interested and declined to participate. I realized that, for most of them, their decision not to participate was borne out of the reason that, participating in such projects in the past, had not emanated any personal benefits. This could also be true on the part of those who agreed to participate. However, for such people, I believe their decisions might have been influenced by their friendship with my gatekeeper or out of the desire to be heard. In airing their views, they hoped that it may help bring an improvement or change in their efforts to be part of the Ghanaian society.

3.3.2 Informant Size

Prior to my fieldwork, I planned to interview between ten to fifteen informants. In the end, I settled on fourteen informants. Statistically, this number cannot provide a representative sample for a study that seeks to generalize findings. However, that is not the purpose of a qualitative study. As opined by Mason (2010), samples for qualitative studies are much smaller than those used in quantitative studies. This is because in such studies, it is not general opinions that are sought for. With the few number, it is easier to guarantee that differences between participants' views are not lost in generalizations. Further, the small number can be advantageous to the researcher, as it opens up space for analysis of the diversity and richness in the data collected. This served the aim of the study as I deemed it satisfactory, with regards to the depth of information obtained from informants.

Also, data saturation became evident towards the concluding stages of the fieldwork. This was the point where additional data did not necessarily provided any added information on the issue under investigation. A probable reason for this was that, in my research, I was investigating a homogeneous group that shared similar views and life experiences as refugees. As a result, for an

occurrence of ones experience in his/her efforts to be part of the society, it was potentially as useful as many, in understanding how the refugees in question are going about their integration (Ritchie, 2003).

3.4 Data Collection Techniques

3.4.1 Interviews

This study focuses on how Liberian refugees are integrating in Ghana with the aim to understand the process from the refugees' point of view. Robinson (1998, p. 122) argues that, "since integration is individualized, contested and contextual, it requires qualitative methodologies which allow the voices of participants to be heard in an unadulterated form." In this sense, interview presented the suitable method for data collection. According to Corbetta (2003, p. 264), this is a qualitative method used to attain deep knowledge and explanations about a phenomenon, from the perspective of the subject. Through direct one-to-one discussions between the researcher and subjects, interviews "give voice to common people, allowing them to freely present their life situations in their own words…" (Kvale, 2006, p. 481) . In other words for studies that seek to shed light on the perceptions, experiences and meanings of a phenomenon from a particular social group, interviews present an appropriate method. This method was therefore used to gather information about the integration process from informants.

Conducting Interviews

Interviews for the study were conducted in June and July 2014. Out interviews with fourteen informants, twelve served as the primary data (mainly from informant refugees). Eleven, were conducted at the Budumburam camp, while one was conducted at a nearby settlement called 'Big Apple'. The other two interviews, which form a part of the secondary data, were with one official each from the office of the UNHCR and the GRB in Accra. Each interview was held once, with the exception of one. This was the one with the official of the UNHCR, which was conducted on two occasions for clarity purposes. To capture as much detail as possible, field notes and tape recordings were also taken with the permission of all informants.

On a whole, officials from the agencies I interviewed, showed a great willingness to help me with information, and made ample time for discussions. Regarding informant refugees, majority of the interview sessions were carried out in their homes. Despite being a dispersed settlement with mixed elements of economic and domestic activities, the interviews conducted in informants'

houses offered a much quieter environment for discussions. Seven of these were conducted, with the other five taking place at the workplace (mostly small retail shops) of informants. At these workplaces, disturbances with music and people's activities, among others, frequently presented distractions to the interview process. Located in the market place of the camp, the shops environment buzzed with different activities. Interviews in this setting was also frequently disrupted, as informants sometimes had to take a break to attend to their customers. All these noise and disruptions could have affected the quality of the data collected. However, a fieldwork free of compromises is not always possible.

With the aim to explore the local integration program from the refugees' perspectives, interviews were not approached with a predetermined hypothesis. Longhurst (2003, p. 105) notes that, in such interviews, it is important to give participants the opportunity to talk freely about issues they consider important and relevant about the research topic. Bearing this in mind, the semi- structured interview format was adopted in gathering information from informants. This interview process is conducted in a conversational manner that allows informants to answer questions in their own words rather than a predefined 'yes' or 'no' answer Longhurst (2003). This approach, helped to open up the space for my informants to talk about issues they considered relevant (Bryman 2008, p. 438). It also served the purpose of preventing interviewees' obligation to tailor their response to my perceived expectations. As noted by Quinn (1980) such interviews aim at not planting ideas in a person's mind, but rather to access the perspective of the person.

Two semi structured interview guides (see appendix 1 and 2) were used during interviews. One set contained questions for my main respondents, and the other for officials from the UNHCR and the GRB. I checked and modified the interview guide, adding and deleting some questions as I moved from one discussion to the other, in order to obtain as much reliable information as possible.

Some few instances of misunderstanding occurred, which were quickly dealt with. One interview session was brought to an abrupt end, when a relative of the interviewee budged into the process, and demanded the interview to be stopped. His reason for the interruption was that, as it had been in the past, they were not going to benefit from the project in any way. Upon consulting the interviewee, we agreed to stop the interview immediately, as I didn't want the interviewee's participation in the project to affect his relationship with the relative in any way. As Scheyvens, Scheyvens, and Murray (2003) note, in carrying out research, it is important for the researcher to

ensure that the research does not harm participants. In another instance, an interviewee who initially did not want the voice recorded decided otherwise upon further explanations. These regardless, most interviews conducted were successful. I felt that my informants were comfortable and had the chance to express themselves freely and openly about their lives and the program.

3.4.2 Direct Observation

This is a method that provides the opportunity for researchers to observe directly what is happening in the social setting as they interact with participants (Pauly, 2010). As indicated by Patton (2005), direct observation provides insight into the aspects of everyday activities of research participants, that are taken for granted, but can contribute to the richness of field data. It gives the researcher direct experience of the phenomena being studied, and creates an opportunity to see and hear what is happening in a social setting, rather than focusing solely on narrative descriptions of participants. While in the field, I took the opportunity to observe my informants during my daily visits to the camp. Conducting interviews personally in the homes and work places of informants, afforded me the opportunity to observe informants' living arrangements and economic activities in the camp. This, I believe, helped me in gaining further insights into their activities and experiences.

3.5 Secondary Data

To supplement the primary data, information was gathered from various secondary sources. During my fieldwork, I hoped to obtain official documents about the integration program from the offices of the UNHCR and the Ghana Refugee Board. However, I was left disappointed as these documents were considered as internal documents and inaccessible to the general public. Nevertheless, as stated earlier, interviews with officials contributed to secondary information for the study. In addition, information from documents from UNHCR website, books and materials from internet sources have all been used to supplement the primary data. Taken together, information from these sources have yielded a pool of background information and the contextual understanding, needed to support the narratives of individuals.

3.6 Study Limitations

As noted by Patton (1990) "There are no perfect research designs." In effect, as part of every research, there exist inherent limitations. This study is also not immune from some limitations, which are acknowledged. The first limitation stems from the focus of the study. Instead of trying to understand local integration from a general point, which implies taking into consideration, the

views of all stakeholders, the study rather focuses on understanding the program mainly from the perspective of benefactors, in this case, refugees. Also, the study does not consider the views of refugees integrating, but rather, it is that of 'former' refugees which is taken into consideration in this context. Further, meaning into the program is not drawn from the views of all former refugees. Rather, this is done in the context of former Liberian refugees who reside in Ghana. As a result, there is also a limiting factor in the generalizability of the study since the interpretations about local integration from the views of informants is not representative of the views of all former refugees.

3.7 Field Reflections

In this section, I reflect upon my experiences, and how my role as a researcher influenced my field entry, informants' interactions and interpretation of field materials. Issues ranging from refugees' past experiences with researchers, gatekeeping, to efforts in ascertain the truth as a researcher are thence discussed.

3.7.1 Refugees Past Experiences with Researchers

A challenge I faced while in the field emanated from my status as a student researcher and how the refugees related to this status. As refugees, who have stayed in the camp for more than a decade, they were accustomed to being the subjects of various research projects. There had even been situations where journalists pose as researchers and extract information from them for their personal benefits (see Frontani, Silvestri, & Brown, 2009). As I realized in my encounters, many refugees had grown weary of such endeavors and were constantly suspicious of persons who came to seek their help as researchers. This situation also affected my fieldwork as I sought to recruit informants for the study.

In the view the refugees who refused to participate in the study, researchers only came to the place with promises of their works bringing positive effects in their (refugees) situations. However, this had not been the case since years after these works were completed, there had not been signs of any improvements as promised. As a result, they had lost interest in participating in these 'so called' studies. Others, who were bent on gaining something from their participation, demanded outright payment in exchange for their information. One person even went to the extent of quoting his price, (10 cedis) for the interview with the reason that, as student researchers, we only used them to get good grades in our studies to better our lives. Therefore, if he was going to help me

achieve that end, at least, that help should be reciprocated with payment. However, I could also not oblige to such demands, as it is unethical as a researcher to pay for information. [32]

Such refugees' past experiences even manifested among those that accepted to participate in the study. To satisfy their suspicions, my student identity card and permission letter to carry out research in the camp was not enough, as they queried me with further questions to verify my identity before participating. It must be noted here that in selecting informants for the study, all potential informants were told about the exact nature of the research, and the way in which their information was going to be used. They were clearly made aware of the objectives of the study and their participation was voluntary. In addition, informants were made to understand that they could withdraw from interviews at any point, and what they had said would not be used for the study.

Despite explaining to the refugees, my study objectives and the way I wanted to go about it, I believe the refusal of some to participate, due to their past experiences, affected the number of informants used for the study. I acknowledge that, perhaps, their participation could have further enriched the study given the uniqueness of every refugees' experience. Nevertheless, I consider the information attained rich enough to capture the views of the refugees about their integration process.

3.7.2 Gatekeeper and Professional Stranger Handler Influence

As a researcher going into an unfamiliar study area, the use of gatekeepers was key to identifying and recruiting informants. However, this could also prove detrimental to the quality of the study. As much as gatekeepers can positively affect research with their help in gaining access, they also pose potential threat of negatively by limiting access to information (Reeves, 2010, pp. 318-319). In my case, where the office of the UNHCR was used as a crucial gatekeeper to identify informants, I stood the risk of the agency deliberately selecting informants who would address my curiosity in ways that will serve their (UNHCR) course. This could have happened in the situation where, these respondents were selected just to confirm the outfit's position on the integration program during my discussions with them. This, if it happened, would not have been a true

---

[32] http://www.uk.sagepub.com/upm-data/27011_4.pdf

reflection of the study as the focus was on the 'independent' views from recipient refugees about the program.

Bearing this in mind, I had to check and ensure this will not happen. In doing this, I adopted different question sequencing (asking questions in different ways) in order to check that, informants answers to my questions were not in a streamlined order and thus free from such potential influence. As I realized during discussions with these informants, most of their views about the integration program stood in contrast to that provided by the officials. As such, I was convinced that this process was free from such a disadvantage from the use of gatekeepers.

Another threat that emanated indirectly through this process, was the potential influence from a professional stranger handler. According to DeWalt and DeWalt (2010, p. 44), these are individuals who are delegated or delegate themselves to check the new person in the midst of a social group. This is done with the intention to limit the new person's access to information, and to situations that might pose a threat to his/her interest or that of the social group. As I pointed out earlier, one of the informants I recruited through the UNHCR's help, took a key interest in my work. During my visits to the camp he took time off to show me around, and helped me establish links with other persons; the professional stranger handler in my situation. In trying to influence my access to data, this person could have taken me to persons who would answer my questions in ways that satisfy his interest for whatever that may be. Bearing this in mind, I yet again constantly checked this influence with different sequencing of my questions with informants.

Furthermore, in conducting interviews, which involved delving into the private issues of informants, I had to respect the private space of respondents. In small communities like the study area, there is always the potential for information about inhabitants to circulate quickly. This, if it occurred as a result of the research, could not have spoken well of the work. As a researcher, I was at a reduced risk of being the cause of this information dissemination, since I was there for a limited period, and was committed to ensuring the confidentiality of information obtained. However, the presence of my stranger handler posed a threat to ensuring informants' privacy. My presumption was that, if this person was present and could listen in to interview sessions, the information about informants could be passed on to other people in the camp through him. To prevent this from happening, every time he helped to get someone aboard the interview process, I asked him to excuse us, so that discussion could be held between the informant and me alone. I realized that,

this also gave the interviewees space to share their private issues concerning the program, which in the presence of others might not have been attained. In one instance for example, I realized an informant was uncomfortable when I asked about how she was using the money from the integration package due to the presence of my friend. Yet, when he moved away, she was forth coming about her use of the money.

Despite the potential of this person influencing the quality of my work negatively, he rather proved helpful to my research. Without his help, it would have been much difficult in gaining access to many informants. With his help, some people agreed to grant interviews. However, not all his efforts were successful as others declined to participate. These scenarios further buttress the point that, he did not hold any negative intentions with his help. For if he intended to, perhaps there would not have been declines from some people, as he would have done a careful selection, and even spoken to them prior to my coming in for interviews. Rather, his help was open because we approached most people together from where he proceeded to ask for their help in my presence. Overall my professional stranger handler proved helpful in my gaining access to informants and information in the field.

3.7.3 The Truth

Despite the willingness of my informants to participate, there was also a challenge in assessing the 'truth' about the information they gave. While conducting interviews, I realized in some cases that, the information informants provided contradicted and were not always accurate. I must admit that, this was also not helped by my discussions with UNHCR official before going into the field, since it had given me some foresight into the integration program. I proceed to highlight on some few points in situations where I suspected the information of refugees to be untruthful.

First, I found it quite surprising that most of the interviewees admitted to having some friends and relatives abroad but only one informant admitted to receiving remittances from such people. While this may be a coincidence, studies have shown that remittances from friends and family members abroad formed the main driving force behind the refugee economy in the camp (Dick, 2002)[33]. Thus, I found this quite difficult to understand why, many informants who admitted to knowing or

---

[33] Also see http://www.scoop.co.nz/stories/WL0410/S00490/cablegate-a-visit-to-ghanas-budumburam-refugee-camp.htm

having relatives abroad, did not cite receiving some form of support by this means.[34] Some informants even sworn to not receiving such support when I probed further.

The second issue relates to the amount of money given to the refugees as part of the integration package. During interviews I realized the amounts quoted varied across informants. While some confirmed the cash figures I got from the UNHCR official, others' were different. These observations confirm Cindy Horst (2001b, p. 13) point that refugees present themselves as vulnerable. Through such experiences, I realized that, in ascertaining the truth behind people's accounts, it is difficult to hold a neutral position and remain completely open to what they tell you. This is especially true in the case of refugees who are always viewed with suspicion that they complain, lie and are constantly in search of assistance (Cindy Horst, 2001b).

However, Holliday (2007, p. 10) reminds us that, as researchers, we cannot put our thoughts above that of the people we study. Ambiguity in the statements of participants of a study might merely reflect the existing contradictions in their world. Yet, this must not be a sign of a person's insignificance (Kvale, 1996, p.31). As a researcher, having a critical perspective does not imply evaluating or judging the stories of one's study subjects. Indeed, good qualitative research becomes impossible if a researcher cannot trust his/her informants. I acknowledge the fact that I am not in the position to ascertain the truthfulness of the information provided by my informants. While contradictions may render their accounts incomplete, as a researcher, my task is to reflect upon and present them as they are.

