UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

EXAMINING EFFECTS OF VOLUNTARY REPATRIATION ON RESIDUAL LIBERIAN REFUGEES IN GHANA

BY

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THIS THESIS IS SUBMITTED TO THE UNIVERSITY OF GHANA, LEGON IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MPHIL SOCIAL WORK DEGREE.

JUNE, 2014
DECLARATION

I, Ernestina Adu, do hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own research work carried out under the supervision of Dr. Mavis Dako-Gyeke and that, to the best of my knowledge, it contains no materials previously published or submitted by another person for the award of any other degree by this university or any other institution, except where references have been made and acknowledgements accordingly made.

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(CANDIDATE)

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DR. MAVIS DAKO-GYEKE  DATE

(SUPERVISOR)
DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my dearest mother, Vinolia Zah for her love, support and sacrifices to ensure that my academic dreams were achieved. Mother! Your faith, prayers and resilience through challenging moments has brought me this far. I am all I am because of your love.

To my deceased father, Nana Atta Kwesi III for believing in me and assuring me of your support towards my education, may the Lord keep you.

And To

Foster Edem Tofoatsi, my best friend for your love, understanding, encouragements and immense contribution towards the success of this work.

God richly bless you all.
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ABSTRACT

The study examined effects of voluntary repatriation on residual Liberian refugees living in the Buduburam refugee camp in Ghana. The study was guided by Lee’s theory of migration and Andersen’s behavioral model of health service utilization. Objectives of the study were to (a) identify factors that motivate Liberian refugees to remain in Ghana, (b) find out challenges faced by residual Liberian refugees in Ghana after voluntary repatriation, (c) explore residual Liberian refugees’ access to UNHCR facilities in Ghana after voluntary repatriation and (d) find out coping strategies adopted by residual Liberian refugees in Ghana after voluntary repatriation. A qualitative research method was employed using phenomenological approach. In-depth interviews and focus group discussions were conducted using an interview guide. Sample size for the study was 45 comprising 40 Liberian refugees and five officials working in the interest of refugees in Ghana. Participants were selected using convenience and purposive sampling techniques. Data solicited from the field was analyzed using the framework analytic approach. Findings of the study revealed that voluntary repatriation has negatively affected residual Liberian refugees in Ghana. Furthermore, the study found that voluntary repatriation resulted in the disruption of social network, unemployment and limited access to UNHCR facilities which have affected the wellbeing of residual Liberian refugees in Ghana. Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that voluntary repatriation be made attractive thereby encouraging refugees to repatriate as well as ensuring that challenges of residual refugees are minimized.
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CHAPTER ONE
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Background of the Study

All over the world, people are compelled to migrate from their countries of origin and become displaced as a result of diverse forms of conflicts. These conflicts in most case, expose victims to various forms of violence and life-threatening situations such as hunger, sexual and physical assault, maiming and disembowelment of pregnant women (Ellis, 1999; Floriani, 1980). In an attempt to escape violence and life-threatening situations, people in war-torn countries travel long distances (within and outside their countries of origin), to places they deem safe and secure. The outcome is millions of refugees scattered across the world, who subsequently settle where they may be unwanted and struggle to survive, due to inadequate resources (Crisp, 2000; Myers, 2005).

According to the UNHCR Global Trend Report (2011), there were a total of 42.5 million forcibly displaced people worldwide. Out of this number, 15.2 million were refugees with 10.4 million under the mandate of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR). Further, 80% of the world’s refugees are found in developing countries with the 48 least developed countries providing asylum to about 2.3 million of these refugees (UNHCR Global Trend Report, 2011). Refugees upon arrival in a host country are provided humanitarian support from government of the host country and UNHCR (Agblorti, 2011). They are kept under the mandate of UNHCR until the country of origin is declared peaceful and safe for return. According to the United Nations Refugee Convention of 1951 and the UNHCR statute, refugees in a protracted situation are given the opportunity to opt for any of the three durable solutions. These are resettlement (migrating to a country other than the first country of asylum), local integration (living permanently in the host country) and voluntary repatriation (returning to the country of origin).
Voluntary repatriation has become the most preferred of the three durable solutions of UNHCR since the 1990s (Crisp, 2000; Hansen, Mutabaraka & Ubricao, 2008). One of the major reasons given by UNHCR for preferring voluntary repatriation is the ever increasing conflict situations in Africa, resulting in large number of refugees, which becomes a burden to both UNHCR and host governments. Furthermore, voluntary repatriation of refugees is usually seen by the international community, such as the United Nations, as a sign of peace. Voluntary repatriation therefore serves as an indicator that a country of origin of refugees has become safe for return. Moreover, only about one percent of the world’s refugee population is privileged to be resettled to a third country. Local integration is usually not mentioned because of the unwillingness of most African governments to permanently host large number of refugees (Hansen et al., 2008). The situation leaves most refugees opting to repatriate to their countries of origin, even when local integration is made available.

Currently, Liberia has become peaceful after more than a decade of conflict that led to the loss of several lives and displacing about 700,000 refugees (Boateng, 2010). The protracted civil war in Liberia has ended and Liberia has, since 2003, experienced two successive democratic elections. In spite of the peaceful status of Liberia, thousands of Liberian refugees still remain in the Buduburam refugee camp in Ghana. As a result of the large numbers, UNHCR has encouraged Liberian refugees to return to their country of origin (Liberia) by organizing voluntary repatriation in 2009 (Omata, 2011). After the 2009 voluntary repatriation, about 11,000 Liberian refugees still remained in the Buduburam refugee camp (Omata, 2011). In an attempt to encourage the remaining refugees to return, UNHCR organized another voluntary repatriation exercise in the year 2012. Unlike the previous repatriation exercises, the 2012 exercise was coupled with the application of the cessation clause.
Application of the cessation clause implied that refugees who remained in Ghana would lose their refugee status, the protection of UNHCR, and all other privileges that come with being a refugee such as food and non-food support. According to Dick (2002) and Kibreab (2003), application of the cessation clause questions the voluntariness of the repatriation of refugees. Dick (2002) and Kibreab (2003) further argue that based on the conditions under which refugees are repatriated, refugees may be compelled to repatriate to their countries of origin. Furthermore, as postulated by Boateng & Hilton (2011), voluntary repatriation is organized with the aim of repatriating large numbers of refugees. It is seen as an intervention that lessens the burden of UNHCR and host countries rather than a program implemented for the welfare of the refugees involved (Boateng & Hilton, 2011).

1.1 Statement of the Problem
Refugees are vulnerable and face diverse challenges which can affect their personal development as well as the development of their countries of origin. According to Boateng and Hilton (2011), the challenges faced by refugees make them one of the world’s most complex problems. The complexity of the refugee problem, does not only lie in the challenges they encounter such as traumatic experiences during civil wars, overcrowding in refugee camps, malnutrition and insecurity but also in programs and policies which are implemented with the aim of addressing the refugee problem. One of such programs is the voluntary repatriation of refugees to their countries of origin which is one of the three durable solutions implemented by UNHCR globally.

The purpose of the voluntary repatriation program implemented by UNHCR is to provide refugees an opportunity to return to their countries of origin, in order to help in rebuilding their lives and contribute to the development of their countries after conflict. However, due to the hasty nature in which most voluntary repatriations are organized, voluntary repatriation tends to
affect refugees negatively (Bakewell, 2001; Boateng & Hilton 2011; Crisp, 2000). According to Boateng & Hilton (2011) the hasty process in which voluntary repatriation is organized, among others, explains the unwillingness of some refugees to repatriate. Furthermore, Crisp (2000) and Sessay (2004) assert that irrespective of the peaceful situation in the country of origin of refugees because not all persons would consider their country to be peaceful enough to call “home”.

The assertion of Crisp (2000) and Sessay (2004) confirms the current situation of several thousands of Liberian refugees at the Buduburam refugee camp in Ghana. These refugees, despite several repatriation efforts by UNHCR, have expressed their unwillingness to repatriate but rather opted to permanently stay in Ghana. The situation of refugees who remain (residual refugees) in host countries after voluntary repatriation is usually worsened, due to UNHCR and host government’s inability to immediately come out with clear-cut interventions for the integration of the residual refugees (Agblorti, 2011). Furthermore, the focus of UNHCR is on the implementation of voluntary repatriation, hence little attention is paid to residual refugees.

Additionally, due to the interdependent nature of refugees, voluntary repatriation may affect the psychosocial and economic wellbeing of the refugees. Relationships could be broken, leading to a reduction in their sources of livelihood. Refugees’ support systems could be reduced as some refugees repatriate leaving others behind. Similarly, refugees could be economically affected by voluntary repatriation as economic activities on the refugee camp could reduce coupled with a possible reduction of support from UNHCR. These problems, thus makes it imperative to pay critical attention to the livelihood of refugees after voluntary repatriation. Moreover, studies conducted on voluntary repatriation of refugees in West Africa, especially Ghana are few. However, the few studies conducted, are focused on repatriated refugees, rather than refugees who decide to permanently stay in host countries. It is based on this gap that the researcher
sought to examine effects of voluntary repatriation on residual Liberian refugees living in the Buduburam Refugee Camp in Ghana.

1.2 Objectives of the Study

1.2.1 General Objective

The general objective of the study was to examine effects of voluntary repatriation on residual Liberian refugees in the Buduburam Refugee Camp in Ghana.

Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study were to:

1. Examine factors that motivate Liberian refugees to stay in Ghana.
2. Explore challenges faced by residual Liberian refugees in Ghana.
3. Ascertain residual Liberian refugees’ access to UNHCR facilities in Ghana.

1.3 Research Questions

1. Why are Liberian refugees motivated to stay in Ghana?
2. What challenges do residual Liberian refugees experience in Ghana?
3. How accessible are UNHCR facilities to residual Liberian refugees in Ghana?
4. What coping strategies do residual Liberian refugees adopt whilst in Ghana?

1.4 Significance of the Study

Issues related to refugees, especially reasons for which refugees find themselves in a protracted refugee situation in host countries could generate a lot of controversies. The UNHCR makes several efforts at encouraging refugees to return to their countries of origin when the cause of conflict is over. However, these efforts most often than not become futile. This study provides
relevant information on reasons for which some refugees choose to stay permanently in host countries instead of repatriating to their countries of origin. Evidence from the study provides relevant information which serves as guide for policy makers, government and nongovernmental institutions that work in the interest of refugees.

Additionally, the study brings to light the experiences and challenges faced by refugees, thus, creating awareness on the plight of refugees which could help reduce misconceptions that people usually have about refugees in general and serve as an instrument in advocating for refugees. Also, social workers, psychologists, counselors and other healthcare practitioners will have access to rich information regarding the lived experiences of Liberian refugees and this would enable them work better with refugees as regards the use of effective therapies and interventions. Furthermore, the study unravels some of the strengths and weaknesses associated with refugee repatriation, which could be useful to UNHCR and the international community by serving as reference for subsequent repatriation of refugees in Ghana. Finally, the study adds up to the scanty literature on refugee research especially in Ghana and West Africa and serves as a basis for further study.

1.5 Theoretical Frameworks

The study was guided by the theory of migration and the Anderson’s behavioral model of health services utilization.

1.5.1 Lee’s Theory of Migration

There are several theories that provide different interpretations on refugee repatriation. The study was guided by the theory of migration originally propounded by Earnest Raveinstein in the year 1889. Ernest Raveinstein who is also known as the earliest migration theorist posits that, the main factor for any migration decision is economic. Raveinstein (1889) explains that there are “push-pull” factors in the place of origin and destination of a potential migrant, which
influences a person to migrate. There have been some criticisms about the “Laws of Migration” propounded by Raveinstein (1889). One of such criticism is the complex nature of the 7 laws as described in the Law of Migration”. Another criticism is the focus of Raveinstein’s (1889) theory on rural-urban migration for economic reasons (Bodvarsson & Van den Berg, 2013). Based on the criticisms, other theorists emerged to reformulate and provide various tenets that explain migration. Prominent among them are Lee (1966), Piore (1979), Sassen (1988), Sjaastad (1962) and Todaro (1969). However, this study utilized the theory of migration propounded by Everett Lee (1966) which is a modification of the “Laws of Migration” propounded by Earnest Raveinstein (1889). The theory of migration by Lee (1966) does not only focus on the cost and benefit of migration as related to economic migrants. The theory also focuses on the political, cultural and social factors that influence migration and further explains how these factors influence the decision of potential migrants. The theory posits that there are four general factors that determine whether a potential migrant will move or remain in a particular area; origin factors, destination factors, intervening obstacles and personal factors.

Origin is the area where a person lives before considering migration. Origin factors are those factors found in the place of origin that will propel a migrant to migrate or remain. Lee (1966) asserts that the place of origin is where formative years have been spent and where a person has knowledge of the advantages and disadvantages of living in that area. The place of origin is not necessarily where one was born or has lived, but where a person has an immediate and long-term acquaintance. Thus, in making a migration decision, these factors are carefully considered by the potential migrant in order not to make a hasty judgment as to whether to move or remain in the area of origin.

Lee (1966) suggested that destination factors are those found in an area where a potential migrant perceives to reside or move to. These factors attract a potential migrant. Knowledge of
the area of destination is usually blurred and lacks detail, because conditions associated with the area are usually based on perception. Thus, unlike the place of origin where a person has lived for a long time and knows the advantages and disadvantages, the area of destination comes with some uncertainties. The difficulty to assimilate into a new environment, is one case of uncertainty. Considering these factors, migrants will move if they perceive their destination to be capable of meeting their needs.

Intervening obstacles, as postulated by the theory, are forces existing between the place of origin and destination. These include physical distance, physical barriers and migration restrictions among others, which might be impediment to one migrant but would not be an impediment to another. According to Lee (1966), the most obvious intervening obstacle is distance. The length of time involved in travelling from one point to another, the actual distance and cost of travelling, language, cultural practices and values could determine the migration decision of a person.

Personal factors include a person’s level of intelligence, level of education, personal contacts, personality, ability to cope with change and knowledge of opportunities at the area of destination. Some of the personal factors are constant throughout a person’s life while others such as marriage and change in job vary with regard to stages in the life cycle. Moreover, uncommon occurrences such as conflict, injustice and crime could influence a migration decision. Lee (1966) argued that a person’s decision to migrate is not only determined by origin and destination factors but how a person perceives these factors.

Lee (1966) further mentioned that no matter the nature of migration, every form of migration involves origin, destination and a set of intervening obstacles with the distance of the move being constantly present as an intervening obstacle. In addition to these four factors, the theory further posits that there are two forces found in both the place of origin and destination called
push and pull forces respectively. Push forces are forces that repel people from an area while pull forces are forces that hold people or attract people to an area. The theory also elaborates that migration is selective based on gender, age and social class and these determine how people respond and are affected by the push and pull forces.

Application of this theory to voluntary repatriation and its effects on residual Liberian refugees in Ghana helped the researcher to understand factors that motivate Liberian refugees to remain in Ghana. Understanding the factors that motivate them to stay provides an in-depth knowledge into the political, social and economic challenges as described by Lee. Furthermore, the theory helped the researcher appreciate challenges faced by residual Liberian refugees and why despite such challenges refugees still prefer to stay in Ghana than repatriate to Liberia. Finally the theory serves as a lens through which the researcher observe how various factors come into play before a migration decision is made with regard to the Liberian refugees at the Buduburam Refugees Camp.

1.5.2 Andersen’s Behavioral Model of Health Service Utilization

The model was developed by Ronald Andersen in 1968 and it is a conceptual model which describes factors that determine the use of health services. The model is one of the extensively employed behavioral models used by researchers in studying various groups of people as well as individuals and their behavior towards health services (Andersen, 1995). The model uses a system’s perspective to integrate a range of individual, environmental and provider related variables associated with decision to seek care. According to the model, utilization of health services (e.g. inpatient care, physician visits and dental care) is determined by three main factors: predisposing factors, enabling factors and need (Andersen & Newman, 1973). Predisposing factors are factors related to an individual such as race, age and health beliefs. These factors are personal factors that could determine whether a person will utilize a health
service or not. Furthermore, enabling factors are means and conditions that must be available in order for a person to utilize a health service. For example, a person’s family resources, level of health insurance coverage, access to a regular source of care, the community in which the person lives and availability of health workers. Moreover, need as explained by the model, is the perceived as well as the actual need for health care by a person. The theory is useful for the study because, it helps the researcher understand factors that influence residual refugees’ decision regarding health service utilization.

1.6 Definition of Terms

The key terms used in this study are defined as follows:

Asylum: The right given by a country that allows a foreigner who has left his/her own country due to fear of harm or persecution to stay.

Country of origin/

Home Country: Country of nationality or pre-war country of a refugee

Cessation Clause: According to the UN Refugee Convention of 1951, application of the cessation clause implies losing of refugee status and all privileges that come with being a refugee.

Durable Solution: They are the three options made available by UNHCR and the 1951 UN Refugee Convention for refugees which are: Resettlement, Local Integration and Voluntary Repatriation.

Host Country: Country where refugees are received or hosted

Local Integration: It is the permanently stay of refugees in the host country where they share the same resources with citizens

Protracted Refugee
**Situation:** It is when refugees stay in a host country for more than ten years.

**Refugee:** A refugee is a person who has fled his or her country of nationality or origin to another country due to fear of persecution or death as a result of war in his or her country of origin or nationality.

**Resettlement:** It is the transfer of refugees from the country that first hosted them to another country (usually developed) that is willing to accept them.

**Residual Refugees:** Refugees who remain in the host country after voluntary repatriation

**Returnees:** Refugees who have returned to their countries of origin.

**Voluntary Repatriation:** It is the returning of refugees to their country of origin facilitated by UNHCR.

### 1.7 Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five chapters. The first chapter is the introduction of the study which includes the background of the study, statement of the problem, research objectives and questions, significance of the study, theoretical framework and definition of key concepts. The second chapter is the review of relevant literature in relation to the research objectives. Chapter three describes the methodology of the study which gives details of procedures employed in data collection and how data was analyzed. The fourth chapter presents interpretation of data and discussion. The final chapter comprises summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations based on the findings.
CHAPTER TWO
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

The literature review begins with a general overview of the refugee situation in Africa generally and West Africa in particular, focusing on the factors motivating refugees to remain in host countries, the challenges faced by refugees after voluntary repatriation, refugees’ access to UNHCR facilities after voluntary repatriation, the coping strategies adopted by refugees after voluntary repatriation and possible interventions for this population.

2.1 General Overview of the Refugee Situation in Africa

Africa has been known as a hub of refugees and also as a continent of refugees (Crisp, 1990; Tete, 2005). Among the top 20 refugee producing countries in the world, 11 are found in Africa. About 25 states in Africa have refugee populations that exceed about 10,000 (Crisp, 2000). Emphasizing the severity of the refugee situation in Africa, Crisp (2000) asserts that, Africa has at one point been either a producer or recipient of refugees, due to escalating conflicts which affect the growth and development of Africa as a continent. Initially, the perception of Africa as a hub of refugees was attributed to the struggle for liberation from colonial rule, until about four decades ago (Ellis, 1995).

After the liberation of most African countries from colonial rule, refugee situations still persist and have become a common phenomenon (Ellis, 1995; Essuman-Johnson, 2011). Tete (2005) mentioned that at the end of the 1990s, there were two main regions of displacement; West Africa mostly Sierra Leone, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Guinea and Guinea Bissau. The second region stretches from the Great Lake region (Horn of Africa) Southern Africa with countries such as Rwanda, Somalia and Angola. Tete (2005) mentions that, in the 1980s and 90s majority of the conflicts leading to refugee situations can be attributed to two main factors. One is the
developed world’s interest in mineral resources such as diamond in Africa and the second is the proliferation of arms from the western world. Tribal, ethnic and political causes of conflicts emerged later.

Supporting Tete’s (2005) assertion is the UNHCR Global Trend Report (2012), which reports that 2012 was marked by a refugee crisis that was not witnessed in the past decade. The report also placed Africa, (excluding North Africa), as the second largest host of refugees after Asia and the Pacific, with a total of about 2.8 million refugees. Furthermore, the UNHCR Global Trend Report (2012) showed that about 25% of all refugees globally are from Sub Saharan Africa. Countries such as Somalia, Sudan and the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC) are mentioned as major producers of refugees in Africa. Apart from Somalia, Sudan and the DRC, countries like Liberia, Ivory Coast and Sierra Leone have also produced a large number of refugee populations in West Africa.

2.1.1 Refugees in West Africa

West Africa as a sub region has been a significant producer and recipient of refugees since the 1980s, mainly due to tribal, ethnic and political conflicts (UNHCR, 2005). Countries such as Liberia, Togo, Sierra Leone and recently Ivory Coast, Mali and Senegal are worth noting as major producers of refugees in the sub region. According to Boisvert (2014), there are about 93,738 refugees mostly in Liberia, Togo and Ghana. War in these areas has led to the retardation of development of these countries, not to mention the loss of human resources. In the West African sub-regions, the challenges confronting the hosting of refugees are the high rates of poverty, and the unwillingness of neighboring countries to host large numbers of refugees.
The consequence is that, a few countries are compelled to host extremely large numbers of refugees. The few countries in the continent that open their borders to host refugees are mostly overburdened by the high influxes. One of such countries is Ghana, which has hosted tens of thousands of refugees from Africa, predominantly West Africa. Ghana for instance, hosted refugees from Sierra Leone, Liberia, Togo, Rwanda and Sudan in the 1990s. Ghana, currently hosts refugees from Liberia, Sierra Leone, Mali and Ivory Coast (Hansen et al., 2008). Ghana’s willingness to host refugees led to the creation of the Buduburam Liberian refugee camp in 1990 which provides shelter for thousands of Liberian refugees, as well as refugees from other West African countries.

2.1.2 The Liberian Civil War

The civil war that led to the flight of thousands of Liberians across borders has been described by some researchers and historians as a blood bath and of a cannibalistic nature (Ellis, 1999; Omata, 2011). The Liberian civil war may be traced to the founding of Liberia as a country (Boateng, 2006; Ellis, 1999; Omata, 2011). Liberia is a country founded by the American Colonization Society (ACS) based in the United States of America as a destination for freed African slaves (Boateng, 2006; Ellis, 1999). This action was aimed at ridding America off envisaged sociocultural problems ascribed to the African slaves. This led to the creation of a dual cultural heritage in Liberia: Americo-Liberians on one hand, and the indigenous Africans on the other hand (Boateng, 2006; Dick, 2002; Ellis, 1995).

Liberia gained independence in 1847 with Joseph Jenkins Roberts, a Black man born in America becoming its first president thus, making Liberia the first country in Africa to become a republic (Ellis, 1999). After independence, the country was ruled by these freed slaves (Americo-Liberians) until 1980. Liberia was a one-party state with the Americo-Liberians being in charge of most of the resources and having more power while, the indigenous Liberians were
left with second class status and with less economic power (Boateng, 2006). The lifestyle of the Americo-Liberians exhibited one of extravagance; using flashy cars and expensive clothing which were admired by the indigenous people (Ellis, 1999; Dick, 2002; Boateng, 2006). Due to the influence, power, wealth and lifestyle of the Americo- Liberians, Dick (2002) asserts that even among the indigenous community, all things that were Western came to be respected and admired, while anything considered indigenous or African was underrated.

Liberia became polarized with the affluent and elite Americo- Liberians on one hand, and the indigenous Liberians characterized by poverty and low socioeconomic status, on the other hand. The indigenous Africans who also comprised about 95% of the entire Liberian population felt marginalized. This led to cultural, tribal and leadership struggles between the freed Americo-Liberian slaves and the indigenous Liberians (Dick, 2002; Ellis, 1999). The struggle culminated in a military coup in 1980 led by Samuel Doe, an indigenous military officer who dared to overthrow the Americo - Liberian regime. Samuel Doe remained in power until 1989 when Charles Taylor, a former minister with anAmerico-Liberian origin organized a coup to overthrow Samuel Doe. This move by Charles Taylor began the Liberian civil war which lasted for 14 years. The civil war resulted in the displacement of several thousands of Liberians and subsequently the creation of refugee camps in neighboring countries such as the Buduburam refugee camp in Ghana.

2.1.3 Liberian Refugees at the Buduburam Refugee Camp

The Liberian civil war produced the highest flow of refugees, displacing approximately 700,000 Liberians to neighboring countries such as Sierra Leone, Ivory Coast, Guinea, Nigeria and Ghana, and killing about 200,000 people (Boateng, 2006). About 62% of the entire pre-war Liberian population were either killed or displaced (Boateng, 2006; Ellis, 1995). In response to the influx of Liberian refugees into Ghana, the Buduburam Liberian refugee camp was
established in 1990. Later in 1992, a refugee law was passed and the Ghana Refugee Board was created for the management of refugee issues on behalf of the government (Agblorti, 2011). Buduburam Refugee Camp, although established for the short term hosting of Liberian refugees, has for over the past two decades remained a safe haven for Liberian refugees in Ghana, due to the inconsistent nature of the Liberian conflict.

At the early stages of their stay in Ghana, Liberian refugees were provided humanitarian support from the international community, UNHCR, Non-Governmental Organizations, Faith Based Organization, churches and philanthropists. Services such as free health care and education, food ration and sanitary wares were provided (Dick, 2002). After the emergency stages, support from both the international community and UNHCR began to reduce gradually, due to lack of enough funds and cut down in the budget for refugees (Omata, 2012; UNHCR Ghana, 2012). This resulted in the reduction of food ration and the payment for certain fundamental services such as water, electricity and using the public toilet by refugees (Dick, 2002). As at the year 2011, there was no form of support for Liberian refugees in Ghana, except for the very vulnerable, such as the chronically ill and HIV Positive refugees (Omata, 2012).

2.2 Durable Solutions for Refugees

Durable solutions are the three options made available for refugees; resettlement, local integration and voluntary repatriation according to the UNHCR Statute of 1967 and the UN Refugee Convention of 1951, of which Ghana is a signatory. Any country that is a signatory to the Refugee Convention is mandated to implement the durable solutions as it applies to its country. The reason for providing the durable solutions is to end refugee situations globally by making refugees self-reliant and enable them to acquire the protection of a state. It also helps to restore, rebuild and reconstruct the lives of refugees by bringing to an end, their dependence on international protection and humanitarian assistance. The implementation of durable solutions
depends on several factors: the readiness of the host country and the country of origin, the decision of the international community and UNHCR, the availability of funding and the refugee’s own decision. In view of these, some of the durable solutions are implemented frequently than others. Furthermore, stakeholders concerned (UNHCR, international community, host country and country of origin) mostly consider the uniqueness of the refugee situation in one’s country before recommending possible durable solutions. After such recommendations are made, refugees usually have no choice, but to accept the best among the options made available. This leaves some refugees frustrated as their expectations are not met.

2.2.1 Resettlement of Refugees as a Durable Solution

Resettlement may be defined as the transfer of refugees from the first country which they have initially sought protection to another country, which is usually a developed country that is willing to host refugees permanently (UNHCR, 2005). Before the mid-1980s, resettlement was generally perceived as the most preferred durable solution. As a result of the Second World War, the International Refugee Organization, (which later became UNHCR), used resettlement as a key means in assisting the displaced and victims of war who could not return to their countries of origin (Nmoma, 1997; UNHCR, 2005). Furthermore, resettlement was used to transfer people in dire situations. For instance, people who were expelled from Uganda by the then Ugandan President Idi Amin in 1972 (Nmoma, 1997).