3.8 Summary

In this chapter I have highlighted on the methodological framework of the study. Data for the study was sought from informants living at the Budumburam refugee camp. In seeking the perspectives of refugees about their integration process, the qualitative approach was adopted by which interviews and direct observation served as the data collection methods. Overall, fourteen interviews were conducted using the semi-structured interview format. Out of this number, twelve served as the main source of primary data. The other two, in addition to information on displacement from books and internet sources, served as the source of secondary data for the study. The snowballing technique was used to identify informants for the study. Accessing informants

---

[34] This was also confirmed during the interview with the UNHCR official

through the information and help of other informants proved beneficial as it facilitated good rapport and trust with informants. However, it also presented challenges in gatekeeper and professional stranger handler influences, which constantly had to be checked against while in the field. Also, refugees' past experiences with researchers may have influenced the number of informants, and richness of the study. Nevertheless, the overall information attained was considered rich enough to capture the views of the Liberian refugees on their local integration process.

Chapter 4. Conceptual Approach

This chapter attempts a conceptual approach to the study. It specifically discusses the concepts of integration, social integration, cultural integration, economic integration and the theory of agency. Taken together, these concepts will help highlight the type of resources, which the refugees mobilize in their quest to be active members of the Ghanaian society.

4.1 Integration

In the context of the study, the concept of integration is viewed as a way of bringing diverse people together to be included in a society. It broadly deals with issues of social cohesion, that is, how a group or an individual can be part of the social, political and economic spheres of a society (see Kuhlman, 1990). The concept "integration" is derived from the Latin word 'Integer', which means untouched or whole (Maagero & Simonsen 2005, p.147). Kathleen Valtonen (2012) in defining integration as a goal oriented dimension of settlement underscores the point that, migrants in seeking to be part of a new society, look forward to full participation in the economic, social, cultural and political life of that society. This process goes hand in hand with impacts on their culture and identity. Integration therefore is the active participation of the migrants in the political, economic and social life of the mainstream society of a host country. As part of the process, it is important that institutions of the host country are accessible for all members of the society and the process for admittance of new members is flexible.

For the purpose of this study, Harrell-Bond (2000) provides a useful definition of integration as "a situation in which host and refugee communities are able to co-exist, sharing the same resources (both economic and social) with no greater mutual conflict than that which exists within the host community".[35] Kuhlman (1990, p. 8) adds to this definition when he outlines some indices that can be used to measure refugee integration in their host communities. Among others, he identifies the following characteristics of successful integration:

• the socio-cultural change they undergo permits them to maintain an identity of their own and to adjust psychologically to their new situation

• friction between host populations and refugees is not worse than within the host population itself

---

[35] Quoted in Dryden-Peterson, S., & Hovil, L. (2004). A remaining hope for durable solutions: Local integration of refugees and their hosts in the case of Uganda. Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees, 22(1).p. 3

• refugees do not encounter more discrimination than exists between groups previously settled within the host society.

The social, cultural and economic factors embodied in these definitions are important to the examination of successful integration of refugees. Refugees upon their arrival and stay in host countries, may face several challenges in their efforts to be active members of their host communities. They usually have special needs and face particular challenges when it comes to integration, because of their past experiences of persecution, flight and exile (UNHCR, 2009, p. 8). By virtue of their circumstance and structural constraints in asylum countries, refugees on one hand, may face limited access to work, education, vocational training or accommodation outside collective centers in the country of asylum' (ibid.). They might have had their education interrupted or might be unable to provide documentary proof of academic qualifications, employment skills or past work experience. Indeed some of these challenges are true in the case of Liberian refugees in Ghana who in the years during their stay in Ghana faced difficulties in accessing the job market, education , healthcare, housing, among others (see Porter et al., 2008).

On the other hand, many refugee hosting countries in Africa are themselves plagued with poverty. This is characterized usually by lack of resources and infrastructure for social services and difficulties in accessing markets (Dryden-Peterson & Hovil, 2004, p. 4). In this respect, Kibreab (1989, p. 473) poses the question that; how can these countries be able or expected to establish policies, legal frameworks and institutions that would allow the absorption of thousands of refugees into their societies permanently? He argues further that most African host countries cannot be expected to carry this burden. In local integration presenting a durable solution, it offers a coordinated effort by all parties involved in addressing such obstacles and mobilizing resources to help refugees integrate successfully in their host countries.[36] Talcott Parsons (1978) has divided integration into economic, social, and cultural aspects.

4.1.1 Social Integration
 As suggested by Robinson (1998), ''social integration'' is a chaotic concept, used by many but understood differently by most. In a broad sense, it refers to elements in a social system. The term

---

[36] See http://www.unhcr.org/4357a91b2.html

social system is used to describe a relatively stable order that establishes a link between itself and its environment (Rainer Strobl quoted in Ritzer George 2007, p. 4429). In this light, organizations, groups and even states constitute examples of social system. Social integration then, connotes the relationship that exist between people and how these relations are organised and harmonised in the social system. According to Angell (1968) "social integration" has been defined in sociology as "the fitting together of all parts to constitute the whole society".[37] This definition suggests, there is a required unification of relations between all members of a society which includes members of the mainstream society as well as immigrant groups. This is done in order to form common interests with the aim of promoting equality at all levels of society.

The social integration concept has been used to understand both social structure and individual behaviour. On the individual level, social integration is defined as structural or affective interconnectedness with others and with social institutions. 'It encompasses patterns of social interaction, participation and attitudes regarding institutions and relationships' (Voydanoff, 2004, p. 279). The structural component of social integration incorporates a behavioural approach, in which, individuals participate in formal organizations and social relationship for example, formal volunteering and spending time with neighbours and friends. Refugees in this sense, upon their arrival in countries of asylum feel strange and alienated from the people and environment. Therefore, they lack effective social relationships with formal and informal social institutions in their new environment. As a result, they are increasingly in need of comprehensive care particularly in terms of social protection in the forms of social welfare to ensure a minimum level of physical and financial security. This is manifested in aid intervention that they are met with upon their arrival in host countries.

While such assistance may facilitate the social integration of some refugees, the diverse needs as compared to the adequacies in their support, hinder others effective integration, as they may suffer from several socio-cultural disadvantages. As noted by Parekh (2005) they may even be liable to discrimination and negative stereotyping from the host population. In facilitating their social integration, local integration, as a two way process places responsibilities both on the host country

---

[37] Quoted in Hosseini-Kaladjahi, H. (1997). Iranians in Sweden: Economic, cultural and social integration. P. 116

and refugees.[38] On the part of refugees, they are required to adapt to the local environment, respecting cultural practice values and norms of host societies. Host societies on the other hand are required to accept refugees into their socio-economic fabric with both processes underpinned by values of diversity, non-discrimination and tolerance.[39] This is set out as the goal in the social dimension of the local integration policy, which encourages host states to promote and implement anti-discrimination policies, and awareness raising activities that embrace all, including refugee groups in the host country.[40]

Social integration on a whole, involves all the aspects of the social life. Societies with high levels of social integration of its members create values and ethics that accept diversity, and enhance values of freedom, security and democracy.[41] For refugees, it is not successful if they work on one hand, but lead parallel lives, with little social contact or civic engagement in the larger community on the other hand (Spencer, 2003, p. 7). As such, refugees must feel they are active members of the community if they deem themselves integrated. While recognizing that complete social integration of diverse groups is unlikely to happen, it is an essential aspect of migrants complete integration into new societies, and remains an ongoing task (UN, 2007).

4.1.2 Economic Integration

In the studies of economic integration of refugees in new societies, two broad approaches can be distinguished (Hosseini-Kaladjahi, 1997, p. 18). The first approach involves evaluating refugees' integration, by comparing the general correspondence between their last occupations in the country of origin, and their present occupations in the new country. With this approach, refugees are economically integrated if their occupations in host countries is at par with the last occupations they held in their home countries. With the second approach, an immigrant is considered to be economically integrated, if s/he enjoys the same socio-economic status and economic standard of living as generally enjoyed by the local population of the host country (Hosseini-Kaladjahi, 1997, p. 19).

---

[38] http://www.unhcr.org/4357a91b2.html
[39] Ibid.
[40] See article two of 1951 refugee convention at: http://www.unhcr.org/4ca34be29.pdf
[41] http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/sib/inclusive_society/summary.html

Regarding employment of refugees in asylum countries, integration is technically defined to be achieved when their employment levels are similar to those of nationals (ECRE, 2005, p. 29). This definition conforms to the standard of equity in terms of rights and opportunities for all. This is because, in societies with such standards, people are distinguished by their individual traits and qualities rather than their association with specific groups. It ensures equal rights and opportunities for all, regardless who a person is, or where they come from. By this means, equitable distribution of resources is also maintained between locals and refugees in host countries. Refugee employment is important and forms a key part of their economic integration because it helps them establish secure livelihoods for themselves. With these livelihoods, they also contribute to the economies of host countries (UNHCR, 2009). However, various obstacles faced in their accessing the economic markets of host countries leads to difficulties in achieving this end.

Like the situation of Liberians in Ghana, many refugees are not able to access the economic markets in their host countries, which may be due to factors like host states' policy restrictions to their employment, lack of skills, discrimination and absence relevant documentation for jobs (see Rutinwa, 2002). However, upon their decisions to be locally integrated, they hope that such a policy will put measures in place that will facilitate their economic integration. Indeed the economic dimension of local integration aims at addressing the challenges refugees face in this aspect with the promotion of their self-sufficiency, top of the agenda.[42] This is because in situations where individual refugees, their households and communities are increasingly empowered to become self-reliant, they attain better livelihoods for themselves, which also benefits the society as a whole.

To achieve this end in local integration policies, refugees are given civil, economic and social rights that can facilitate their economic integration. Furthermore, skills training and education are offered to refugees to equip them to seize economic opportunities in their adopted societies. Just as nationals, refugees are by these means, able to seek to employments similar or even higher than the ones they formerly held in their own countries. The achievement of this ensures the integration of these groups in terms of profession in their new societies (Hosseini-Kaladjahi, 1997). However,

---

[42] Ibid. 39

as much as refugees' economic integration is a desirable end, it is also a work in progress (UNHCR, 2009).

4.1.3 Cultural Integration

Culture refers to language, traditions, and material creations of people and dynamic change (Dirks, Eley and Ortner, 1994; Haig-Brown, 1995).[43] Culture by this definition, comprises beliefs, values, norms of conduct, as well as, the artefacts created by these skills and values of people, transmitted from one generation to the other. Every human society has its model of culture, which is dynamic, and it can change overtime. It can also adapt to a new social reality or diversity. In the social sciences the dominant perspectives on cultural integration are the theory of acculturation, assimilation and multiculturalism (Algan, 2012).

The concept acculturation is used to describe change in culture which "results from direct contact between two different cultural groups or the acquisition of cultural traits of one group by the other" (Hosseini-Kaladjahi, 1997, p. 75). According to Redfield et al. (1936), acculturation occurs when individuals from different groups with different cultures come into continuous contact, and as a result, changes in original patterns of cultures occurs in either group or both. In the context of refugees, acculturation can be seen as the change in their cultural patterns to those of the host society (Gordon, 1964).[44] The concept assimilation is sometimes used in the context of acculturation, but assimilation which is a form cultural change, is to be distinguished from acculturation.

Assimilation implies that, individuals or specific groups(mostly minorities) become an indistinguishable part of the mainstream society (Eisenstadt, 1954). For refugees, this can be said to have occurred when their social and cultural identity end or diminish to the extent that, they are absorbed both politically and economically by that of the host society. It must be noted that the concept assimilation, as used in the 1951 UN refugee convention is not implied in the integration of refugees in asylum countries. To quote Crisp (2004, p. 2), "the international community has

---

[43] Quoted by Harvey (2001) in Kabuya, K. (2008). Social integration of Congolese refugees in a town in Southern Norway. P. 8
[44] Quoted in Hosseini-Kaladjahi, H. (1997). Iranians in Sweden: Economic, Cultural and Social Integration. P.76

always rejected the notion that refugees should be required or expected to abandon their own culture, so as to become indistinguishable from members of the host community". With local integration, the term 'integration' is a much more preferred term to assimilation as it lays the foundation for refugees to become part of the host society (Costa, 2006, p. 24). At the same time, they are expected to maintain their own identity to the extent that, both the host population and refugees can live together in a way considered acceptable. .

The concept 'multiculturalism' refers to societies, which are made up of heterogeneous collection of ethnic and racial minority groups, and a dominant majority group. In such societies, immigrants actively shape their own identities rather than being assimilated into the host population culture (Glaser & Moynihan, 1970; Handlin, 1973). In addition, the cultural characteristics of immigrants are preserved in their co-existence with that of host countries. Multicultural societies, by this virtue, presents members of ethnic minority groups as active and integral segments of the whole society, rather than just foreigners or outsiders (Algan, 2012, p. 5). In an integrated society, diversity and multiculturalism are viewed as positive and stimulating for people who seek to be part of the society (Maagerø & Simonsen, 2005). Members of such societies have different cultures, values and norms. The mutual respect for the different norms and values of people ensures peaceful co-existence and growth of society (see Minow, 2002). On the other hand, disrespect for diversities in society can cause tensions and conflicts among members of a society.

A typical example of such situation is given in the case of Liberian refugees in Ghana whose disrespect for community's norms and practices has generated tensions and hostile attitude against them from the Ghanaian host population (see Hardgrove, 2009). Just like other migrants, refugees enter their host communities with their unique cultural values and norms. In their integration, they are expected to respect the practices and norms of their host society, at the same time preserving theirs. While they are not expected to be completely assimilated into the mainstream society, they are expected to grasp some aspects of the dominant culture in order to facilitate their successful integration (Maagerø & Simonsen, 2005, p. 146).

One important aspect of culture, which is language, comes to the fore. As noted by the UNHCR, the knowledge of language of asylum countries is important for refugees, if they are to experience

a successful integration process. It is also a means by which refugees gain a sense of security, dignity and self-worth (UNHCR, 2009). A number of factors, however, can affect refugees' ability to learn the language and culture of host countries. These include, refugees' educational background, age, gender, physical and mental health (ibid., p. 28). Local integration policy in addressing such obstacles to refugees' cultural integration, provides language training and cultural orientation programs to facilitate their cultural integration.

4.2 Agency

The concept of agency is central to the social actor paradigm and forms the fulcrum of discussions aimed at reconciling notions of 'structure' and 'actor' (Long & Long, 1992). It broadly refers to the individual actor and their capacity to process social experiences, by devising ways of coping, even within difficult structural constraints. It is constructed differently in different contexts (Eisenhardt, 1989, p. 57) .

Drawing from Gidden's structuration theory, some important concepts in discussing the role of refugees as active agents or actors become relevant. In this theory, he introduces the concept of human agency. This recognizes that, human beings are social actors, who act with purpose, knowing what and why they undertake specific actions. At the same time, the actions of individuals, which are set in social contexts, stretch away from their activities but causally influence their nature (Giddens, 1984). The theory acknowledges the fact that, structures within which individuals act are very much influenced, that is, created and re-created by the actions and behavior of the people themselves. In effect, social structures are dead without actors (Giddens, 1979). As agents, human beings are not mere puppets, who act to the dictates of their circumstances and structures in place. Rather, they are both conscious and unconscious social actors who transform the empirical world. In the environment of uncertainty and other constraints, social actors are nevertheless "knowledgeable" and "enabled" (Long & Long, 1992; Sewell Jr, 1992). Even within severely restricted social space, they are capable of innovating, making decisions and acting upon them. This is otherwise referred to as coping strategies (Corbett, 1988).

Also, it is an essential feature of action that, the agent at any point in time, can choose to act otherwise, that is, either positively in terms of attempted intervention in the process of events in the world, or negatively in terms of self-restraint. Therefore, they make efforts to solve problems,

intervene in the flow of social events around them, and continuously observe their own actions, and how others react to their behavior (Giddens, 1984). As asserted by Long and Long (1992), caution must however be taken, to restrict our use of the term "social actor" to refer to only those social entities that can meaningfully be attributed with the power of agency. In the context of this study, refugees fit the idea of social actors, especially in respect of how they have coped after their displacement and subsequent integration.

Structural theorists often, emphasize the role of structure, that is, individuals actions being resigned to the dictates of social, economic and political events or forces (see Allport, 1955). However it must be acknowledged that, while structures can entrap individuals or agents, constraining and directing their actions, they can also enable them as these agents reproduce social rules (Bakewell, 2010, p. 8). This regardless, the role of agency is worth considering as a conceptual base, that captures the wider processes and social settings within which forced migrants such as refugees are situated (Shanmugaratnam, Lund, & Stölen, 2003).

The common assumption for refugees is that, they are vulnerable and constantly in need of aid (Cindy Horst, 2001a, p. 13). Contrary to this view, Vincet and Sorenson (2001) point that, they are not all poor and resourceless persons, who only think of their present means of survival. Some are equipped with skills, plan and work for a better future despite their deplorable circumstances. In the case of Liberian refugees in Ghana, a lot of the literature about life on the Budumburam camp seem to support this position (see Dick 2002). Liberian refugees have faced many socio-cultural, economic and political constraints in trying to survive. Shelly Dick however, stresses that, they have exhibited that, "they are capable, enterprising and industrious, adapting survival strategies and adjusting to changing circumstances in order to maximize opportunities available to them" (p.1). This suggests resourcefulness rather than resignation among the refugees. Such enterprise in survival has also been exhibited in their decisions for durable solution policies offered them over the course of their stay in Ghana. As a durable solution, local integration can be regarded as a structural policy, which can enable or constrain refugees as human agents. Drawing from the perspectives of refugees, this study examines how such a policy is enabling or constraining refugees as they work and plan for better futures. However, the main emphasis is on how the refugees mediate these structures in dealing with their situation.

As social actors, individual refugees have goals and aspirations, which inform their choice of durable solution policies. Despite the acknowledgement in the deficiencies and insufficiencies in these policies in meeting their needs[45], they nevertheless opt for them. Being conscious agents, they device alternative strategies along with what the solutions may present to pursue their goals. In some circles, these durable solution measures are in themselves survival strategies for refugees (see Omata 2011). Local integration in this case, present similar tendencies, which Liberian refugees have chosen. Rather than giving up, they hope to make use of the policy to their benefit in the pursuit of their goals.

In this light, Shanmugaratnam et al. (2003) notes that displaced persons can be victims, as well as, agents of change. While the effect of refugee interventionist policy like local integration in the life of refugees cannot be underestimated, agency and creativity, rather than structure and resignation, would more accurately capture the ways in which refugees often go about their lives. Therefore, in spite of the desire to assist refugees who are for the most times considered helpless and vulnerable, they often reveal an extraordinary ability to face difficult situations and make use of opportunities, if and when they can (Shanmugaratnam et al., 2003). I also subscribe to the notion that refugees are not losers, but are resourceful, and if given the right assistance, can become active members of a society.

4.3 Summary

This chapter has outlined the conceptual approach of the study. In the effort to understand and explain how former Liberian refugees are integrating in the Ghanaian society, the concepts of social, cultural and economic integration theories were reviewed. This is because as a policy solution to refugee situations, social, economic and cultural integration are important for the successful local integration of refugees in their host countries, as clearly outlined in the policy objectives.[46]

Furthermore, the concept of agency was adopted to identify and understand the type of resources that, the refugees in question have mobilized to realize their objectives as they rebuild their lives in their new society. In this regard, the refugees come across as innovative and resourceful social agents, who in the face of difficulties and structural constraints, find alternative means of coping

---

[45] http://www.unhcr.org/4444afcc0.pdf
[46] See ibid. 39

with life. Local integration as a refugee policy ideally aims at ensuring the successful integration of refugees. However, like other durable solutions, it presents deficiencies in advancing the refugee course. Nevertheless, it is implemented, and refugees in the face of policy deficiencies have to device alternative ways to pursue their goals as members of the society. This is because at the end of the day, they must survive, and if being part of their host community is what it takes to ensure this, then they must find ways in addition to what the policy presents and move on with their lives. The interplay between these theories and empirical data is further examined in the next chapter.

Chapter 5. Data Presentation and Analysis

In this chapter, I present and discuss the data returns from the field. I focus on informants' background information such as their age, gender and length of stay in Ghana. In addition, their educational background, civil status and number of dependents are assessed. These are factors that are likely to affect refugees' decision making vis-à-vis local integration. To better understand the impact of the integration program, I tap into the refugees' reflections and experiences about how they are negotiating their paths to integration. This is also done in order to highlight the diverse ways in which refugees exercise agency to earn a living, and meet their gendered responsibilities to maintain dignity.

5.1 Background of informants

5.1.1 Age

As stated earlier, a total of 12 informants, including 4 females and 8 males, were interviewed for the study. According to Johnson (1997), the productive age of individuals is considered to be between 15 and 49 years. For refugees, who have to stay in exile during this period of their lives, this has implications for their social and economic lives. Those who have spent most of their productive years in exile may have established social and economic ties in asylum countries. This can also mean the loss of such ties in their home countries. Combined, these factors, among others, are important as they have bearings on the kind of paths refugees take to survive. They can influence their decisions as they seek opportunities in moving on with their lives. Similarly, for Liberian refugees who decided to integrate, the presence of social and economic ties or absence by virtue of their productive years spent in Ghana, might have influenced their decisions for such a policy. This therefore makes the age of informants worthy of assessment.

The age of respondents was between 29 and 54 years. From the data returns, 8% of informants were aged between 20-29 years, with 42% falling between the ages of 30-39. Informants between the ages of 40-49 constituted 17%, while 33% were aged between 50-59 years.

It can be seen that there were fewer informants in the age group of 20-29 years. This might be due to the fact that people in this age group are more mobile and are likely to seek opportunities to fend for themselves outside the settlement (Harrell-Bond, et. al., 1992). As affirmed by Fall (1998), migrants' mobility start to decline from the age of 34 years. This, also attest to the reason why

most interviewees in the camp were between 34 and 52 years. Furthermore, informants had spent substantive part of their productive lives in the host country, which could have consequences for their survival if they decided to leave or stay as stated earlier.

5.1.2 Civil Status, Number of Dependents and Living Arrangements

All interviewees were residents in the refugee camp with the exception of one, who lived at a nearby village. Of the 12 informants, 50% were married, while 42% were single. One informant was divorced. The dependents of informants were mainly their children and those of relatives and friends who had passed on. Out of the total research population, 10 had children whose number ranged between 1 and 4. The others did not have any child responsibility.

It is observed that informants who were either married or single with children stayed with them to constitute a household. As noted by the UNHCR (2009), the presence of family for refugees is deemed important because, members can help reinforce their social and economic support system. The following narrations from informants exemplify the support they received from family members:

When I am sick, the eldest among my children stays home on school days to take care of me. (R.T)

My children help me in the farm on the days that they don't go to school. They also help me sell the leaves and pepper in the market after harvest. (L.S)

This data supports Moser (1998) argument about the family serving as an asset, because it is a source of human capital. With the kind of support systems provided by family members, the data also support the notion that, family proximity inform refugees decision to remain in asylum countries when faced with the option of return (see Jacobsen, 2001).

5.1.3 Educational Background and Occupation of Respondents

Education is critical to preparing refugees for successful and active participation in the societies they live (UNHCR, 2009). This is because it plays a role in developing their skills for employment. It also helps reintroduce a sense of normalcy and routine in refugees' lives, thereby, facilitating their active participation in the socio-economic activities of their host countries. Therefore, the level of education attained by informant refugees can have an important bearing on their decision to be part of the Ghanaian society or not.

The data returns revealed that, 25% of informants had received basic education[47]. Majority, constituting 67% had attained education up to the high school level[48], with 8% percent making up those with tertiary education[49]. In addition to the active school education received, 7 informants had received some form of vocational training including, sewing, baking, carpentry, and beauty care in the past, while on the camp. The skills attained through vocational training constituted the means of economic activities engaged by informants. Other income generating activities of informants included farming and retail shop business. The informant with tertiary qualification worked as a teacher on part time basis, and also farmed with his knowledge in animal husbandry.

In sum, it is observed that, the level of education of informants had an influence on their occupations. They worked in the informal sector, which does not require extensive formal education. Also, informants for the most times, indulged in multiple income generating activities, as single jobs were not enough to generate sustainable income to meet their needs. This data trend falls in line with Jacobson (2005) studies of economic life of refugees, which situates their income generating activities, mostly in the informal sector of asylum countries. It further support studies that have shown that, refugees even when equipped with skills to access the job market in asylum countries, have to contend with meagre activities in the informal sector to survive (see Kawar, 2014).

Table 1 below gives a summary of the background information of informants. With the commitment to protect the identities and privacy of informants' in the use of information, aliases have been used instead of their real names. As noted by Serva and Pearlson (1998), the obligation to protect the anonymity of research participants, and keep research data confidential is all-inclusive. This should be fulfilled at all costs unless arrangements to the contrary are made with the participants in advance.

---

[47]Basic Education in Ghana is the minimum period of schooling for one to acquire basic literacy, numeracy and problem solving skills. It lasts for a period of 11 years starting from Kindergarten(grade 1 and 2) to Primary school(grade 3-6) and ends at the Junior High School (JHS) (grade 9-11), with a Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE). (Ghana Education service)

[48] The Senior high school (SHS) proceeds the (JHS) and its curriculum lasts 3 years. It ends with a final exam called the West African Senior School Certificate Examination (WASSCE).

[49] Tertiary education in Ghana proceed the SHS and comprises full degree studies (4 years) taken at the university level or diploma education (3years) at from the polytechnics. Also included in the retiary category are Colleges of Education that offer diplomas in specialized fields including agriculture colleges, Nursing and teacher training colleges.

Table 1. Background Information of Respondents

Informant	Age	Sex(M/F)	Educational background	Occupation	Years of Stay	Marital Status	Number of children
A.A	53	M	High school	Social worker, tour guide	24	Single	4
C. J.	54	M	Tertiary	Teacher, Farmer	18	Single	-
A.B	29	F	Basic Education	Seamstress, baker/Hair braider	19	Single	2
A.J	40	M	High school	Computer software/unemployed	18	Single (Divorced)	4
M.A	32	M	High school	Orange and pineapple seller, fisherman	18	Married	3
Y.A	36	F	Basic Education	Eggs / call credit seller	24	Single	1
P. L	35	M	High school	Electrician, grocery shop owner/operator	9	Married	-
S. M	52	M	High school	Photographer, plumber	23	Married	4
P. R	46	M	High school	carpenter, retail shop owner/operator	24	Married	3
L.S	52	M	High school	Farmer	24	Married	3
R.T	34	F	High school	baker, trader, hair braider	11	Married	4
O. A	34	F	Basic Education	Beauty care, retail shop owner/ operator	24	Single	3

Source: Fieldwork 2014

5.2 Reasons for Local Integration

In their choice of local integration, refugees' decisions may be guided by various factors. As noted by Crisp (2003, pp. 3-4) such factors may include security and the development of social and economic ties in asylum countries. Personal circumstances may also influence refugees' decisions to stay in their host countries. As conscious actors, such decisions are guided by reasons deemed primarily important to the individual decision maker. Liberian refugees who have decided to stay in Ghana are not immune to these issues. As one informant narrated:

Every Liberian who chose local integration, has a good reason for taking that decision, despite the opportunity to go back to Liberia. Of course, there is no place like home, but they all must have good reasons for staying here. Nobody will just want to stay somewhere that they don't see anything good about the place. So for me anybody who chose integration has a good reason for that decision, it's very important. (R.T)

Against this backdrop I proceed to highlight on the reasons behind refugees' decisions to stay in Ghana. On a whole informants cited security, social and economic issues as informing factors to their stay. Table 2 below, gives a summary of the issues raised by informants for opting for local integration.

Table 2. Respondents Reasons for Local Integration

Informant	Category of Reasons
A.A	Physical security
C.J	Economic security
A.B	Physical security/Severed ties with home country
A.J	Physical security/ Social networks in host country
M.A	Severed ties with home country
Y.A	Severed ties with home country
P.L	Social networks in host country
S.M	Physical security
P.R	Economic security
L.S	Physical security
R.T	Economic security/Social networks
O.A	Economic/Severed ties with home country

Source: Fieldwork 2014

5.2 Security

5.2.1 Physical Security and Safety

The issue of security lies at the core of refugee movement as they seek to safeguard their lives.[50] As illustrated earlier, for Liberian refugees in Ghana, while going home has remained an option to consider after the declaration of peace in their country, many remained in Ghana. Studies have shown that, one issue that has informed the refugees' continuous stay in Ghana, is the security risk of returning (see Dick, 2002). Among the security issues raised by refugees for not returning in the past, is the fear of persecution upon return to their home countries, and the risk of other forms of harassment and discrimination by virtue of their backgrounds.

In the current study, these issues also reflected in the views of the refugees who considered return to their country as not a viable option. Prominent among the reasons cited by informants' decisions to stay in Ghana, was the fear of return, emanating from man hunting agendas perpetrated by people who were offended by their relatives during the war. They contended that the activities and positions held by their relatives during the war placed their lives under threat of retribution attacks from their enemies. These threats forced their exile and even after the war, and the subsequent declaration of peace in Liberia, such elements were still in place. Thus, they would pose a threat to their wellbeing if they returned. Coupled with this, was the trauma encountered during and after the war which increased the refugees' doubt about the safety of return. Relating her fears and experiences, one informant said:

We had to run away to Ghana because, because my mother was an army woman and my father was also pay master in the army, so our lives was under threat. I decided to stay because their enemies will still hunt us if I go back to Liberia. (A.B)

Another informant also said the following:

I chose local integration because I fear for my life. My older brother was in the army before, and his actions in the war has led to man hunting of his family members by the people he offended. Even though he is dead now, I heard that his son had been killed. Because of this, and for my own security and that of my children, I decided to stay in Ghana so they can go to school and be safe. (A.A)

---

[50] http://www.unhcr.org/4444afc80.pdf

5.2.2. Economic Security

As much as the physical safety is important for refugees when making decisions about their lives, their economic security also counts. When refugees flee their homes, poverty follows closely behind as they lose their livelihoods and most of their productive assets, including their jobs and housing. These constitute their economic and financial security. However for those who have to stay in exile for extended periods, they are able to develop self-sufficient livelihoods and gradually re-establish these resources in asylum countries over time.