Nmoma (1997) further asserted that resettlement served as an international protection instrument (by which individual refugees who feared prosecution upon return to their countries of origin) were protected thus, through resettlement, developed countries shared the burden of hosting refugees. However, currently, resettlement to a third country is the least implemented of the three durable solutions by UNHCR. According to the UNHCR Global Trend Report (2011), less than one percent of the world’s refugees get the opportunity to be resettled, although it is
the most preferred durable solution by refugees, especially in African countries. This is because resettlement is seen by the international community as another form of displacement and a complicated solution to the refugee problem. Furthermore, there are very few countries that are willing to resettle refugees, making the implementation of this durable solution unreachable to most refugees.

In view of this, refugees who deserve to be resettled are usually determined by UNHCR based on level of vulnerability, health condition, age and gender, which deprives most African refugees this opportunity (Hansen et al., 2008). This is because of the three durable solutions; resettlement is the most preferred by refugees (Essuman-Johnson, 2011). However, most refugees, especially in Africa, live with the hope that they will be resettled someday. The hope to be resettled into a developed country, results in the resistance of voluntary repatriation as a durable solution, even when it is obvious that the country of origin of refugees is safe for return (Essuman-Johnson, 2011). For most of these refugees, resettlement might only remain an illusion, leaving most refugees, especially in Africa, with two options: local integration and voluntary repatriation (Essuman-Johnson, 2011).

Essuman-Johnson (2011) asserted that one of the main reasons for which African refugees remain in host countries is the assumption that prolonged stay in the host country gives them a better opportunity of being resettled to a more industrialized and developed country. Some refugees have a history of war-related trauma and, as a result, fear persecution such that for them returning to their countries of origin is not possible. According to Essuman-Johnson (2011) in his study of Liberian refugees in Ghana, Liberian refugees perceive Ghana as a conducive space and gateway on which to hang on until their dream of being resettled is achieved. Some refugees are motivated to reject voluntary repatriation as a solution to their
prolonged stay in exile. Thus, the choice of resettlement for refugees, is not only due to post-war trauma but also the desire to enhance their livelihood.

### 2.2.2 Local Integration of Refugees as a Durable Solution

Local integration is the only durable solution that provides refugees the opportunity to remain in the host country permanently. A refugee who opts for local integration is given the legal, economic and social right to live in the host country as any other citizen, such as the right to ownership of land and working permit (Agblorti, 2011). Unfortunately, local integration, as a durable solution, is usually an unpopular phenomenon for the refugees and the host country (Omata, 2011). The reasons are that especially in Africa, most governments are burdened with economic problems, and hence the permanent hosting of refugees would be an additional burden. This is because most host countries see refugees as a burden, rather than a resource for productivity and development. On the part of refugees, local integration is not preferred because of the fear of losing resettlement opportunities.

In the case of Liberian refugees in Ghana, Omata (2011) asserts that on several occasions, refugees have protested move by the UNHCR to implement local integration as a durable solution, drawing on the 2008 protest by Liberian refugees in Ghana. However, there are a few thousands of Liberian refugees in Ghana who have opted for local integration as a durable solution. In a research conducted by Omata (2011) to find out reasons for which refugees who had initially protested against local integration in 2008 opted to stay. Omata (2011) noted that considering the two durable solutions (local integration and voluntary repatriation) made available for Liberian refugees in Ghana, some refugees were left with no option, but to remain in Ghana as they were unwilling to repatriate.
2.2.3 Voluntary Repatriation of Refugees as a Durable Solution

Voluntary repatriation is the most viable of the three durable solutions by the international community, especially in protracted situations, and where there are large numbers of refugees. This is because it serves as a signal of peace and stability in the country of origin. It lifts a burden off the host country. Also voluntary repatriation provides refugees an opportunity to return home. Beyond reasons of political stability, the reintegration of previously displaced persons enhances the family unit and national identity of returning refugees (Hansen et al., 2008). Hence, the UNHCR makes every effort possible to facilitate, promote or coordinate voluntary repatriation globally, depending on the uniqueness of each refugee situation in the country of origin and asylum. Available statistics show that between the 1950s and 1990s, tens of millions of refugees who sought protection in Africa, Asia and Latin America availed themselves for the voluntary repatriation option.

Additionally, the number of refugees who repatriated to their countries of origin increased from about 1,709,000 refugees between 1975 and 1981 to 13,201,169 between 1990 and 1999 (Kibreab, 2003). According to Kibreab (2003), most of these refugees repatriate to developing countries that are among the poorest in the world, and where peace is fragile. The UNHCR’s role in voluntary repatriation is influenced by several factors such as pressure from the international community, pressure from the country of origin and asylum, perceived peace in the country of origin and an intended application of the cessation clause. Of the factors mentioned, peace in the country of origin is paramount, and it is the major factor considered by UNHCR. For instance, with the repatriation of Liberian refugees from Ghana, UNHCR organized voluntary repatriation between 2004 and 2007, as a result of the signing of the peace agreement in 2003, which was seen as a sign of peace and stability in Liberia. This exercise saw the repatriation of about 7,000 Liberian refugees from Ghana (UNHCR Ghana, 2009).
Furthermore, between 2008 and 2009, UNHCR organized another repatriation of Liberian refugees from Ghana, which reduced the number of refugees in the Buduburam camp from about 20,000 to about 11,000 by 2011 (UNHCR Ghana, 2012). The most recent repatriation of Liberian refugees in Ghana was in 2012, which was necessitated by the Tripartite Commission, comprising the government of Ghana, government of Liberia and UNHCR. Due to the favorable conditions in Liberia, UNHCR’s Regional Bureau for Africa issued a memorandum of understanding, and came up with a comprehensive strategy for the repatriation of Liberian refugees. In this regard, UNHCR and the Government of Ghana intensified efforts to enhance opportunities for local integration or voluntary repatriation of the refugees.

About 5,000 Liberian refugees repatriated from Ghana to Liberia in 2012 with a one-time support package of USD 300 for adults and USD 150 for children (UNHCR Ghana, 2012). Although repatriating refugees are given support package, some authors argue that voluntary repatriation is usually a hasty process which is not aimed at giving refugees a better life upon return to their home country but to lessen the burden on UNHCR and host governments (Boateng & Hilton, 2011; Omata, 2011). Hence, the support package and hasty processes makes voluntary repatriation an unattractive option.

2.3 Factors Motivating Refugees to Remain in Host Countries

There are several factors considered by migrants when taking a decision to migrate, but for most refugees, the major factor that influences their decision to migrate is survival, which makes refugees a distinct group of migrants. For many refugees, the beginning of migration from the home country is one of confusion, and the destination is usually one of an imagination rather than a reality. Upon arrival in the country of asylum, a refugee is able to decide on how long to remain in that country and the appropriate time to leave. Refugees’ decision regarding whether to remain or return is determined by several factors. Some of the factors discussed in this
chapter are insecurity in post war (home) countries of refugees, infrastructural and socioeconomic challenges in post war (home) countries of refugees and resettlement opportunity in host countries.

2.3.1 Insecurity in Post War (Home) Countries of Refugees

One of the salient factors considered by a refugee in deciding to return to his or her country of origin or remain in the host country is the security condition in the country of origin (Omata, 2011). Refugees flee from their countries of origin during conflict mainly due to fear or the feeling of insecurity. Hence, refugees generally make a repatriation decision when convinced that their country of origin is peaceful enough for return. However, the definition of peace by refugees is subjective, depending on one’s personal experiences, observation and a person’s general feeling of security and insecurity. Although the formal signing of peace treaties and ceasefire agreements is seen as a sign of peace in a once war-torn country by the international community, Omata (2012) argues that a peace treaty does not always imply peace and security to refugees. This Omata (2012) attributes to the traumatic experiences encountered by refugees during conflict which makes them develop a high level of insecurity.

Omata (2012) further asserts that the key reasons for which refugees decide to remain in the host country is the feeling of insecurity upon return. Thus from Omata’s perspective, the host country is often perceived by refugees as safer than the country of origin. Insecurity, as asserted by Omata (2012), stems from traumatic experiences encountered by refugees during the conflict that led to their flight. Omata (2012) further mentions that in situations where a post-war country is determined as peaceful to return to by refugees, victims of violence, such as women who were raped and ill-treated during conflicts are usually hesitant and among the last group of refugees to return. The feeling of insecurity by refugees results in protracted refugee situations globally where refugees remain in host countries for decades. Omata (2012) concludes that
based on traumatic experiences, a decision to repatriate or remain in a host country is personal and varies for each refugee.

Discussing the role of insecurity in influencing refugees’ decision to remain or repatriate is Sessay (2004). Like Omata (2012), Sessay (2004) also admits that feeling of insecurity in countries of origin of refugees is a key factor that influences refugees to remain in host countries even when the cause of conflict in the country of origin is over. Secondly, Sessay (2004) mentions that women usually experience diverse forms of abuses such as physical assault, rape and abduction by men thereby resulting in a feeling of a high sense of insecurity than their male counterparts. An explanation given by Sessay (2004) is the nature of most conflicts where men are the perpetrators and women and children become victims. A study by Sessay (2004), of abused Sierra Leonean women in Guinea, found that these form of violence and abuses deters women from returning to their country of origin after conflict.