In her studies, Dick (2002) affirms Liberian refugees in Ghana as good examples of refugees who have exhibited high levels of self-sufficiency over the years of their stay in Ghana. While many lost their economic support systems through the war, they have been able to re-establish for themselves, sustainable livelihoods in safety while in Ghana. Due to such loses through the war, coupled with consolidating their livelihoods and safety in the host country, the refugees have been reluctant to return in the past. In effect they are well aware of the consequences of going back home. In addition, to losing their livelihoods in Ghana, they will need among others, sufficient finance and capital to re-establishing their lives in Liberia. Also, considerations for their children's education prevented refugees from going back to Liberia, where uncertainties remained about educational facilities (Dick, 2002). Faced with the option to return or stay in Ghana, such issues about return also reflected in informants' decision to stay in Ghana. As narrated by a 34 year old single mother with four children:

I chose local integration because here I can make money to take my children to school and feed them as well. My family had a good life in Liberia but we lost everything during the war. Even though it's not much here, at least I have a place to sleep and I can sell and braid to take care of myself and my children. There is nothing for me in Liberia so why would I leave everything to go and start all over again. (R.T)

After the declaration of Liberia as safe for return, repatriation programs in the past have come with financial and other assistance from donor agencies to help refugees reestablish their lives upon return.[51] However, for refugees who resisted these programs and are subsequently integrating in Ghana, nothing related to return was worth risking their lives and that of their families, which at

---

[51] Ibid. 4

least is safe in Ghana. These data returns on security confirm Essuman Johnson's (2011) previous study which revealed that, Liberian refugees preferred to stay in Ghana rather than return home in order to ensure their physical and economic security. It also corresponds with the notion of refugees as active agents. In this regard, Liberian refugees want to survive, and they know where their bread is buttered. Staying in Ghana, they are showing that this is the place where their means of survival lie, and they are sure of attaining livelihoods to achieve their goals. While at this, they are also aware of the importance of their safety, which they know is assured in Ghana. This fits into Giddens (1984) notion that, human beings, in this context refugees, purposefully act with knowledge about why they take specific course of actions. As affirmed by Black and Koser (1999, p. 9) refugees can feel more at "home" in the country of asylum, especially if they have lived there for a long time or if economic or social opportunities are likely to be denied to them in their country of origin.

5.2.3 Social Networks in Ghana

Social capital stands for the ability of actors to secure benefits from their social networks- family, friends, colleagues, and more general contacts or other social structures- in order to receive opportunities to use their financial and human capital (Burt, 2009; Portes, 2000).

The choices people make in in their lives is considerably influenced by their social environment. Beaman (2012) notes that, the social capital of refugees' exhibit immense influence in their lives; from their decisions to exile, to place of refuge and survival strategies while in exile. Social capital for refugees, normally takes the form of assistance and support received from their social networks in the community or by the diaspora who send help in the form of remittances (see Horst, 2004). These support systems play an important role in sustaining refugees through their difficult patches. They also help them to get a jumpstart, as well as, hold on to their livelihoods in exile. In this respect, social capital can be regarded as key to the economic security and safety of refugees, as without them they will lack the resources to start income generating ventures and access housing, among others in asylum countries.

While this is important, it is also worthy to remember the value of emotional support that the presence of family and friends offer refugees to overcome their various challenges in asylum countries (Jastram & Newland, 2003). From these support and enabling effects, social capital can also be seen to help the effective social and economic integration of refugees. Thus, in seeking

opportunities to move on with their lives, the presence of friends, families and immediate social environment can be seen to potentially influence the choices of refugees. This is because as social actors, they are more likely to prefer being closer to their support systems. After a decade of staying in Ghana, it is natural that refugees even if they did not come with their families and friends, would have established such relationships and ties during their stay in Ghana. Due to the varying support individual refugees receive from their relationships while in exile, they may find it difficult moving away. This showed in the data returns, as informants cited the presence and support of family and friends as motivators for their integration. An informant had this view to share:

Now I have nobody back home, both of my parents are dead, but my friends and brothers are all here. Life is not good, but I am ok if I wake up and see my family and friends around. To me this is very important. (P.L)

Another informant had this to say:

You see, we Liberians living here treat each other as brothers and sisters, because of what we've been through. When I needed some money to start a small business, I went to see my friend who owns a shop in the market. Even though he doesn't have much, he was able to give me some money to also start my setup here. The little profit I make, I save some and pay him back little by little. (P.R)

From these narratives, the value refugees attached to the presence of their networks is revealed. These family and friends present a form of safety net which refugees fall on anytime they are in need. The data returns therefore agree with Cindy Horst (2006) study, which affirms the importance of social networks to the livelihoods and survival of refugees. Looking at the time invested in establishing relations and means of livelihoods, restarting all over again in a different place, was not a viable option for informant refugees.

5.2.4 Severed Ties with Liberia

Coupled with the utilization of social capital in asylum countries, the loss of such networks in refugees' home countries may also influence their decisions about the paths to take regarding return or integration. As stated earlier, conflicts come with huge loses in human lives and infrastructure. In addition to losing their livelihoods, refugees lose friends and family during conflicts.

Indeed, studies have shown the importance of social networks to the return of refugees to home countries. In his study, Omata (2011) for example, identifies the presence of family and friends as important to the settlement of refugees upon return. These networks help refugee returnees with monies and housing needed to restart their new lives. In situations where these support systems are not present for refugees, their return and settlement may be difficult. As such, they may not want to go back home. They may prefer to stay in host countries where they have these resources at their disposal. For second generation refugees[52], they do not only grow up without knowledge of their relatives, but are also not able to establish any linkages with their home countries. For such refugees, 'home' is their asylum countries and they may not want anything to do with their home countries.

From the data returns, this issue also manifested in informants' reasons for staying in Ghana, rather than returning to Liberia. This account given by an informant reflect the issue:

I took the integration because my father died through the war, and even our house was burned down. The person who brought me here took me as her child, because she rescued me when my father died, and I've been with her since we came. I don't have a home there that I will go to. (O.A)

Another informant, who had to rely on the help and support of 'good Samaritans', who brought him from the war wreckage to Ghana, also had this to say:

I came with an old woman who led me because I was young. She said she picked me up and brought me here. Because she didn't know my parents, I also don't know my real parents or any family members. The old lady is the only person I knew and she is dead now. So now I don't know anybody in Liberia, and I don't have any reason to go back. I have no business with Liberia. (M.A)

As affirmed by Jacobsen (2001) the loss of ties with home countries by refugees may make their return unfeasible, as they might not want to have anything to do with their country after war. This issue, which is evident in accounts given by informants also speaks to the consciousness of refugees as social agents (Giddens, 1979). Faced with the option so stay or return, Liberian refugees knowing what they want, have critically assessed the best opportunities for them. For

---

[52] These are children of refugees who spend all or the most part of their growth and development stages in asylum countries

those that decided to stay in Ghana, the loss of ties and uncertainties about return was crucial to their decisions.

5.3 Informants Reflections on Integration Package

In this section I highlight on the specific contents of the integration package given to the refugees, who have officially decided to stay in Ghana following the cessation. This package, as stated earlier include legal and socioeconomic components, that is, passports and work permits, cash grants, health insurance and skills training. As an objective of the study, reflections from refugees about this package are drawn from the field narratives in order to understand its impact in their lives.

5.3.1 Legal Component- Passports and Work Permits

As part of the integration program in Ghana, passports and work permits were issued to refugees. This was necessary due to the fact that most Liberian refugees who came to Ghana did not have passports.[53] With the coming into effect of cessation, these refugees had to be identified as citizens of their country, thus, the need for the passport provision. Despite not being restricted in their movement as refugees in Ghana, the provision of these documents provided the legitimate means of movement both within and outside Ghana as recognized nationals of Liberia. Further, in rebuilding their lives in the host country, the refugees required work permits, which is required in the search for jobs, especially in the formal sector of the Ghanaian labor market. In the past the lack of work permits provided an obstacle to refugees' ability to access some job opportunities in Ghana. This is evidenced by a narrative given by one informant who despite training professionally as a teacher, could not formally practice his profession for the lack of work permit.

After I obtained my degree as a teacher I couldn't find a job because I didn't have a work permit to seek for jobs. (C.J)

This is not to say that all Liberian refugees, who came to Ghana during the war have not been able to access opportunities in the formal sector outside the confines of the camp. Indeed, studies carried out by Dick (2002, p. 26), for example, shows that some Liberian refugees have been able to practice their trades as accountants and journalists in Ghana. However, these cases remain isolated and for the vast majorities, job access in the formal sector remained a problem for reasons such as,

---

[53] From interview with UNHCR official (5/6/14)

the lack of work permits. As such, with their integration, refugees have been handed 2 years renewable work permits. This is intended to help address the legal barriers that may arise in their search for jobs in Ghana. Generally, informants did not have much to say about this aspect of their integration package. This is due to the fact that, as refugees, their economic activities have mainly been centered in the informal sector, which does not require much legal documents to access. In this sector, they did not face barriers in their movement or accessing jobs. An informants shared this comment on the legal aspect of her stay:

For me, I know Ghana is a free country, you are free to go anywhere you want unlike like for example Ivory Coast, where resident permit is demanded at the least opportunity. Here, wherever you go, whether Accra, Kumasi etc. nobody ask you for such documents and I feel comfortable with that. (A.B)

This freedom the refugees enjoy may be due to the fact that, the host as a signatory to the 1951 refugee convention respected their rights as refugees. However, in the current situation, except for special exemption, Liberian refugees no more qualified as such. They are now immigrants, who without legal documents, can face problems in accessing jobs and rights. This could further place their human security in danger as they can be victims of expulsion. With their integration coming into effect, it is therefore important to address the legal aspects of their stay. In doing this, refugees' economic integration can also be enhanced because they can move freely and find jobs just like any member of the host country. This affirms Polzer (2004) study, in which she emphasize addressing the legal status of refugees as important measure to their successful integration, because it grants their access to rights and jobs in the host country. In the current study this was also important for refugees' integration.

5.3.2 Social and Economic Components

Social protection programs involves "interventions from public, private and voluntary organizations and informal networks to support communities, households and individuals in their efforts to prevent, manage and overcome risks and vulnerabilities and enhance the social status and rights of the marginalized".[54] It can be delivered to refugees through a variety of mechanisms,

---

[54] The proposal for the research project on Social Protection and Migration in Sub-Saharan Africa: Case Studies on Access, Portability and Inclusion, builds on Holzmann and Joergensen (2000), Shepherd (2004), and Devereux and (Sabates-Wheeler 2005). Quoted in (Makhema, 2009)Page.4

which include, but not limited to, cash transfers, housing assistance, health insurance, job-creation schemes and retraining programs.

The social and economic components of the integration package for Liberian refugees in Ghana consisted of social protection programs - cash grants, health insurance and skills training programs. These programs are aimed at helping the refugees to reestablish themselves in the socio- economic spheres of the Ghanaian society.[55]

5.3.2.1 Cash Grants

This can be seen as a form of cash transfer policy, which involved the cash handouts of between US$ 400- US$ 2,400 depending on family size. Heads of households were entitled to $400 and their children were given $200 per head. Thus, the size of a family determined how much money a refugee household received as a cash grant. As noted by Adato and Bassett (2009, p. 1), social protection in the form of cash transfers are aimed at providing financial support to beneficiaries to help them meet their varying needs in terms of food purchases, housing, education and healthcare. The data returns shows that refugees have utilized their cash grants in diverse ways to meet their needs. These include supporting their businesses, catering for their health needs and that of housing among others. The following narratives from informants are insightful:

I was doing some small buying and selling business (groceries sale), so when I got that money, I decided to invest it into the business. (P.L)

I was on admission in the hospital when I heard that they were giving the money, so I went to take mine. I needed surgery, and the hospital said they will cover some of the expenses and I had to pay the rest. So I ended up using most of my integration money to pay for my health expenses. (R.T)

I used some of the money to pay my children's school fees and also pay for the rent of my house in advance for 2 years (A.B)

These data returns reveals that monies received from the integration package is helping refugees reestablish their lives. This assistance can be seen as enabling refugees as agents to reproduce social rules (Bakewell, 2010, p. 8). This is because as conscious actors, they have clearly identified the needs essential for their survival and are making use of opportunities provided through the

---

[55] Ibid. 32

integration program to address these needs. Using these opportunities is not being done according to any predefined mode. Rather refugees are individually utilizing the monies in their own ways for their benefit. Thus with varying needs, the refugees are enabled, and they are exhibiting knowledge in the use the monies received from the integration program (Long & Long, 1992).

While they exercise agency in the use of the cash handouts, the efforts of refugees to integrate in the social and economic spheres of the host society is also revealed. Using monies to support their businesses for example enhances their economic integration as they strengthen their income source base, essential for supporting themselves and their households. Housing also plays an important role in their integration. This is because it is important in determining their overall health and wellbeing, which provides a base from which they can seek employment and connect with the community as a whole (UNHCR, 2009, p. 13). While this was not part of the integration package, refugees recognize its importance and are making the best out of the opportunity presented to address this need. Further, taking into consideration that their health is also important to their safety, they are using the money to address such needs. These findings agree with Dick's (2002) point that, refuges will utilize opportunities available to them in order to maximize their situation. When aid is lacking or insufficient they invent new ways or reshape existing opportunities to meet their needs. Rather than surrendering to challenges, informant refugees are showing resilience, planning for better lives and reshaping opportunities to achieve their goals.

5.3.2.2 Health Insurance

According to the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, health is a fundamental human right necessary for the exercise of other human rights.[56] Every human being is entitled to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of health conducive to living a life in dignity. Refugees are not an exemption. In fact by virtue of their circumstance and experiences they may suffer from various health issues from physical traumas to psychological ones which requires special attention and treatment. Therefore, in policies and humanitarian assistance aimed at helping address refugees' needs, it is important that their health issues are taken into consideration by stakeholders (Kinzie, 2001; UNHCR, 2009). With this informing the formulation and

---

[56] Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, General Comment 14, The right to the highest attainable standard of health (Twenty-second session, 2000), U.N. Doc. E/C.12/2000/4 (2000) at: http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/gencomm/escgencom14.htm

implementation of refugee policies, the integration program for Liberian refugees in Ghana sought to help beneficiaries in addressing their health needs. Included in the integration package was a 1-year health insurance premium for the refugees. Recipient refugees were responsible for its renewal after expiry.