Arguably, countries of origin of refugees are not the only cause of insecurity, but also sometimes host countries where refugees seek refuge. Sessay (2004) argues that although host countries are perceived as safe and secure by refugees, in reality it is not always the case as refugees’ security could be threatened by factors such as unfavorable migration laws and criminal activities. According to Sessay (2004), host countries sometimes even pose a greater threat to refugees than their countries of origin. This makes refugees vulnerable both in the host country and in the country of origin, hence increasing their level of insecurity (Sessay, 2004). However, Sessay (2004) adds that whereas feeling of insecurity about one’s country of origin is usually due to traumatic experiences during wars thus affecting a larger number of people, activities that result in the feeling of insecurity in host countries are rare, thereby affecting a lesser number of people should they exist.
In addressing security as a factor considered by refugees, Cook (2005) mentions that the presence of the United Nations Missions is also considered by refugees. According to Cook (2005), the role of the United Nations Mission in any country is to ensure a smooth process of transition in a post war country. Additionally, the United Nations Mission carries out diverse activities such as peacekeeping, civilian policing and socioeconomic assistance purposes in any country after conflict. Cook (2005) describes the role of the United Nations Missions as an inevitable part of the transition process of any post war country. The presence of the United Nations Missions in Liberia (UNMIL), and for that matter, in any post war country as asserted by Cook (2005), is generally aimed at eliminating fear, reinforce security and to communicate to resident citizens, citizens who fled war, and other nationals that a country is peaceful and secure.

2.3.2 Infrastructural Challenges in Post War (Home) Countries of Refugees

Infrastructure remains one of the major key determinants of the success of a country’s economy (Foster & Pushac, 2010). Another cause of the low infrastructural development in most African countries is wars. Rampant civil wars in most African countries limit infrastructural development (Hoeffler, 1999) because these conflicts usually result in the destruction of private as well as state owned properties such as hospitals, schools, markets, roads and places for public gatherings. Countries such as Rwanda, Burundi, Djibouti, Somalia, Democratic Republic of Congo, Sierra Leone and Liberia are examples of countries that have experienced low infrastructural development due to conflicts. Radelet (2007) mentioned that in Liberia, 70% of schools in Liberia were either partially or completely destroyed during the Liberian civil war.

Furthermore, although the infrastructural conditions in Liberia have improved since 2003, lack of good road networks, hospitals, electricity and water supply remain a major problem (Radelet, 2007). In post conflict countries such as Burundi, Sierra Leone and Liberia, the war led to
destruction of its major infrastructure, hence, the need for rebuilding of infrastructure in order to ensure their development. Furthermore, infrastructural development is required to ensure the smooth integration of its exiled citizens (refugees) as availability of infrastructure could facilitate the smooth integration of exiled citizens into their home countries. Fransen & Kuschminder (2012) in their study of repatriated Burundian refugees found that infrastructural challenges were one of the major problems encountered by the repatriated refugees. According to Fransen & Kuschminder (2012) lack of access to houses and land for farming were the major infrastructural challenges encountered by the refugees upon their return to their home country. Fransen & Kuschminder (2012) assert that unavailability of infrastructure, especially houses, could get repatriated refugees frustrated, hence resulting in their inability to smoothly integrate. This suggests that lack of basic infrastructure such as houses, could make integration futile, lead to conflict between repatriated refugees and citizens who stayed as well as deter other refugees from returning to their home country. In addition to the unavailability of infrastructure in home countries of refugees, Fransen & Kuschminder (2012) mentioned that lack of property restitution laws also compound the infrastructural challenges faced by refugees. The importance of property restitution laws according Fransen & Kuschminder (2012) cannot be overlooked. This is because they are laws that help citizens who flee wars to repossess their properties upon return. Unfortunately in most post conflict countries, these laws are non-existent and where available are ineffective. As a result, refugees upon return to their home countries are unable to reclaim their properties, which further worsen their situation.

In emphasizing the importance of infrastructure to refugees in their home country is, Kibreab (2003) who notes that citizenship right and infrastructure, both in the country of asylum and origin are carefully considered by refugees before a return decision is made. Kibreab (2003) explains that the motivation behind refugee migration in Africa is not only due to fear or lack of
peace in the country of origin after conflict, but also due to the unavailability of basic infrastructure and unfavorable governmental policies that do not ensure property restitution and citizenship rights of refugees. Kibreab (2003) in comparing infrastructural conditions of Africa to developed countries noted that infrastructural challenges are characteristic of many African countries.

Furthermore, Kibreab (2003) asserts that favorable policies that protect the rights of refugees such as property restitution laws are usually unavailable in most African countries. Property restitution laws as described by Kibreab (2003) enables refugees to legally claim their properties upon return to their home country after conflict. Where it is not possible to reclaim properties, Kibreab (2003) maintains that refugees ought to be compensated but this is not the case for most African countries. Due to the inability to reclaim properties, most refugees prefer to remain in the host country than to return.

2.3.3 Unfavourable Socioeconomic Conditions in Post War (Home)Countries of Refugees

According to Segal and Mayadis (2005), the socioeconomic condition of a post war country determines its readiness to receive its citizens who fled during conflict. Favorable socioeconomic conditions enable refugees to integrate quickly. The integration of returnees into their country of origin is vital to a post-conflict country as it serves as an attraction for fled nationals to return. Contrarily, most refugees upon return to their countries of origin are unable to quickly integrate due to unfavorable socioeconomic conditions. The unfavorable socioeconomic conditions could result in the re-return of repatriated refugees to their host country. According to Omata (2011), the next priority of a returnee (repatriated refugee) after securing shelter is an attempt to start up a new livelihood.

Refugees usually have uncertainties about sustenance of their livelihood in a post-war country where they once lived. This fear is attributed to unfavorable socioeconomic factors, such as
unemployment, poverty and lack of family support. These factors usually lead to large number of refugees remaining in the host country even when it is evident that the country of origin is safe for return. Unemployment implies starvation and inability to provide for basic needs, thus, worsening the condition of a refugee than it was in his or her host country. Additionally, unemployment is usually coupled with lack of employable skills which most refugees lack due to their inability to equip themselves while in exile. Adding to the lack of employment is non-provision of startup kits and resources by host governments, such as capital and equipment to create businesses for returning refugees (Hegre, Ostby & Raleigh, 2009; Omata, 2011).

In the absence of jobs, family serves as a buffer for refugees as they attempt starting a new livelihood upon return (Omata, 2011). Family support plays a vital role in helping returned refugees start up a new livelihood. As found in Omata (2011)’s study of repatriated Liberian refugees, repatriated Liberian refugees who had family support upon return had less difficulty starting life while those who did not have any family support were unsuccessful in starting life. Traditionally, the family plays an important role by meeting some basic needs of its members such as food and shelter as well as providing emotional support (Hegre et al., 2009). This support is particularly vital for returned refugees as they integrate into their country of origin after conflict.

The absence of family support coupled with unemployment could lead to severe emotional and mental disorders. From the viewpoint of Omata (2011), the fear of starting a new life in a country of origin is justified due to the prolonged stay in the host country and lack of family support among others. In supporting Omata’s assertion, Hegre et al., (2009) add that the absence of efficient socioeconomic conditions in countries of origin of refugees could result in unhappiness which may affect refugees’ psychological wellbeing. In addition, unfavorable socioeconomic conditions could result in the adoption of social vices as a means of survival.
Contrary to Omata (2011) and Hegre et al., (2009) is Lambo (2012) who argues that refugees’ ability to integrate into their home country after conflict does not depend on family support but on the refugee. In Lambo (2012)’s study of Somali refugees, he found that planning prior to repatriation, communication, resilience and self-determination plays a key role in the life of a refugee and not necessarily family. Additionally, Lambo (2012) asserts that proximity to refugees’ country of origin and nostalgic feelings about a person’s country of origin helps refugees integrate with minimal challenges. Lambo (2012) concludes that effective planning prior to repatriation, timing of repatriation play an important role in the integration of a former refugee into his or her country of origin than the availability of family support.

2.4 Challenges Faced by Refugees after Voluntary Repatriation

Generally upon arrival in host countries, refugees are given a warm welcome both by the host government and community in which they live. On the part of the host communities in which refugees live, members begin to develop positive attitude towards their guests and coexist with them peacefully. However, this cordial relationship that exists between refugees and host community turns sour, especially when the refugees’ stay is prolonged beyond the expectation of the host community. This relationship is worsened due to factors such as limited infrastructure and natural resources such as land. Furthermore, violence, crime and unemployment make life challenging for refugees. Some of the challenges faced by refugees after voluntary repatriation are discussed below.

2.4.1 Competition between Refugees and Host Community

A community can be defined as a group of people with common values, culture and living within a particular geographical area (Lynn, 2005). A community although is defined as people with common values and culture may have members with diverse views and perception. These views and perception could result in conflict among community members. The chances of a conflict become high when the community has people of diverse origin and nationality such as
Ghanaians and Liberians. According to Lynn (2005), one of the major causes of conflict is competing for limited resources and struggle for power. In the case of host communities and refugees, limited resources have been identified as one of the major causes of conflict (Agblorti, 2011). Competition between host communities and refugees is one of the major challenges faced by refugees. According to Agblorti (2011), there is an assumed automatic hospitality and friendship that exists between refugees and members of host communities, which may not be entirely true, especially in protracted refugee situations.

Usually, the expectation of host communities is that refugees will remain in their community only for a short period (Agblorti, 2011). Hence when their stay is prolonged, it may lead to tension at various levels, such as conflict over resources. Identifying the cause of competition and conflicts, Agblorti’s study of Liberian refugees in Ghana showed that, the distribution and provision of humanitarian aid and other incentives for refugees upon their arrival in the host community was the cause of conflict. Agblorti (2011) explained that host community members felt neglected in the sharing of these items hence, their unwillingness to share community resources with refugees. The competition over resources such as water and land was a major cause of conflict among refugees and host community (Agblorti, 2011).

Compounding the loss of land is the feeling of marginalization by the host community as refugee population usually far outnumbers that of host community. Moreover, lands owned by the host community are taken over by government for the establishment of refugee camps, while refugees also encroach lands owned by the community (Agblorti, 2011). This usually results in a situation where host community members have a sense of insecurity and feel their community is being taken over by refugees. Furthermore, Ghana like most African countries place high value on land ownership due to the belief that land served a spiritual purpose by being a link between host community and their ancestors (Agblorti, 2011). Hence to the host
community inhabiting of large portions of their land implied deprivation of blessings from ancestors and dispossessior of family legacy.

Similarly, Veney (2007) mentions that there is an initial cordial relationship that exists between host community and refugees. Although the main cause of conflict is due to limited resources, host communities’ misconception of refugees as a burden rather than a resource also contributes to the conflict (Veney, 2007). This is because host communities usually accept refugees with the hope of benefitting from humanitarian assistance and other infrastructure. Hence, when the expectations are not met and host community has to share its limited resources such as water and land with refugees, this generates conflict. A conclusion drawn from Veney (2007) is that, adequate resources for both host community and refugees could lessen conflicts.

A study by Berry (2008) which focused on the impact of environmental degradation on refugee-host relationships in Northwestern Tanzania tended to bring to bear factors that lead to conflict and competition between refugees and host communities. Berry (2008), like Agblorti (2011) and Veney (2007) found that there is generally a cordial relationship between refugees and host communities and the cordial relationship was attributed to similar cultural practices, intermarriages and business activities. The common cultural practices, intermarriages and business activities provided refugees and the host community an opportunity to interact more frequently, hence, conflicts were minimized.

In discussing causes of potential conflict between refugees and host communities, Berry (2008) asserts that agricultural activities, bush burning, charcoal burning and other activities that led to environmental degradation were the causes of conflict. Moreover, refugees in their quest to survive trespassed forest reserves and lands, involved in activities, such as hunting of wild animals among others. Berry (2008), however, admitted that these conflicts rarely occurred and where they did, there were existing conflict resolution committees that resolved these conflicts.
Conclusion drawn from Berry’s (2008) study indicates that cordial relationships between refugees and host communities could be ruined due to environmental degradation.

2.4.2 Criminal Activities on Refugee Camps
Refugee camps and settlements are typically characterized by criminal activities such as armed robbery, theft and drug abuse (Hough, 2013). These criminal activities can be attributed to the high rate of poverty, hunger and the proliferation of arms as a result of the permeable nature of these camps (Hough, 2013). Boateng and Hilton (2011) mention that refugees flee their country with almost nothing. Upon arrival in refugee camps, refugees carry out various activities (despite the dangers involved), in order to survive. However, in situations where refugees share their settlement with host communities, Hough (2013) argues that criminal activities on refugee camps are not only perpetrated by refugees, but also by non-refugees such as host community members.

Criminal activities perpetrated by host community members and non-refugees are mostly carried out during the arrival of refugees (Hough, 2013). At the arrival of refugees in their host communities, shelter and other basic needs are unavailable thus predisposing refugees to criminals. In Vogler’s (2006) view, criminal activities on refugee camps are mainly perpetrated by non-refugees. Vogler (2006) adds that civilians as well as security personnel who are usually expected to provide protection for refugees also become perpetrators of criminal activities thus further endangering the lives of the refugees in their host community. An outcome of these criminal activities is the inhibition of refugees’ social life and movement on camps due to fear of attacks by criminals.
2.4.3 Disruption of Social Network among Refugees

Social network can be defined as the relationship or connections that individuals have with one another. According to Boateng (2006) positive interactions found in the network characterized by trust and reciprocity makes up the social capital of an individual. Social networks and social capital are vital for the psychosocial development of people especially refugees (Boateng, 2006). This is due to the fact that most refugees in fleeing from conflicts lose members of their social networks such as family and friends to death and other factors. Others, although their family members could be alive, are never able to get in touch. For this reason, to a refugee, social networks extend beyond immediate family and friends, to anyone who shows concern. Due to the interdependent nature of refugees, a disruption of the social network could be detrimental.

The disruption of social networks of refugees is attributed to several reasons. One of such reasons is the movement of refugees from one place to another as in the case of voluntary repatriation of refugees (Jerusalem et al., 1996). Refugees during voluntary repatriation move from their host countries to their countries of origin. This movement often results in disruption of social networks as some refugees migrate to their countries of origin while others remain in the host countries (Jerusalem et al., 1996). According to Jerusalem et al., (1996), repatriated as well as residual refugees experience disruption in their social network. The effect is severe for both groups of refugees as they have to adapt strategies to broaden their social network.

Contrary to Jerusalem et al., (1996) is Hovil (2010) who argues that voluntary repatriation does not lead to disruption of social network. In Hovil’s (2010) view the timing and preparedness of refugees to repatriate and distance between refugees’ host country and country of origin /is a major determinant of social network disruption. In a planned repatriation, refugees are able to strategize and decide on mode of communication and number of visits to each other which facilitates their social network. However, Hovil (2010) mentions that migration of refugees
could result in separation of close relationships, such as families, but these separations are usually temporary as both repatriated and remaining refugees are able to create a niche that supports their relationships. Furthermore, in host countries, refugees are able to broaden their relationships relating with host community members.

2.4.4 Unemployment among Refugees

Africa as a continent is generally noted for high rate of unemployment which creates a vicious cycle of poverty among its people (Hoeffler, 1999). Due to the economic nature and the high rate of unemployment in most African countries, refugees in particular, suffer severe unemployment, which can be attributed to the following reasons. In both host and home countries of refugees, the general cause of unemployment is due to the unavailability of jobs and appropriate governance structures (Hoeffler, 1999). However, in host countries of refugees, unemployment is usually due to lack of requisite legal documents that enable refugees to work (Mattheisen, 2012). Secondly, due to the limited jobs available, employers prefer to employ citizens rather than refugees. Unemployment generally has negative repercussions such as hunger, poverty and inability to meet basic needs but this can be more severe on refugees, because most refugees flee into host countries with virtually nothing.

The severe impact of unemployment on refugees is worsened in cases where there is no humanitarian support, which implies that refugees have to fend for themselves. Mattheisen (2012) in her study of Central African Republic refugees in Cameroon found that unemployment was a major challenge to refugees. Mattheisen indicates that lack of legal documents, stigmatization and lack of requisite skills were the main causes of refugee unemployment. Refugees in most host countries are unable to secure employment because they do not have the requisite qualifications and documents to secure a job. This is usually as a result
of the nature of flight where refugees are not able to pick required documents that will secure them employment.

Ott (2011) explored the impact of migration on refugees’ ability to integrate into three locations in the United States of America hosting the largest number of refugees namely; Kansas, Pittsburgh and greater Detroit. According to Ott (2011), underpinning the cause of refugee unemployment is the already distressed economic conditions in most African countries which imply that refugees compete with nationals for limited jobs. Moreover, Ott (2011) note that, unemployment among refugees is determined by several factors, but the key factor is the location of the refugee.

By location, Ott (2011) explains that access and availability depends on the economic and level of development of the host country, as well as the availability of policies that protect refugees in all aspects including employment. In a good location (such as a developed country where refugee protection policies are effective), a refugee stands a greater chance of securing employment. Although access to employment for refugees in developed countries are high, Ott (2011) mentions that refugees could gain easy access to menial jobs in communities where majority of the population are aged. A conclusion from Ott (2011), is that availability of jobs for refugees depends several factors, including the availability of policies that protect refugees and the level of development of the host country.

2.5 Residual Refugees’ Access to UNHCR Facilities after Voluntary Repatriation

The role of UNHCR over refugees cannot be over emphasized as it is the mandated institution in charge of protection of refugees globally. UNHCR together with other donors provide food and non-food support for refugees upon their arrival in a host country. The day-to-day managing of affairs and provision of services to refugees is usually assigned to implementing partners (NGOs or other organizations and institutions) deemed fit by the UNHCR for such
purposes. Infrastructure such as schools, health facilities, vocational training centers, public places of convenience as well as food and non-food items are made available by UNHCR in an attempt to make life meaningful and bearable for refugees. The infrastructure provided is usually intended to serve mainly refugees, although in most cases, host communities also benefit (Phillips, 2003). During repatriation of refugees, some of these facilities are left behind to the advantage of the remaining as well as host community (Phillips, 2003).