The health insurance program in Ghana covers basic medical care, and one is required to pay for certain types of treatments and drugs that are not covered by the insurance (Blanchet, Fink et al. 2012). In the past and present, refugees have not faced much difficulties in accessing healthcare systems in Ghana. With a hospital located on site at the camp, it has served as the main healthcare center, from where refugees accessed their medical needs. However, they were also at liberty to do so at other hospitals outside the camp if they so wished. Informants' gave the following comments about the insurance package and how they were using it access health facilities when required:

The health insurance card is good, but when we received it, it had already expired. So I had to renew it with some of the money I got. When my son was sick the last time, the nurse asked if he has insurance and when I provided it, they treated him. (Y.A)

I was sick, and when I went to the hospital, they said my health insurance could only cover paracetamol and folic acid. All the other prescriptions, I had to buy on my own. Even though I didn't have the money, my health is important. So I borrowed money from my brother to cover the other medical expenses. (C.J)

From these narratives, it can be seen that the health insurance package has also been useful to refugees in catering for their healthcare needs. The 1 year premium may have expired upon receipt by the refugees. Nevertheless, knowing the importance of their health, and the potential of the insurance to ease their medical costs, refugees have taken it upon themselves to find means to reactivate their insurance in order to reap from its benefits. In addition, the insufficiency in the insurance package in covering all their medical needs has meant that, they have to find other means to pay their medical expenses. This, they have done through the assistance of cash grants from the program, as well as, through the help from their networks. Here, the enabling effect of the integration program as a structural policy is at play. Equally important is what the refugees are doing themselves in addition to what they received to meet their healthcare needs. They know it is in good health that they would be able to pursue the 'good life'. Therefore, they are taking the

appropriate measures in using their networks and support from the grant to ensure that. This buttress the point that as active agents, refugees are knowledgeable and resourceful (Vincet & Sorenson, 2001). As depicted in an informant's comment:

My health is very important. You see every day I have to put food on the table for my wife and my three children. If I am sick, I can't do that, so if insurance give me painkiller and it's not enough I have to find money to buy the other medicine so I can get strong and take care of my family. (L.S)

5.3.2.3 Skills Training

According McCord (2011), skills training, as a social protection program involves the deliberate transfer of skills to poor groups of a society with the aim to enhance their livelihoods. As stated earlier, refugees' lives in protracted situations are characterized by the lack of access to jobs in their host countries. In the efforts to help them, some humanitarian assistance has focused on providing education for refugees, as this provides them with employable skills (see Lyby, 2001). This also enables refugees to be self-sufficient and reduce their dependence on assistance. It can involve formal education of refugees in schools, or through non-formal vocational training. Vocational training has especially presented a feasible option when refugees cannot have access to formal education.

As Tete (2005) observed in relation to many Liberia refugees in Ghana, attaining a vocational skill is deemed important. During their stay, many took advantage of various skills training programs offered by the UNHCR and other NGO's to learn a skill or upgrade existing ones. Their attained skills served as a means to income generating activities and self-sufficiency. As revealed by an informant:

When I came to the camp I learnt to bake through one of the vocational training programs in the camp. It has really benefitted me because I work for myself and the income I get is what I use to take care of my children. (R.T)

With knowledge about the impact of vocational training in enhancing refugee livelihoods in the camp, skills training programs were included in the integration by the UNHCR and its partner agencies. In the skills training component, is a range of programs, from which refugees could choose based on their personal interests. These included information technology (I.T both software and hardware training), masonry, baking, beauty care, carpentry and electrical training. Further, as

means of empowerment, trainees were handed startup kits after completing their training programs.[57]

Regarding how the refugees accessed these training programs to improve their lives, the following comments were given by informants:

*I didn't take any skills program because, the programs they had were the same as the ones I had some time ago. Besides, I have to support my child schooling and I can't leave my work for the training because, it is the source of finance for our upkeep. (*A.B)

I wanted to do plumbing but they said, that was not available, and since I was not interested in the other programs, I didn't take part. (S.M)

From these narratives, it can be seen that refugees did not take much interest in the training programs on offer. This was due to the fact that, they had already attained these skills already and they were more interested in working to earn income for their families' upkeep. This is especially true for female informants who had attained multiple skills from past training programs.[58] Also, some of the training programs on offer did not suit refugees' interest, explaining their refusal to partake in the training program. In doing this, refugees demonstrated that they had clear goals concerning their lives and were bent on achieving them with or without aid (Shanmugaratnam et al., 2003). While other programs were available they stuck to their preferred programs, thus their decisions were not guided by dictates of structural policies. As noted in the previous chapter, as conscious agents, they do not act merely as puppets to the dictates of their circumstance or structures in place. Rather, they plan and work toward their goals for a better future (Vincet & Sorenson, 2001).

For those who partook in the training programs, they expressed reservations about the limited period for training, which did not equip them with the requisite skills to seek jobs in the Ghanaian labor market. Also, issues about discrimination from the host population were raised by skilled refugees in their search for work. Informants had these to say concerning the training programs.

I received computer software training, but I am not working with the skills attained now. It's very hard to get work here because most of the people on the camp do not have computers to be fixed.

---

[57] Ibid.54
[58] This affirms Tete (2005) point that, acquiring skills for work is well appreciated by Liberian refugee women.

So I have to go to Kasoa or Accra to find a job, but that is also difficult because among the Ghanaians, they don't even want to welcome you. (A.J)

I trained in computer hardware repairs, but the period for the training was not enough (three weeks). If you train at least for seven or eight months, then you are confident that you are capable and will qualify for a job outside when you apply. The skills and startup kit is good, but getting the job experience is also important. So I continue do some practicals with my friends in his internet café so that I will get much experience to apply for a job. (A.A)

These data returns mirror the critique leveled against training policies that do not give adequate recognition to the fact that there are a range of obstacles that may prevent recipients access to the labor market (McCord, 2011). However, it is also worthy to note that in the Ghanaian context, unemployment is structural with significant demand deficits. Thus it affects the general populace. In such a case, it will be difficult for refugees to gain successful employment with their skills. This is further exacerbated when these skills attained are inadequate. However, this is not to say that refugees are not utilizing their skills attained through the integration package to generate income of some sort for their survival.[59] As this informant, who trained as an electrician said:

After I completed my training, there was no job so I just go around and if I see people with problems with their light, I assist them for money. (P.L)

This shows that, despite the general lack of jobs in the Ghanaian labor market, refugees are finding ways to make some income in and around the camp. This may be through the utilization of their skills attained or not. However the underlining point is that they are exhibiting ingenuity and devising strategies as social agents to reach their goals (Long & Long, 1992). This brings us to the next section of the chapter, which highlights on the coping strategies being adopted by refugees in the face of limited employment opportunities as they integrate in Ghana.

---

[59] Also see narrative on p. 14

5.4 Coping Strategies

Coping is the ways in which people act within existing resources and range of expectations of a situation to achieve various ends. (Blaikie, 1994, p. 62)

Refugees deploy varying actions to deal with their protracted situations. These differ from one person to the other. The type of act deployed also vary from striving to satisfy basic needs like food, shelter, to reaching out for goals like empowerment, respect, dignity and preservation of life at both household and family levels (Skonhoft, 1998). Thus, they go beyond satisfying their basic survival needs and plan for the future. It is worthy of note that the strategies adopted by individual refugees are informed, among others, by their experiences, knowledge and capabilities.

In gaining an understanding of how Liberian refugees are integrating in Ghana, the study findings support the notion that, they are ready to utilize opportunities available to them through intervention policies. However, the absence or insufficiency in such policies does not deter them, but rather, they adapt and find ways to meet their needs in their own ways. In this regard, Liberian refugees in Ghana are utilizing in diverse ways the integration package which has facilitated the access to work permits, employable skills and business capital. The program seems to place much emphasis on facilitating refugees' economic integration so that, once they are self-sufficient, they can enter other spheres of the society. However the insufficiencies presented in the program, coupled with other factors, like the lack of jobs in Ghana has meant that, there is still some way to go if this end is to be achieved. Nevertheless, for the refugees, life must go on. While challenges prevail they are circumventing them and seizing opportunities to survive. In this light, I proceed to examine the coping strategies being adopted by refugees to achieve their short term survival goals as well as long term ones.

5.4.1 Work in Accra and on the Camp

The integration program, despite efforts to help refugees meet their needs, cannot do it all. Refugees themselves are also making their own inputs. This, they are doing by finding alternative ways to earn income with skills acquired both in the past and through the integration package. Among the refugee women, many have found a vocation in plaiting hair, and it served as an important source of income for the upkeep of their households. This is done through their daily travels to the capital city Accra, where such skills are in demand. A female informant who has two children said the following:

I go to Accra to plait people's hair. The income I make, I use some for our upkeep and I also save some (susu)[60], so that I can use to pay for the children's school fees. (A.B)

Another single mother with four children said the following:

The money I get from plaiting hair is good but it is not stable. Sometimes the money I make is insufficient to cater for the family. Other times, even after paying transportation to Accra, you don't get anything and have to come back empty handed. So now I have started a small business in the market. I sell some bread and biscuits in the market during the week. Then on the weekends I go to plait hair in Accra because normally in the weekends more people want their hair done. (R.T)

The data returns reveal that, the daily travels to Accra for work brought income for refugees, which buttress the point that the mobility of refugees has a strong influence on their economic integration (see Cindy Horst, 2006). However, the unstable nature of income gained from this venture, coupled with the insufficiency of income in meeting their needs, meant that, they also have to pursue other income generating activities in the camp and its immediate environs. One could ask why refugees have not explored other job opportunities while in Accra, which is the central economic hub of the host country? In answering this question refugees reported issues of discrimination from Ghanaians in their search for jobs. Thus, reinforcing the location of their economic activities in the camp where businesses are operated by Liberians themselves. As narrated by an informant:

I used to work at the clinic on the camp so I usually take Liberians who don't know their way to the Korle Bu hospital in Accra. Every time I am there I try to find a job, but they tell me their own people are not employed yet. (A.A)

On the camp, refugees are engaged in diverse income generating activities with many doing petty trade and other small businesses. The following narrations from informants give an insight into the kinds of economic activities they engaged on the camp.

I sell oranges and pineapples, as you can see. But you know, with three children to feed, the money I make from this alone is not enough. So in the evenings, together with my wife, we sell some

---

[60] Used to refer to daily savings of income made from work

beverage (tea with bread and eggs) to supplement what I make in the day. It's not easy taking care of the children's education and feeding, but we have to manage with the money we make. (M.A)

I have this small setup here, buying and selling provisions. That is what I have been using to take care of my family. Sometimes, people ask me to help them with their building roofs because I am a carpenter by profession, but that is not reliable because these people are either friends or family, and I can't really take money. If they like they give me money for the service, but I can't complain. (P.R)

One respondent who is a teacher by profession also had this to say:

Well, I *go round and find schools to teach within the confines of the camp. But this is only part time, so I have a small farm where I rear pigs for sale. But even that, the landowner is claiming the land, so I have to dispose off the animals. (C.J)*

It can be seen that, the income generating activities of refugees on the camp are mostly in the informal sector. This speaks to the fact that most do not have the requisite education and skills to get economically secure jobs in the formal sector. Even for those who have the formal skills, the lack of access to jobs outside the camp has meant that, they have to contend with informal livelihoods on the camp. Also, the kind of activities engaged by refugees due to their small scale base, is not able to generate sufficient income for their upkeep. As a result, they are usually engaged in multiple jobs simultaneously in order to make ends meet. This data returns support Pavanello et. al., (2010), whose study shows that, the economic activities of refugees are normally situated in the informal sector of host countries. As it is generally the case in a society that depends primarily on income earned in the informal economy, refugees are involved in a variety of income generating projects at the same time. Thus they diversify risk and provide themselves with petty cash received from one business or the other.

In their works in the informal sector, refugees require, among others, working capital to operate. Regardless the fact that most of their works are situated in the informal sector, which does not require much capital for business, some appreciable amount of money is still required if one is to establish a business of any sort on their own. As revealed by informants monies received from the integration package has provided seed capital for their businesses. While this money may be useful and sufficient for some refugees, it is not the case for others, thus they have to seek other sources

of capital. Here, the monies from their social networks, including remittances from relatives abroad and those in their immediate environs help them to generate capital for their businesses. As revealed by informants:

Even though I don't know my relatives, my 'mother' who brought me here travelled outside and the money she sent me the last time, is what I have used to establish this small shop. (O.A)

The fruits I sell, I get them on credit from a friend. When I sell, I pay him back. Sometimes business is not good, so I pay back late. Even though he is usually not happy about this, because he is my friend, he helps me out (M.A)

Despite the support received from these networks in aiding refugees' economic activities, not all have this privilege. Even for those who do, they are not overly dependent on these networks for survival. This informant's narrative is insightful to this effect:

I have many friends who have travelled abroad, but sometimes when you call them for assistance they say things are not good. So I have stopped calling them. I have to find ways to survive on my by myself. (A.B)

This returns data buttress the point that, while support from the program is useful, refugees for the most times exhibit agency as they know what they want, make conscious decisions and use their ingenuity to shape their lives. In doing this they actively reshape the empirical world, which in this case, is manifested in the performance of the integration act on their own terms (Giddens, 1979, 1984). Thus they can be seen as agents of change as noted by Shanmugaratnam et al. (2003) in the previous chapter.

In terms of their economic integration, the refugees' exhibition of agency can also be seen as progressive in terms of their active participation in the informal labor market. For the fact that, many Ghanaians operate similar small scale businesses and petty trade ventures, this speaks to refugees economic integration in terms of comparisons with occupation of locals (Hosseini-Kaladjahi, 1997). However, it is worthy of note that, these income generating activities remain at the lower economic echelons of the Ghanaian society (Jacobsen, 2001). While they aspire to rise up the economic ladder of their host country, this is what their capabilities can take them for the meantime, and they are making the best out of it.

5.4.2 Beyond Economic Activities

5.4.2.1 Housing

The use of assistance and the exercise of agency by refugees to survive is not limited to activities in the economic sector alone. It also cuts across other spheres of their lives. Housing for refugees for example, as noted earlier, is important in determining the overall health and wellbeing of refugees. Refugees' access to safe, secure and affordable housing is important for their integration. This is because it enhances shared forums and intercultural dialogue between refugees and their hosts (UNHCR, 2009).

As studies have shown, Liberian refugees with assistance and their ingenuity have been able to put up solid housing structures to accommodate themselves and their families since their arrival in Ghana.[61] Indeed informants attested to owning their own houses either on the camp land.

I managed to build my own house here that I share with my woman and my four children. (A.J)

With the cessation of their refugee status and subsequent integration, refugees are required to leave the camp land and integrate in host communities without any housing benefit. This was confirmed by the official from the GRB who said that:

The decision to locally integrate was based on the knowledge that government or the UNHCR was not going to provide accommodation for the refugees. We made it clear to them that they will not be allowed to stay on the camp land because the land belongs to somebody. The camp was set up for a specific purpose (hosting Liberian refugees), it is expected that once the program has come to an end, it will be closed and the land handed back to local authorities.[62]

According to officials, refugees have been made aware of this, and they have been advised to take the necessary steps, to move out of the camp. For refugees integrating, who live on the official camp land, this is especially a problem since they have to leave their acquired structures to seek

---

[61] According to Dick (2002), to replace the tents they had been given upon arrival, refugees were encouraged to build permanent houses using the brick-making skills that they were taught in vocational schools run by some NGOs and CBOs. The refugees provided the labor and purchased cement needed for the foundation and walls of their houses while support was provided in the form of wood, nails and felt for roofing. With all the building going on, many men were able to contract out their labor to other refugees to earn a small income which was used in turn to finance theirs.

[62] Interview with GRB official. (30/7/14)

accommodation elsewhere. As studies have shown the cost of obtaining accommodation outside the camp is often expensive and requires a minimum of two years advance payment of rent (see Dick, 2002). However, in the face of such problems refugees integrating are adopting alternative means to secure housing for themselves and their families. The following accounts of informants reveal some of the creative ways by which refugees are finding accommodation.