Access to infrastructure for refugees is a necessity, as it makes life easy. However, in most cases during repatriation, access to these facilities may be restricted for various reasons. In Ghaffar-Kucher’s (2005) view, UNHCR facilities such as education, health care and food rations are normally restricted or completely withdrawn after voluntary repatriation. There are two main reasons given for the restriction or withdrawal of UNHCR facilities and services (Ghaffar-Kucher, 2005). The first reason is that the withdrawal of services and closure of facilities is used as a strategy by UNHCR to encourage refugees to return (Ghaffar-Kucher, 2005). An example is the case of Afghan refugees in Pakistan (Ghaffar-Kucher, 2005). Secondly, the withdrawal of facilities and services is done because when conflict is over in a once war-torn country, the focus of UNHCR and other donor organizations is to help rebuild the country. Hence, resources are channeled into the country of origin for development purposes rather than into the host country.

The withdrawal of such services and facilities could result in competition and overcrowding as there are few facilities with large number of refugees. Contrary to Ghaffar-Kucher (2005), Hopkins (2011) argues that UNHCR facilities are made available to residual refugees throughout their stay in host countries. According to Hopkins (2011), facilities and services intended for refugees are always made available by UNHCR, however, the unofficial relocation of refugees from UNHCR official settlements and ignorance about where services can be
accessed are factors that prevent refugees from accessing UNHCR facilities after repatriation. The restricted access to UNHCR facilities, according to Ghaffar-Kucher (2005) and Hopkins (2011), negatively affects the development of residual refugees, especially the vulnerable and extremely poor who might not be able to afford services such as health care.

2.6 Coping Strategies Adopted by Refugees

Civil wars trigger traumatic experiences, and in order for a person to overcome trauma, coping is required. Generally, coping strategies are measures or skills adopted by people in an attempt to eliminate uncomfortable events and situations in life such as wars, accidents and floods which affects a large number of people and also events such as divorce, marriage and losing a loved one. War is one of the situations that expose people to extreme danger which is outside the range of usual human experience thus, making it traumatic to those who experience it.

Coping as defined by Atkinson, Atkinson, Smith, Bem & Nolen-Hoeksema (1996) is the process by which a person attempts to manage stressful demands. According to Atkinson et. al (1996), there are two types of coping, which are problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping.

In problem-focused coping, a person focuses on the problem or situation and finds a way of changing it or avoiding it future occurrence. On the other hand, emotion-focused coping is the type of coping where a person tries to alleviate the emotion associated with the problem or situation even if the problem itself cannot be changed. Furthermore, Atkinson et. al (1996) mention that in dealing with stressful situations most people use both types of coping. In situations that can easily be changed or avoided, problem-focused coping is employed whereas in uncontrollable situations emotion-focused coping is usually employed (Atkinson et. al, 1996). Although coping is usually a psychological process, Atkinson et. al (1996) mention that it
sometimes involve physical activities such as exercising, drinking alcohol and available social support.

Refugees are regarded as one of the most vulnerable groups of people in the world, due to various degrees of traumatic experiences they encounter during conflicts. Coping is necessary because scholars such as Gillespie, Pelzer & Maclachan (2000) postulate that the inability to cope with traumatic events could result in psychological disorders, which when unresolved, does not only lead to mental disorders, but also physiological manifestations such as non-productivity, fatigue, headache among others, thus affecting the general wellbeing and development of people. Furthermore, Khawaja, White, Schweitzer & Greenslade (2008) posit that, in responding to extreme difficulties experienced by refugees throughout migration, refugees adopt several coping strategies, including the use of religion, social support networks and refocusing. In support of this assertion, Pahud, Kirk, Gage & Hornblow (2009) also mentioned prayer, spiritual activities and social networks as very important coping strategies for refugees.

2.6.1 Religion among Refugees

Religion, according to Pahud et al., (2009), is one of the most widely adopted coping skills used by severely traumatized people such as refugees. Studies conducted have shown that persons with religious and political convictions are able to deal better with their traumatic experiences. Religion plays a very crucial role in the recovery of severely traumatized and also serves as a major resource in dealing with daily living (Pahud et al., 2009). To Pahud et al., (2009), religious activities such as prayer, spiritual beliefs and associated activities do not only bring hope, but also strengthens a person’s source of hope, and gives meaning to one’s life. In emphasizing the importance of religion as a coping strategy, Pahud et al., (2009), in their study
of former resettled adult refugees in New Zealand, found that prayer was the first coping strategy adopted in dealing with emotional distress.

Religion as a coping strategy serves as a basis for other opportunities. For instance, Pahud et al., (2009) mention that involvement in religious activities provides refugees access to information about jobs and enables them reconstruct their social network as they relate with others (Pahud et al., 2009). This implies that involvement in religious activities broadens a refugee’s social network. Khawaja et al., (2008) accentuate the importance of religion in the lives of refugees by asserting that religion is the first coping strategy adopted by refugees irrespective of their religious affiliation. Involving in religious activities provides refugees inner strength and hope which helps them overcome difficult situations.

2.6.2 Economic Activities among Refugees

The presence of refugees in a host country is usually seen as a burden on host countries. To the contrary, one of the advantages of hosting refugees is the expertise and business activities they engage in especially in a protracted refugee situation (Boateng, 2006). Dick (2002) explored the survival strategies of Liberian refugees in Ghana with the aim of examining the extent to which Liberian refugees had become dependent due to the humanitarian assistance they receive. Dick (2002) argues that, contrary to the popular misconception that refugees are unproductive and dependent due to the humanitarian assistance they usually receive. Refugees are active, productive and industrious enough to create businesses for their sustenance. Their desire to work is made evident in situations where refugees volunteer and render varied forms of services for individuals as well as organizations.

Involvement in income earning activities such as trading, food vending, operating telephone call centers and carrying of goods are common among refugees especially in Africa. Refugees just like other people involve in economic activities with an ultimate aim of making profit. This is
because for most refugees, food rations and other humanitarian assistance provided by donors are woefully inadequate to meet their needs as well as that of their usually large family size. However, the uniqueness in the involvement of refugees in income earning activities such as trading is that these activities serve as a coping strategy (Dick, 2002). Furthermore, involvement in economic activities helps refugees feel independent and confident. By so doing refugees are able to contribute to the economic development of their host country, become independent and overcome daily challenges.
CHAPTER THREE
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

This chapter describes the methods used in this research. The chapter describes among others, the research design, study area, target population, study population, sample size, methods and instruments used in data collection and how data was analyzed.

3.1 Research Design

A qualitative research design was employed using the phenomenological approach. Qualitative research was adopted because it is described as the best research method when conducting research on topics that are intangible, complex, sensitive and requires personal and lived experiences of participants (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Furthermore, the phenomenological approach was employed because it enabled the researcher to study a small number of participants through extensive and prolonged engagement, to develop patterns and relationships of meaning (Creswell, 2003; Moustakas, 1994).

3.2 Study Area

The Gomoa-Buduburam Refugee Camp was the study site. It is popularly known as Buduburam or Liberia Camp and is located in the Gomoa East District of the Central region in Ghana. The camp lies in a semi-urban area and is about ten minutes’ drive from Kasoa (the nearest major town) and approximately thirty five kilometers from Ghana’s capital city, Accra. The camp covers a land size of approximately 141 acres and is divided into twelve zones. Zones 1 to 9 are mainly refugee communities, while zones 10 to 12 are mixed communities dominated by Ghanaians. Zones 10 to 12 are known as the village as these zones are dominated by Ghanaians. These zones are an extension of the camp due to the influx of Liberian refugees in subsequent waves of the Liberian civil war.
The camp has two markets, a hospital, schools, public toilets, police and fire service station, social welfare office, camp management office provided by the UNHCR for the refugees and other offices run by NGOs. In addition, social amenities such as drinking spots, fast food joints, restaurants, guest houses, cinemas and hotels are widespread on the camp. The predominant economic activity on the camp is petty trading, especially selling of ‘provisions’ (consumables and other merchandise), food stuff and operating mobile communication centers popularly called ‘space to space’. Like any local community in Ghana, it is open and allows the free movement of people in and out of it. The structure of the camp facilitates intercultural and socioeconomic relations between refugees and host community members. The zones are controlled by zonal heads who serve as leaders and manage the affairs of the zone, while affairs of the entire camp is managed by a camp management committee headed by the camp manager.

Buduburam camp was established in 1990 which makes it the oldest refugee camp in Ghana and is the largest in terms of population size. According to Omata (2011), the population size of Liberian refugees on the camp as at the year 2011 was 11,000. The researcher decided to use the Buduburam refugee camp because about 80% of its inhabitants are Liberian refugees. It is also the oldest and the first camp established in Ghana. Furthermore, the researcher chose the Buduburam refugee camp because the Liberian refugees in the Buduburam refugee camp have on several occasions protested against the implementation of voluntary repatriation and local integration (Agblorti, 2011; Tete, 2005).

3.3 Community Entry Techniques

The researcher contacted the Buduburam Liberian Refugee Camp Manager to seek permission to carry out the study. It was deemed necessary by the researcher to contact the camp manager because he serves as the custodian of the camp on behalf of UNHCR and the Ghana government. The objectives of the study were explained to him and he accepted to be part of the
study. The researcher then contacted a Peer Counselor and volunteer on the camp who is well known on the camp due to his work with the refugees. The Peer Counselor also accepted to be part of the study and served as a gatekeeper who introduced the researcher to the various participants. The researcher’s decision to use a gatekeeper was due to the unwillingness of refugees to talk to strangers and also for the participants to build confidence in the researcher.