If I am going to rent outside, I will be paying like 35 cedis a month, so if they tell you to pay for two years advance you can just imagine the money involved. So I have agreed with the landlord to extend the lease on the land where I have built my own house. That one is cheaper because I only pay for the land because I built the house myself (A.A)

A friend used to live here, but she went back to Liberia. Because the lease had not expired, she allowed me stay here. When it expired, I used the money I got from the integration program to extend for another 2 years. (Y.A)

These data returns are indicative that, despite the inability of integration package to address the housing needs of refugees, they found their own creative ways to address such needs. For those especially with housing properties on the camp land, they continue to stay in their structures despite information about the imminent closure of the camp. For them, this is not a new issue, as there have been similar information about the camp closure in the past. Thus, so long as this action is yet to be effected, they will continue to inhabit their structures, while they utilize other opportunities to pursue their goals. This reflected in the comment given by one informant:

I labored to build my house here. I can't go out and live in the street while this house is here. I say I want to stay in Ghana, if they drive me out of here, I will still survive. After all when I came here there was nothing. Just as I managed to get this structure here, I can manage anywhere else. (A.J)

5.4.2.2 Language

Language is also another issue that refugees have had to grapple with as they integrate. According to the UNHCR (2009), the knowledge of the language of asylum countries for refugees are basic requirements for their self-sufficiency, and becoming part of the local community. As studies have shown, many Liberian refugees have not learned to speak the local language, primarily Twi. This was confirmed in the data returns as none of the informants admitted to proficiency in the local language. Among others, this might be due to the fact that the refugees in Ghana have been bent

on being resettled in a developed country. Many viewed their stay in Ghana as temporary. Dick (2002) argues that through a measure like not learning the language of the hosts, Liberian refugees have communicated to the outside world that they want to be taken away from Ghana. In this regard, learning the local language will only create the awareness that they want to stay and will trigger the implementation of policies such as local integration which was clearly not desired. As a result, they showed unwillingness to learn the language despite the availability of programs to this effect in the past. This is indicative of how refugees have exhibited agency in the past to get their needs addressed. As one informant said:

I think the reason why most Liberians didn't learn the local language before is because they think if you learn, then it means you are going to stay in Ghana. (A.B)

Upon their decisions to integrate, the refugees seem to have softened their stance on learning the local language. For example an informant said that:

I think if you decide to integrate you should be able to speak the major local language. So for me, it is not a problem. As long as I have chosen local integration, if they teach me the local language, I will learn. It will even be easier that way for me to make it in the society. (A.J)

However, unlike in the past, language training programs no more exist. The integration program, which is facilitating refugees' active membership in the local community, also does not include any language training programs. According to officials, despite the importance of language to the integration of refugees, this was not included in the package due to lack of funds.[63] While this remains the case, refugees are aware of its importance to their stay. The lack of it makes them often feel discriminated against. This also affects the social and cultural dimensions of their integration process as it is retarding their effective interaction and active participation as members of the society. As narrated by an informant:

The language barrier retard progress here, if I don't speak Twi, how do I go sit among Ghanaians. I don't understand it, and most of them whether they are educated or not are accustomed to their local language, which I respect. I am not against that, but it creates some barrier when you want to approach Ghanaians. (C.J)

---

[63] Interview with UNHCR official (7/6/14)

This regardless, their survival remains key. Therefore, they are finding ways to negotiate the language barrier themselves .As this informant said:

I have learnt to speak a little because I have to. Sometimes when I go to the market, they realize from my accent that I am Liberian and will inflate the price. So I had to learn the simple communication language like 'yes' and 'no' to avoid being cheated in the market. (R.T)

This measure adopted by refugees further buttress the point that, as social agents, they are not quitters who give up when they don't have assistance in the face of challenges. Rather they are exhibiting awareness, capacity and find ways of surpassing these challenges in order to move on with their lives (Sewell Jr., 1992)

5.5 The Hope for a Better Future

It seems that Liberian refugees integrating in Ghana are managing enough as they utilize opportunities available and their ingenuity to address their needs. As capable individuals, they have clear goals about the directions their lives should take. While in the short term, such goals may be driven by the sheer desire to survive, they also hold aspirations for better lives for themselves and their families. Regarding their aspirations with their stay in Ghana, much of informants themes surrounded around securing good jobs and helping their children to attain better lives in future. The following narratives from informants reflect their aspirations in Ghana.

I don't want my children to suffer from the problems I have been through. So I want them to go to school and improve their life chances. That's why I'm struggling to take care of them. (O.A)

I want to get a good job so that I can give my children good education. Their future lies in good education. (R.T)

In the pursuit of their goals and aspirations, refugees had other options. However for informant refugees, staying in Ghana presented the best means by which they could attain their self-defined goals in life. This shows that as social agents, they are conscious of what they want and are aware of the environment that will present them with the opportunities to achieve these goals. It also buttress the point that, they are knowledgeable agents, who use their ingenuity to get their goals achieved, regardless their circumstances (Long & Long, 1992). While theirs might be a lost course, they have still not given up. Rather, they continue to plan and work for better future for

themselves and that of their children. In doing this, challenges may prevail, but they are making the best out of what they have to make progress in their lives.

5.6 Summary

In this chapter, I have presented and discussed the field data. The results indicate that, among the interviewees their personal and economic security informed their decisions to stay in Ghana. Also, the presence of their social networks in their immediate environment, as well as, the loss of these in their home country were contributory factors to their choice of local integration, after their refugee status was revoked. With their decisions to stay in Ghana, the legal component of their integration package, was aimed at legitimating the refugees' stay as immigrants. It also addressed the barriers that arose in refugees assess to jobs especially in the formal labor market. The data returns showed that, this is facilitating their integration as they had the freedom to move freely and access jobs in Ghana.

Informed by social protection policies, cash grants, health insurance and skills training programs constituted the socio-economic component of the integration package. Regarding the cash grants, the results showed that it also helped the interviewees' integration process, as they utilized it in diverse ways to meet their needs. The refugees used it to finance their healthcare expenses, businesses and housing expenditure, among others. The health insurance upon arrival was expired, but the refugees with the assistance of the cash grants and their networks reactivated it, and utilized it to address their health needs. Thus it was also seen to be helping them in their integration. The skills training programs, which included baking, electrical and computer training among others, had equipped the refugees with employable skills. However issues remained about the adequacy of the skills, discrimination from employers and the lack of employment opportunities in Ghana. Nevertheless, it also facilitated interviewees' integration, as they had found means of earning income through them.

Taken together, the integration package, even though with deficiencies in the programs presented, is seen to be facilitating the refugees' socio-economic integration in one way or the other. However, an underlying feature in the data returns has been the refugees' exhibition of agency in their knowledge and innovation in utilizing the package to meet their needs and aspirations. In the midst of the program deficiencies, they nevertheless reshaped and utilized the opportunities presented in the program in their own ways to address their self-defined goals. In addition, they

exhibited ingenuity by devising coping strategies to meet other needs which the package could not address. This, they did by engaging in different income generating activities in Accra and the camp to realize both their short and long-term goals. While, these income generating activities were seen as economically integrating the refugees, especially, in the context of their comparability to similar activities engaged by the locals, they remain in the informal economic sector of the hosts.

Furthermore, through their personal capabilities and the help of their networks, they were individually addressing other issues relating to housing and language, which they deemed important to their successful integration. While they employed various strategies to meet their immediate survival goals, they also held aspirations for a better future, to which, most of their activities were geared towards. In pursuing their future goals, challenges prevail, but they are not giving up. They continue to work towards achieving better lives for themselves and their children.

Chapter 6. Summary and Concluding Remarks

6.1 Introduction
This chapter presents a summary of the main study findings and analytical contributions to the policy effectiveness of local integration as a durable solution to refugee situations.

The study has attempted to reveal the local integration process for former Liberian refugees in Ghana. It sought to provide insight into the program based on the reflections and views of individual refugees who are taking part of the integration program. To understand the ways by which the refugees are rebuilding their lives, the study employed the narratives of those living in the Budumburam Refugee Camp in Ghana. The data collected pertained to issues about why they decided to stay in Ghana, and how they were rebuilding their lives with the assistance of the integration package.

6.2 Approaches
Recognizing the program deficiencies in helping these refugees meet their needs, the approach was to tap into the refugees' experiences, especially in their diverse efforts to integrate into or be members of the Ghanaian society. Thus, the qualitative methodological approach was employed to achieve this end. The emphasis was recounting on their views and reflections. This was achieved through semi-structured interviews and active observation of their daily activities, mainly in the camp. A snowballing sampling technique was particularly adopted to identify informants for the study. In all, the flexibility of the chosen methodology helped to produce coherence between the chosen theories and analysis of the field data. With a smaller sample size, I have been able to give attention to much detail, as well as, present participants narratives in their own words as much as possible.

The concepts of social, cultural and economic integration theories were reviewed as important processes to the successful local integration of the refugees. Furthermore, the concept of agency was used to identify and understand the type of resources that the refugees in question mobilized to realize their objectives as members of the Ghanaian society.

6.3 Findings
The analysis of the field data showed that, refugee interviewees, were utilizing the available opportunities presented by the package through the local integration program, to realize their self-

defined goals. Even when these opportunities were not available or deficient, they still adapted and found creative ways to meet their needs in other ways.

In the refugees' integration, the integration package presented to interviewees by the UNHCR, Ghana government and their donors, was seen as having an enabling effect on their lives. This was manifested in the provision of passports and work permits to facilitate their legal integration in the Ghanaian society. In addition, cash grants, health insurance and skills training programs, facilitated their socio-economic integration. While not downplaying the enabling effect of the integration program in helping refugees, it was observed that, at the center of efforts garnered by the refugees in their integration was the exhibition of their agency.

As noted by Kabeer (1999, p. 438), exercising agency is about making strategic life choices, setting goals and being able to pursue them. In different ways, the refugees had their goals in attaining better lives for themselves and their children, which informed their choice of the integration program. The data returns revealed that, among the reasons interviewees assigned as key informers to their decisions to stay in Ghana, was the need to consolidate both their physical and economic security in Ghana. Also included as a reason for their stay, was the proximity of their social networks, which interviewees viewed as closer to them in Ghana. Therefore, given the option to return, they exhibited knowledge and consciousness in identifying Ghana as the place, which presented them the opportunities to pursue their social and economic goals in safety and peace (Giddens, 1984).

Making use of the programs available is important to achieving these goals. Indeed, the narratives of informant refugees showed that, they made use of the package to address their needs in Ghana. Monies received through the cash grants was used by informants to address various needs like financing their health expenses, businesses ventures and housing expenditure. Similarly, they used the health insurance to address their health needs. Also, despite problems in the adequacy of training skills, the refugees were utilizing in one way or the order, their skills attained as bakers, electricians, and carpenters, among others. In doing this, the refugees demonstrated that they were social actors, who shaped the opportunities presented in the integration package to realize their self-defined goals (Long & Long, 1992).

However, with their diverse needs, the integration package inevitably, could not help the refugees in attaining or pursuing all their goals. Nevertheless, they exhibited ingenuity in devising coping

71

strategies to get other needs which the package could not help address met. This is manifested especially in their search for economic means of livelihood, which has also not been helped by discrimination from Ghanaian employers and the general lack of employment opportunities in Ghana. In their coping strategies, the refugees earned income from hair plaiting jobs found in the capital city, Accra and several petty trading ventures, such as the sale of fruits and vegetables in the camp. However, due to the meagre income received from these activities, the refugees usually combined multiple activities simultaneously in order to make ends meet.

While such activities are concentrated in the informal sector of the Ghanaian economy, it is observed that, the refugees, through their efforts were economically integrating on the basis that, Ghanaians engaged in similar economic activities (see Hosseini-Kaladjahi, 1997). Their exercise of agency was also not limited to the economic sector alone. Through their knowledge and capabilities, informant refugees identified housing and knowledge of the dominant local language (Twi) as important factors, necessary for their successful integration. Despite the integration package not facilitating these, they have taken it upon themselves to address them through their resourcefulness. With their personal capabilities and through the help of their networks, they were individually addressing such issues relating to housing and language. From the narratives, the study thus demonstrates that the refugees are innovative and resourceful social agents, who in the face of difficulties and structural constraints, find alternative means of coping with life (also see Dick, 2002; Cindy Horst, 2006). Thus, they can be seen as transformers of the empirical world. (Giddens, 1984).

6.4 Concluding Remarks

Analytical Contributions

This study has sought to contribute to understanding the local integration process of Liberian refugees in Ghana by providing insight from the refugees' point of view. While the program is still ongoing, the study has revealed important insights about the ingenious ways adopted by the refugees to pursue their goals in their adopted societies. It has also revealed some nuances in their perceptions with respect to the impact of the local integration policy in their lives. From these revelations, there are lessons that have emerged which can contribute to effective policy formulation and implementation.

6.4.1 Bottom-up Approach to Policy Formulation

The study has depicted refugees as social agents who through their knowledge and ingenuity shape their world. It also shows the effect of local integration as a structural policy in their lives. Rather than constraining the refugees, the integration program is seen as having an enabling effect on refugees' lives by facilitating their integration. As a policy practice, the formulation and implementation of the integration program in Ghana assumed the usual top- down approach, which concentrates decisions into policies and their facilitation at the top level, among officials and policy makers. The input of refugees were effectively not considered as part of the local integration program.[64] Though such efforts made at making the lives of refugees better must be commended, there remains much to be seen, if programs can be sustainable and effect real changes in refugees' lives. This has mainly been due to the fact that their views are not taken to inform programs that affect their lives (see Korac, 2003). The resultant effects is discrepancies between programs and their ability to reach the actual needs of refugees as revealed in the narratives of the refugees under the study.

With the demonstration of refugees as social actors, who actively shape their lives with or without aid programs as local integration, they can be considered as the ones who are best placed to articulate efforts at responding to their own needs (also see Essed et al., 2004; Harrell-Bond & Voutira, 2007). Indeed, this was affirmed by one official in the field, who noted that refugees' input in programs, is very important. This is because knowing their needs and the aspects of their lives requiring assistance can help make programs more sustainable and effective in their lives.[65] With this revelation, it is suggested that, for policy effectiveness, it will be beneficial for both policy makers and refugees, if focus is shifted towards the bottom-up approach to policy formulation and implementation, rather than usual 'one size fits all' approach. In effect, it is important that refugees are involved at all levels of decision making that involves their own welfare

---

[64] This was confirmed by interviewees who said that their views about the program were not sought prior to its implementation. The officials also affirmed this, with the point that refugees' views about the program was not considered mainly because it would not have made any difference in the program formulation and implementation.
[65] From interview with UNHCR official (5/6/14)

and that of the community (also see Korac, 2003). This is important especially in cases, where programs aim at facilitating their active participation in the community.

In the context of the study, refugees' response to the program by adapting with their efforts to be self-sufficient, suggest their willingness and determination to make progress in their lives. As such, in moving forward, there is the need for future programs to take into consideration, their views and needs in program formulation. This can serve policy effectiveness and sustainability better by bridging the gap between programs and their impact on the refugee lives.

With such an approach, emerging issues such as local language deficiency on the part of refugees can be ascertained and the appropriate measures put in place to facilitate it. The study revealed that, the refugees previously exhibited an unwillingness to learn the local language. However, they have subsequently softened their stance in this regard. As a policy program, even the UNHCR considers knowledge of local language as important to refugees' successful integration (see UNHCR, 2009). Therefore, it is suggested that future programs seek to address this aspect of refugees' integration. This can be done by putting in place language training programs which include especially, the development of basic communication skills. Further, these skills should seek to correspond to individual refugees' work skills and employment aspirations in their adopted society.

There is also the need to enhance employment opportunities for refugees in their adopted societies. In this regard, measures that facilitate the recruitment of refugees should be promoted. Programs aimed at empowering refugees, such as, skills training for example, should take into account the differentials in refugees' qualification. Flexible and effective measures must be adopted in order to identify and assess refugee skills and qualifications before rolling out training programs. They must also be designed in such a way that, they are accessible to refugees at different levels, which at best, correspond to the needs of those enrolled. In doing this, the time frame of training programs must also be enough to equip refugees with the skills being imparted.

Also, as much as skills training is an important measure to the economic integration of refugees, other measures that seek to encourage local employers to recruit refugees must be explored in

integration programs. This can be done for instance by channeling training programs through potential employers, or through the use of economic incentives to promote the employment of refugees as vulnerable people with special needs. Also measures that monitor legal provisions in integration programs must be put in place to prevent discrimination, as well as, tackling the structural barriers refugees face in accessing economic opportunities in their efforts to be part of the new societies.

6.4.2 Host Communities

While these suggested efforts mostly focus on assisting refugees, there is also the need to consider the role of the local population in facilitating the overall success of integration programs. In these programs, the host government, UNHCR and their donors cannot facilitate and support refugees' socio-economic activeness with assistance programs that benefit only refugees. This can undermine their integration as providing support and infrastructure, for which, refugees serve as the main beneficiaries can lead to their resentment by the local populace (see Jacobsen, 2001). This can prevent or hinder refugees' effective integration. For instance, according to the official from UNCHR, they initially had plans to provide housing as part of the socio-cultural component of the integration program.[66] However, the local chiefs disagreed to that plan with the reason that, unlike the host community, refugees had been the sole beneficiaries of assistance in the provision of social amenities and other benefits, since their arrival. Thus, if they were not going to support another venture aimed at serving the course of the refugees alone. The outcome of this was that the funds allocated for the housing project has now been redirected into rebuilding a Senior high School in the community. This has seen the approval from the local leaders since it will benefit the children of both refugees and the locals.

This is indicative of the important role of the host society in the successful integration of refugees. Therefore, in their formulation and implementation, policies should not only seek at addressing the course of refugees alone, but must also seek the development of the host community. In this respect, assistance programs need to be set up in ways that make new services available to both

---

[66] Ibid.

refugees and locals. This practice works towards creating a joint community of refugees and locals which overall benefits refugees to be active members of the society (Jacobsen, 2001, p. 24).

6.4.3 Donor Funding

Setting up these programs also requires funding from donors. As compared to the other two durable solutions, local integration has not received much donor attention over the years. As noted by Stein (1986) , much of international donor efforts do not target assistance at local integration of refugees, but rather, seek to improve their situation in asylum countries, pending the feasibility of return to their host countries. The resultant effect is the lack of effectiveness and unsustainability of integration policies when they are implemented. The data returns show that, the integration package for refugees would have been much improved if there was much funding from donors.[67] This has resulted in bit part programs that are virtually deficient in their impact on the refugees' lives. As suggested by Jacobson (2001) local integration programs for refugees if pursued with much effort and dedication can be an effective durable solution for refugees in protracted situations. Therefore there is the need for refocusing of donor support and funds to ensure the success local integration policies.

6.4.4 Integration- An Act of Performance

In local integration as a durable solution, much research and policy practice has usually focused on the structural and organizational aspects (see Fielden, 2008; Jacobsen, 2001). It has been establish how the enhanced support from the structural and organizational point can improve the effectiveness of local integration policy. While this is important, at the fulcrum of these processes is the individual refugee. Their lives and situations are forced by the phenomenon of wars, and they need assistance in various aspects of their lives, in order to get their lives back in shape. However, recognized as capable agents refugees do not give up by virtue of their situations. They hope for better lives, plan and work towards achieving them. Structural policies such as local integration may come with the best assistance in the effort to help refugees to pursue their goals. But whether the goals of refugees can be achieved or not, is not dependent on these policies. As

---

[67] This is evidenced in for example, the omission of language training programs because of the lack of funds.

revealed in this study, refugees despite their circumstances set life goals and actively worked towards their achievement. While policies like local integration may facilitate this process, they do not ensure their achievement. Refugees themselves act to ensure the realization of their objectives. This has reflected in the study, by how refugees themselves did the actual performance of their integration - employing ingenuity and adapting appropriate means to ensure that, their goals and aspirations in life are met.

Thus, whether they receive support or not, they are determined to realize their life goals and they take their destinies into their own hands to ensure this end. This mirrors Giddens (1979) analysis of the linkages between performance (agency), structure (invariant features of institutions) and power (control of resources, capacity to act). Although power and structure have a great influence on what can be achieved, the stage is dead without actors. As a central point to understanding modern social theory, social life is not completely corrigible by outside observers. In effect, outsiders, such as policy makers may be able to put up structures and policies for refugees in the pursuit of their goals, but they cannot make their actions. Policies like local integration are defined by the performance of refugees. Without their performance or agency, these policies will be dead on arrival.

This linkage between refugee policies and their performance by can be likened to the case of a musical performer, who is given music notes and several practice sessions to provide a perfect performance (Adato & Bassett, 2009). Plans are made on how to phrase a melody, coordinate entrances and pace various sections of a piece. However, much of this plans may go awry during the time of performance. In the face of the realities of the audience and the contingencies of a temperamental instrument, among others, things will suddenly seem different. Here, a good musician needs additional skills to help overcome the nerves, avoid panic and recover from mistakes. The capacity to keep going and avoid a complete breakdown always remain an important musical skill hard to teach or define. It may therefore be of interest for researchers and policy makers to pay some attention to the coping skills of musical performers as a prelude to thinking about the coping strategies of refugees as they pursue their goals. This can help them fashion out the best assistance to help refugees, rather than aiming to perfect programs to rid refugees off their problems.

While policies may be important to helping refugees' rehabilitation and development, it is not a guarantee to this effect. Perhaps the gap between refugees and their policies could be closed if policy makers and researchers on the formal side reflected on one further lesson from the musical field. Technical perfection is no guarantee that performance will succeed in stirring the imagination of the audience. Conversely technically imperfect performances can be great performances (Adato & Bassett, 2009). Integration, is how refugee themselves make it. A refocus of policies and research to this point, it is suggested, will lead to the emergence of much efficient and sustainable policies for the benefit of all.

Bibliography

Books and Articles

Adato, M., & Bassett, L. (2009). Social protection to support vulnerable children and families: the potential of cash transfers to protect education, health and nutrition. *Aids Care, 21*(S1), 60-75.

Alan, B. (2008). Social research methods: London: Oxford university Press.

Algan, Y. (2012). *Cultural integration of immigrants in Europe.* Oxford University Press.

Allport, F. H. (1955). Theories of perception and the concept of structure: A review and critical analysis with an introduction to a dynamic-structural theory of behavior.

Angell, R. C. (1968). Social integration. in Hosseini-Kaladjahi, H. (1997). Iranians in Sweden: Economic, Cultural and Social Integration. . *International Encylopediaof SocialScience, 7.*

Anthony, G. (1979). Central Problems in Social Theory. Action, Structure, and Contradiction in Social Analysis. *London and Berkeley.*

Bakewell, O. (2010). Some reflections on structure and agency in migration theory. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies, 36*(10), 1689-1708.

Beaman, L. A. (2012). Social networks and the dynamics of labour market outcomes: evidence from refugees resettled in the US. *The Review of Economic Studies, 79*(1), 128-161.

Brink, H. (1993). Validity and reliability in qualitative research. *Curationis, 16*(2), 35-38.

Burt, R. S. (2009). *Structural holes: The social structure of competition*: Harvard university press.

Corbett, J. (1988). Famine and household coping strategies. *World development, 16*(9), 1099-1112.

Corbetta, P. (2003). *Social research: Theory, methods and techniques*: Sage.

Costa, R. d. (2006). LEGAL AND PROTECTION POLICY RESEARCH SERIES .Rights of Refugees in the Context of Integration: Legal Standards and Recommendations pdf at http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/44bb9b684.pdf.

Crisp, J. (2000). Africa's Refugees: Patterns, Problems and Policy Challenges. *Journal of Contemporary African Studies, 18*(2), 157-178.

Crisp, J. (2003). No solution in sight: the problem of protracted refugee situations in Africa. *Center for Comparative Immigration Studies*.

Crisp, J. (2004). *The local integration and local settlement of refugees: a conceptual and historical analysis*: UNHCR, Evaluation and Policy Analysis Unit.

DeWalt, K. M., & DeWalt, B. R. (2010). *Participant observation: A guide for fieldworkers*: Rowman Altamira.

DiCicco-Bloom, B., & Crabtree, B. F. (2006). The qualitative research interview. *Medical education, 40*(4), 314-321.

Dick, S. (2002). *Liberians in Ghana: living without humanitarian assistance*: United nations High commissioner for refugees (UNHCR).

Dryden-Peterson, S., & Hovil, L. (2004). A remaining hope for durable solutions: Local integration of refugees and their hosts in the case of Uganda. *Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees, 22*(1).

Eisenhardt, K. M. (1989). Agency theory: An assessment and review. *Academy of management review, 14*(1), 57-74.

Eisenstadt, S. N. (1954). *The absorption of immigrants: a comparative study based mainly on the Jewish community in Palestine and the State of Israel*: Routledge & Kegan Paul London.

Essed, P., Frerks, G., & Schrijvers, J. (2004). *Refugees and the transformation of societies: agency, policies, ethics, and politics* (Vol. 13. in Tete, S. Y. (2012). 'Any place could be home': Embedding refugees' voices into displacement resolution and state refugee policy. Geoforum, 43(1), 106-115.): Berghahn Books.

Essuman-Johnson, A. (2011). When refugees don't go home: the situation of Liberian refugees in Ghana. *Journal of Immigrant & Refugee Studies, 9*(2), 105-126.

Fall, A. S. (1998). Migrants long distance relationship and social network in Darkar. Environment and Urbanization. (10): 1, 135-146.

Feldman, M. S., Bell, J., & Berger, M. T. . (2004). Gaining access: A practical and theoretical guide for qualitative researchers: Rowman Altamira. in Johl, S. K., & Renganathan, S. (2010). Strategies for gaining access in doing fieldwork: Reflection of two researchers. The Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods, 8(1), 42-50.

Ferris, E. (1996). 'Refugees: New Approaches to Traditional Solutions.' in Meyer, S. (2008). FMO Research Guide on Local Integration.

Fielden, A. (2008). NEW ISSUES IN REFUGEE RESEARCH.

Frontani, H. G., Silvestri, K., & Brown, A. (2009). Media Image and Social Integration of Liberian and Togolese Refugees in Ghana. *Africa Media Review, 17*(1&2), 51-75.

Giddens, A. (1979). *Central problems in social theory: Action, structure, and contradiction in social analysis*: Univ of California Press.

Harrell-Bond, B. (2000). Are refugee camps good for children? in Dryden-Peterson, S., & Hovil, L. (2004). A remaining hope for durable solutions: Local integration of refugees and their hosts in the case of Uganda. Refuge: Canada's Journal on Refugees, 22(1). *New Issues in Refugee Research: Working Paper* (Vol. 29): UN. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

Harrell-Bond, B., & Voutira, E. (2007). In search of 'invisible' actors: barriers to access in refugee research. in Tete, S. Y. (2012). 'Any place could be home': Embedding refugees' voices into displacement resolution and state refugee policy. Geoforum, 43(1), 106-115. *Journal of Refugee Studies, 20*(2), 281-298.

Harrell-Bond, B., Voutira, E., & Leopold, M. (1992). Counting the refugees: gifts, givers, patrons and clients. *Journal of Refugee Studies, 5*(3-4), 205-225.

Holliday, A. (2004). Issues of Validity in Progressive Paradigms of Qualitative Research. *TESOL Quarterly, 38*(4), 731-734. doi: 10.2307/3588292

Holliday, A. (2007). *Doing & writing qualitative research*: Sage.

Horst, C. (2001b). Vital links in social security: Somali refugees in the Dadaab camps.: Kenya. pdf at: http://www.unhcr.org/3af66c884.html.

Horst, C. (2004). Money and mobility: transnational livelihood strategies of the Somali diaspora.

Hosseini-Kaladjahi, H. (1997). Iranians in Sweden: Economic, Cultural and Social Integration.

Jacobsen, K. (2001). *The forgotten solution: local integration for refugees in developing countries*: United nations High commissioner for refugees (UNHCR).

Jastram, K., & Newland, K. (2003). Family unity and refugee protection. *REFUGEE PROTECTION IN INTERNATIONAL LAW: UNHCR'S GLOBAL CONSULTATIONS ON INTERNATIONAL PROTECTION, E. Feller, V. Türk, and F. Nicholson, eds*, 555-603.

Jaye, T. (2009). Transitional Justice and DDR: The Case of Liberia. *International Center for Transitional Justice, June*.

Johl, S. K., & Renganathan, S. (2010). Strategies for gaining access in doing fieldwork: Reflection of two researchers. *The Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods, 8*(1), 42-50.

Johnson, R. W. N., D. . (1997). Age Discrimination, Job Separations, and Employment Status of Older Workers: Evidence from Self Reports. Journal of Human Resources 32(4):779-811.

Kabeer, N. (1999). Resources, agency, achievements: Reflections on the measurement of women's empowerment. *Development and change, 30*(3), 435-464.

Kawar, S. A. M. (2014). THE Impact of the Syrian Rrefugee Crisis on the Labour Market In Jordan: A PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS. *International Labour Organization, Regional Office for Arab States*.

Kibreab, G. (1989). Local settlements in Africa: a misconceived option? *Journal of Refugee Studies, 2*(4), 468-490.

Kinzie, J. D. (2001). Psychotherapy for massively traumatized refugees: The therapist variable. *American Journal of Psychotherapy*.

Korac, M. (2003). Integration and How We Facilitate it A Comparative Study of the Settlement Experiences of Refugees in Italy and the Netherlands. *Sociology, 37*(1), 51-68.

Kuhlman, T. (1990). The Economic integration of Refugees in Developing Countries: A Research Model. retrieved from: http://degree.ubvu.vu.nl/repec/vua/wpaper/pdf/19900035.pdf.

Kvale, S. (1996). Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing. Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.

Kvale, S. (2006). Dominance through interviews and dialogues. *Qualitative inquiry, 12*(3), 480-500.

Long, N., & Long, A. (1992). *Battlefields of knowledge: the interlocking of theory and practice in social research and development*: Routledge London.

Longhurst, R. (2003). Semi-structured interviews and focus groups. *Key methods in geography*, 117-132.

Lyby, E. (2001). Vocational training for refugees: a case study from Tanzania. *Crisp, J.; Talbot, C.; Cipollone, D.(Eds.)*, 217-259.

Maagerø, E., & Simonsen, B. (2005). *Norway: society and culture*: Portal.

Makhema, M. (2009). Social protection for refugees and asylum seekers in the Southern Africa Development Community (SADC). *World Bank Social Protection Paper*.

Mason, M. (2010). *Sample Size and Saturation in PhD Studies Using Qualitative Interviews.* Paper presented at the Forum: Qualitative Social Research.

McCord, A. (2011). Skills development as part of Social Protection Programme

Education for All Global Monitoring Report 2012.

Miles, M., & Crush, J. (1993). Personal Narratives as Interactive Texts: Collecting and Interpreting Migrant Life-Histories*. *The Professional Geographer, 45*(1), 84-94. in Tete, S. Y. (2005). Narratives of Hope? Displacement Narratives of Liberian Refugee Women and Children in the Gomoa-Budumburam Refugee Camp in Ghana.

Minow, M. (2002). Education for co-existence. *Ariz. L. Rev., 44*, 1.

Nilsson, D. (2003). *Liberia: The Eye of the Storm: a Review of the Literature on Internally Displaced, Refugees and Returnees*: Nordic Africa Institute.

Nmoma, V. (1997). The Civil War and the Refugee Crisis in Liberia. *Journal of Conflict Studies; Vol 17, No 1 (1997)*.

Noy, C. (2008). Sampling knowledge: The hermeneutics of snowball sampling in qualitative research. *International Journal of social research methodology, 11*(4), 327-344.

Omata, N. (2012). Struggling to find solutions: Liberian refugees in Ghana 28.

Parekh, B. (2005). Unity and Diversity in Multicultural Societies [internet] Geneva, International Institute for Labour Studies Geneva Available from: http://ilo.org/public/english/bureau/inst/download/1parekh.pdf.

Parsons, T. (1978). *Action theory and the human condition*: Free Press New York.

Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods in Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2010). Designing qualitative research. Sage. p. 42*: SAGE Publications, inc.

Patton, M. Q. (2005). *Qualitative research*: Wiley Online Library.

Pauly, B. (2010). Direct Observation as Evidence. In Albert J. Mills, G. Durepos, & E. Wiebe (Eds.), Encyclopedia of Case Study Research. (pp. 302-305). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. doi: http://dx.doi.org/10.4135/9781412957397.n114

Polzer, T. (2004). *We are all South Africans now: the integration of Mozambican refugees in Rural South Africa*: Forced Migration Studies Programme, University of the Witwatersrand.

Porter, G., Hampshire, K., Kyei, P., Adjaloo, M., Rapoo, G., & Kilpatrick, K. (2008). Linkages between livelihood opportunities and refugee–host relations: learning from the experiences of Liberian camp-based refugees in Ghana. *Journal of Refugee Studies, 21*(2), 230-252.

Portes, A. (2000). Social capital: Its origins and applications in modern sociology. *LESSER, Eric L. Knowledge and Social Capital. Boston: Butterworth-Heinemann*, 43-67.

Redfield, R., Linton, R., & Herskovits, M.J. (1936). Memorandum on the study of acculturation. in Kuhlman, T. (1991). The economic integration of refugees in developing countries: a research model. Journal of refugee studies, 4(1), 1-20. .

Reeves, C. L. (2010). A difficult negotiation: Fieldwork relations with gatekeepers. *Qualitative Research, 10*(3), 315-331.

Ritchie, J. L., Jane & Elam, Gillian (2003). Designing and selecting samples. In Jane Ritchie & Jane Lewis (Eds.), Qualitative research practice. A guide for social science students and researchers (pp.77-108) Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. . (2003). Designing and selecting samples in Mason, M. (2010). Sample Size and Saturation in PhD Studies Using Qualitative Interviews. Paper presented at the Forum: Qualitative Social Research.

Ritzer, G. (2007). The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology, SE- ST, Volume IX. USA, Blackwell Publishing.

Robinson, V. (1998). 'Defining and Measuring Successful Refugee Integration', Report of Conference on Integration of Refugees in Europe, Antwerp 12–14 November. Brussels: European Council on Refugees and Exiles.

Rutinwa, B. (2002). Document. The end of asylum? The changing nature of refugee policies in Africa. *Refugee survey quarterly, 21*(1 and 2), 12-41.

Sawyer, A. (1992). *The emergence of autocracy in Liberia: tragedy and challenge*: ICS Press.

Scheyvens, R., Scheyvens, H., & Murray, W. E. (2003). Working with marginalised, vulnerable or privileged groups. *Development Fieldwork: A Practical Guide, Sage Publications: London*, 167-193.

Sesay, F. L. (2002). The root causes of refugee flows in a global context at: http://motspluriels.arts.uwa.edu.au/MP2102fls.html.

Sewell Jr, W. H. (1992). A theory of structure: Duality, agency, and transformation. *American journal of sociology*, 1-29.

Shanmugaratnam, N., Lund, R., & Stölen, K. A. (2003). *In the maze of displacement: Conflict, migration and change*: Norwegian Academic Press. in Tete, S. Y. (2005). Narratives of Hope? Displacement Narratives of Liberian Refugee Women and Children in the Gomoa-Budumburam Refugee Camp in Ghana.

Shaw, E. (1999). A guide to the qualitative research process: evidence from a small firm study. *Qualitative Market Research: An International Journal, 2*(2), 59-70.

Spencer, S. (2003). The Politics of Migration: Managing Opportunity, Conflict and Change, USA, Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing.

Stein, B. N. (1986). Durable solutions for developing country refugees. *International Migration Review. pdf at: http://www.jstor.org/stable/pdfplus/2546035.pdf?acceptTC=true&jpdConfirm=true*, 264-282.

UN. (2007). Building peaceful social relationship by, for and with people.' Accessed from:

http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/peacedialogue/background.htm.

UNHCR. (2009). UNHCR Note on Refugee Integration in Central Europe. pdf available at: http://www.refworld.org/docid/4bfe70d72.html.

UNHCR. (2013). War's Human Cost. UNHCR Global Trends 2013.

Valtonen, M. K. (2012). *Social work and migration: Immigrant and refugee settlement and integration*: Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.

Vincet, M., & Sorenson, B. R. (2001). *Caught between borders: response strategies of the internally displaced*: Pluto Press.

Voutira, E., & Dona, G. (2007). Refugee research methodologies: consolidation and transformation of a field. *Journal of Refugee Studies, 20*(2), 163-171.

Internet News and Websites

http://reliefweb.int/report/c-te-divoire/west-africa-s-refugee-and-security-crisis.
http://thinkafricapress.com/legal/liberians-ghana-refugees-buduburam.
http://worldwithoutgenocide.org/genocides-and-conflicts/rwandan-genocide.
http://www.bbc.com/news/world-africa-24537834.
http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/war/sierra_leone.htm.
http://www.iom.int/files/live/sites/iom/files/Country/docs/IOM-Ghana-Voluntary-Repatriation-of-
        Liberian-Refugees.pdf.
http://www.irinnews.org/report/96440/ghana-liberia-limbo-for-ex-liberian-refugees.
http://www.unhcr.org/4b332bca9.html.
http://www.unhcr.org/4444afcc0.pdf.
http://www.unhcr.org/4890898c4.html.
http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49c3646c125.html.
http://www.unhcr.org/pages/49e484e66.html.
https://www.refugeesinternational.org/where-we-work/africa/dr-congo.
https://www.refugeesinternational.org/where-we-work/africa/somalia.
https://www.refugeesinternational.org/where-we-work/africa/south-sudan.

Other Sources

Agblorti, S. K. (2011). *Refugee Integration in Ghana: The Host Community's Perspective*: UNHCR,
        Policy Development and Evaluation Service.
Alan, B. (2008). Social research methods: London: Oxford university Press.
Bakewell, O. (2010). Some reflections on structure and agency in migration theory. *Journal of Ethnic and
        Migration Studies, 36*(10), 1689-1708.
Beaman, L. A. (2012). Social networks and the dynamics of labour market outcomes: evidence from
        refugees resettled in the US. *The Review of Economic Studies, 79*(1), 128-161.
Blaikie, P., Davis, I. and Wisner, B. . (1994). At Risk: natural hazards, people's vulnerability, and
        disasters, Routledge, London. in Tete, S. Y. (2005). Narratives of Hope? Displacement Narratives
        of Liberian Refugee Women and Children in the Gomoa-Budumburam Refugee Camp in Ghana.
Burt, R. S. (2009). *Structural holes: The social structure of competition*: Harvard university press.
Corbetta, P. (2003). *Social research: Theory, methods and techniques*: Sage.
Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*:
        Sage.
ECRE. (2005). The Way Forward Europe's role in the global refugee protection system :Towards the
        Integration of Refugees in Europe. pdf at:
        http://www.ecre.org/component/downloads/downloads/125.html.
Feldman, M. S., Bell, J., & Berger, M. T. (2004). *Gaining access: A practical and theoretical guide for
        qualitative researchers*: Rowman Altamira. in Johl, S. K., & Renganathan, S. (2010). Strategies
        for gaining access in doing fieldwork: Reflection of two researchers. The Electronic Journal of
        Business Research Methods, 8(1), 42-50.
Giddens, A. (1984). *The constitution of society: Outline of the theory of structuration*: Univ of California
        Press.
Glaser, N., & Moynihan, D. P. (1970). Beyond the Melting Pot: The Negroes, Puerto Ricans, Jews,
        Italians, and Irsih of New York City. in Algan, Y. (Ed.). (2012). Cultural integration of
        immigrants in Europe. Oxford University Press.: MIT Press.
Handlin, O. (1973). The Uprooted. Boston: Little Brown. in Algan, Y. (Ed.). (2012). Cultural
        integration of immigrants in Europe. Oxford University Press.

.

Hardgrove, A. (2009). Liberian refugee families in Ghana: the implications of family demands and
        capabilities for return to Liberia. *Journal of Refugee Studies, 22*(4), 483-501.

Harrell-Bond, B., & Voutira, E. (2007). In search of 'invisible'actors: barriers to access in refugee research. in Tete, S. Y. (2012). 'Any place could be home': Embedding refugees' voices into displacement resolution and state refugee policy. Geoforum, 43(1), 106-115. *Journal of Refugee Studies, 20*(2), 281-298.

Holliday, A. (2007). *Doing & writing qualitative research*: Sage.

Horst, C. (2001b). Vital links in social security: Somali refugees in the Dadaab camps.: Kenya. pdf at: http://www.unhcr.org/3af66c884.html.

Horst, C. (2006). *Transnational nomads: how Somalis cope with refugee life in the Dadaab camps of Kenya* (Vol. 19): Berghahn Books.

Jacobsen, K. (2005). *The economic life of refugees*: Kumarian Press.

Limb, M., & Dwyer, C. (2001). *Qualitative methodologies for geographers: Issues and debates*: Arnold London.

Lyby, E. (2001). Vocational training for refugees: a case study from Tanzania. *Crisp, J.; Talbot, C.; Cipollone, D.(Eds.)*, 217-259.

Miles, M., & Crush, J. (1993). Personal Narratives as Interactive Texts: Collecting and Interpreting Migrant Life-Histories*. *The Professional Geographer, 45*(1), 84-94. in Tete, S. Y. (2005). Narratives of Hope? Displacement Narratives of Liberian Refugee Women and Children in the Gomoa-Budumburam Refugee Camp in Ghana.

Omata, N. (2011). NEW ISSUES IN REFUGEE RESEARCH.

Pavanello, S., Elhawary, S., & Pantuliano, S. (2010). *Hidden and exposed: Urban refugees in Nairobi, Kenya*: Overseas Development Institute.

Portes, A. (2000). Social capital: Its origins and applications in modern sociology. *LESSER, Eric L. Knowledge and Social Capital. Boston: Butterworth-Heinemann*, 43-67.

Quinn, P. M. (1980). Qualitative Evaluation Methods. London :SAGE publication Inc.

Serva, M., & Pearlson, K. (1998). Mar-Tex chemical: managing the research partnership between business and academia. *Information Resources Management Journal (IRMJ), 11*(1), 38-30.

Skonhoft, C. G. (1998). *Coping in Adversity. A Study of Burundian and Rwandan Hutu Refugees during Flight and Exile in Tanzania. in Tete, S. Y. (2009). Whose solution? Policy imperatives vis-à-vis internally displaced persons' perceptions of solutions to their situation in the Sri Lankan conflict. Norsk Geografisk Tidsskrift-Norwegian Journal of Geography, 63(1), 46-60.*, M. Phil thesis, NTNU.

Tete, S. Y. (2005). Narratives of Hope? Displacement Narratives of Liberian Refugee Women and Children in the Gomoa-Budumburam Refugee Camp in Ghana.

Voydanoff, P. (2004). Implications of Work and Community Demands and Resources forWork-to-Family Conflict and Facilitation. *Journal of Accusation Health Psychology*, 9 (4): 275-285.

Wasserman, J. C. J. (2007). Accessing Distrustful Populations: Lesson from ethnographic research with street homeless" Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, TBA, New York, New York City, Aug 11. in Johl, S. K., & Renganathan, S. (2010). Strategies for gaining access in doing fieldwork: Reflection of two researchers. The Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods, 8(1), 42-50.

Horst, C. (2001a). Vital links in social security: Somali refugees in the Dadaab camps: Kenya.

APPENDICES

Appendix 1. Semi- structured Interview Guide for Refugees.

Background Information

1. Gender
2. Age
3. Nationality
4. How long have you been living in Ghana?
5. How did you come here?
6. Where do you live currently?
7. How long have you been staying in this place?
8. What is your Educational Qualification?
9. What do you do for a living?
10. Are you married?
11. How many children do you have?
12. What work does your wife\ husband do?
13. Do you have other dependents?
14. How much do you earn per week?
15. What languages do you speak?

Integration Package from Informants Perspectives

16. Why have you opted to stay in Ghana?
17. Have you received the integration package from the Ghana government?
18. Is the package same as was promised you?
19. How much of the package have you received?
20. Can you tell me what you are using your package for?
21. How far does it help to meet your needs?
22. Which other needs do you need that the package is not enough to cover?
23. Did the government seek your views about the package before determining the contents of the package?
24. Do you have any job skills?
25. Did you acquire them before moving to Ghana or during your time here?
26. Was the skills attained through training programs?
27. Have you attained any training from the integration program?
28. Has the program helped to get a job?

Informant Self-Reflections and Aspirations

29. What do you think about the local integration program in Ghana?

30. Are you able to communicate using the Ghanaian local language?
31. What about rights and opportunities?
32. How is the local integration program helpful to you in these aspects in Ghana?
33. What do you hope to achieve in integrating in Ghana?

Policy Relevant Issues

34. What do you think can be done to improve the integration program?

35. Do you think the Ghanaian community is peaceful enough for you to achieve your future aspirations? (Includes reasons on why you think Ghana is safe)

Appendix 2. Semi-structured Interview Guide for Officials

- Position:

1) How long have you been working with Liberian refugees in Ghana?
2) Do you think it is helpful to them in meeting their needs?
3) What do you think about the modes of determination of the package?
4) If not a good way, what do you think would be the better way in this case?
5) Do you think taking refugees views and needs into consideration should be considered in the program?
6) In your view, do you think the local integration of Liberian refugees is a success and should be an example for other countries pursuing similar programs to follow?
7) What do you think can be done to improve future integration programs?