3.4 Target Population

The target population of the study was all Liberian refugees living in the Buduburam refugee camp in the Central region of Ghana, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Faith-Based Organizations (FBOs), government agencies and departments responsible for the provision of care, protection and support for refugees in Ghana.

3.5 Study Population

The inclusion criteria for the study were registered Liberian refugees aged 25 years and above, who had lived at the Buduburam Liberian Refugee Camp since their arrival in Ghana and has opted to permanently stay in Ghana. This is because the study focused on refugees who witnessed the civil war in Liberia and who have officially opted to stay in Ghana after the 2012 voluntary repatriation exercise. The study population also included key informants who work with governmental and Non-Governmental Organizations on the camp providing care and protection for the refugees. Key informants provided in-depth information on topics discussed and issues raised by refugees.

3.6 Sample Size

The sample size for the study was 45 consisting 40 Liberian refugees (23 women and 17 men) and five (a woman and four men) officials who provide care, support and protection for refugees in Ghana. The officials included: The Program Coordinator of the Ghana Refugee
Board (GRB), the Buduburam Refugee Camp Manager, the Buduburam Camp Social Welfare Officer, the Project Coordinator of the National Catholic Secretariat and the Country Director of Point Hope (a Non-Governmental Organization on the Buduburam refugee camp).

3.7 Sampling Techniques

Non-probability sampling techniques specifically convenience and purposive sampling techniques were employed in recruiting participants for the study. Convenience sampling was used because according to Creswell (2003), convenience sampling is a quicker way of receiving responses from participants. Furthermore, convenience sampling was used because although there were about 5,000 Liberian refugees at the Buduburam camp (UNHCR Ghana, 2012), not all of them met the criteria for inclusion in the study. In order to qualify as a participant of the study, a refugee should be residing on the camp at the time of the study, 25 years or older and should have opted to locally integrate (stay in Ghana). The researcher ensured that all participants met the criteria for the study by contacting the Buduburam Refugee Camp Manager. The Camp Manager led the researcher to the registration point. After introducing the researcher to the registration officials and the Liberian refugees, the researcher then announced the study. Liberian refugees who were interested were asked to meet the researcher after their registration. On the other hand, purposive sampling was used to select participants who had information on the research topic (Kreuger & Neuman, 2006). This was deemed necessary because the key informants were people who have worked with the refugees for several years, and as such, had detailed information on the issues explored by the researcher such as the year of arrival of refugees, reasons for the prolonged stay of Liberian refugees in Ghana and challenges faced by refugees.
3.8 Sampling Procedure

Using the convenience sampling method, participants who were willing to participate in the study were identified by the researcher with the help of a gatekeeper, three weeks prior the commencement of the study. Details of participants were collected and put into six categories. Participants in the first four categories were put into focus groups. The first three focus groups comprised two men and four women in each group, with the last group being all women. The fifth category comprised 16 participants (five women and 11 men) who participated in the in-depth interview and the sixth group comprised five key informants who participated in an in-depth interview. Participants were then contacted on phone two days before the interview to remind them of their appointment with the researcher and to confirm their participation in the study. This was deemed necessary by the researcher to avoid absenteeism by participants on the day of the interview and focus group discussions.

3.9 Methods of Data Collection and Data Sources

Data for the study were gathered from two main sources; primary and secondary.

3.9.1 Primary Data

Primary data was gathered from participants through in-depth interviews and focus group discussions in the form of informal interactions with respondents using an interview guide. The two methods of data collection were employed and these enabled the researcher to triangulate information gathered from respondents. According to Ritchie and Lewis (2003), an in-depth interview is appropriate in conducting a comprehensive investigation and when soliciting information on personal experiences on delicate issues. Furthermore, the in-depth interviews enabled the researcher to probe into issues and provided an insight of the topic through the responses of the participants.
Moreover, it provided participants an opportunity to express their subjective views about issues discussed. The focus group discussion was also useful because it provided a social context and a good platform for the researcher to explore views and opinions of participants on the same topic (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). Additionally, the focus group discussion gave the researcher quick understanding of salient issues of agreement and disagreement as well as providing the researcher an opportunity to observe participants as issues unfolded during the discussions (Creswell, 2003).

3.9.2 Secondary Information

Secondary information was collected to support the primary data solicited as well as gave the researcher an in-depth knowledge into the research topic. Sources of secondary information included publications from the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) office and website related to the topic under study. Journal articles and books, reports on Liberian refugees in Ghana from the National Catholic Secretariat as well as news items and articles related to the research topic were used. Articles were reviewed based on the objectives of the study.

3.10 Data Handling

In-depth interviews and focus group discussions were audio-taped on a voice recorder and safely stored on a compact disk. The recorded voices were transcribed verbatim in English language using Microsoft Office Word application 2010 version. Transcripts were grouped based on the objectives of the study for easy analysis.
3.11 Data Analysis

The Framework Analytic Approach developed at the National Center for Social Research in the 1980s (Ritchie and Spencer, 1994 in Ritchie and Lewis, 2003: 171) was used in analyzing the data. The framework analytic approach was deemed appropriate because the researcher found it easier to use as compared to other analytical methods, such as the phenomenological analysis method. It also helped the researcher to understand and interpret participants’ views and experiences (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003). The first step of the framework analysis approach is familiarization and identification of initial themes. At this stage the researcher read through transcripts in order to be conversant with various issues raised and discussed in the transcribed data. Familiarization was necessary because it also helped the researcher identify emerging and recurring ideas. Through familiarization, initial themes were identified.

The next step according to the framework analytic approach is devising index. In devising index, recurrent issues in the data were identified and themes were sorted and grouped. The grouping was done such that subthemes were created under each broad theme and numbered. The third step was labeling of transcripts which involved identifying similar themes and pairing them with portions of the data that were related to the particular themes. Sorting of data according to themes was the next step. At this stage data was grouped according to themes generated from the objectives of the study. It allowed the researcher to focus on details of the transcript. After sorting, data was put into charts to allow for easy summary. Charting helped the researcher to link similar ideas. It also enabled the researcher to have a pictorial representation of the themes, which made interpretation easier. The next step was summarizing of data. Data was summarized under each theme to make it more manageable. Finally, the summarized data was interpreted by providing comprehensive explanations and write ups.
3.12 Member Checking

Member checking was deemed necessary in order to ensure credibility and trustworthiness of data collected. The process involved sharing of the content of transcripts with respondents for clarification and confirmation. Member checking also ensured that data collected was credible and trustworthy (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson and Spier, 2008). Additionally, Creswell and Miller (2000) describe member checking as a critical technique required to establish credibility in qualitative studies.

3.13 Ethical Considerations

The researcher adhered to all ethical requirements in conducting a social research. Permission was sought from appropriate authorities; UNHCR, the Camp Management and the Ghana Refugee Board in order for the researcher to gain access to the refugee camp. Participants of the study were informed of the purpose of the study and their consent sought. Participants were given a consent form to sign or thumbprint as evidence of their approval to be part of the study. Permission was sought from participants before recording their voices. In order not to alter data received from participants, data was transcribed verbatim in Liberian English and its corresponding English interpretation put in parenthesis where necessary. Participation was voluntary and participants were assured that they could opt out at any stage of the study. The researcher ensured confidentiality and anonymity of research participants by using pseudonyms when referring to participants in the study in order to protect the true identity of participants. Due to the nature of the study, the researcher ensured that a counselor was available should the research process provoke any trauma of the past. Finally, all sources of information were duly acknowledged to avoid plagiarism.
CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION OF THE FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study and discussions based on the findings. The researcher employed a qualitative method in gathering data for the study, analyzed and discussed data thematically based on the objectives of the study. Data was interpreted and supported with the reviewed literature. Due to the sensitive nature of the study, actual names of participants were not used in the study instead; pseudonyms were used in the presentation of findings.

4.1 Presentation of the Findings

4.1.1 Demographic Characteristics of Participants

4.1.1.1 Age of Participants

The ages of participants were inquired during the study. The participants’ age ranged between 27 years and 70 years. The age range enabled the researcher to receive diverse views and experiences on the research topic. A breakdown of the age range and the number of participants are as follows: 13 of the participants were within ages (25-35), 13 participants were within ages (36-45), eight participants were within ages (46-55), eight participants were within ages (56-65) and three participants were above 65 years.

4.1.1.2 Sex of Participants

There were 17 male and 23 female Liberian refugees living in the Buduburam refugee camp who participated in the study. There were also five key informants comprising four males and a female.
4.1.1.3 Occupation of Participants

Participants engaged in diverse occupations: out of the 40 refugee participants, two were beauticians, two HIV Counselors, two Teachers, a Musician, two Pastors, two Electricians, 3 Petty Traders, a Hospital Receptionist, a Retired Nurse and 24 were unemployed. Out of the five key informants, there were three Project Coordinators, a Camp Manager and a Social Worker (Social Welfare Officer).

4.1.1.4 Duration of Stay at the Buduburam Refugee Camp

The duration of stay of the participants ranged from 11 to 23 years depending on the three phases of the Liberian war; 1989, 1997 and 2002. Eighteen of the participants had been on the camp for 23 years implying that this group of refugees arrived in Ghana in 1990 during the first phase of the Liberian war. Twelve participants had been on the camp for 17 years (second wave of refugees who arrived in Ghana in 1997) and the third group; comprised 10 refugees who had been on the camp for 11 years (arrived at the last wave of the war in 2002).

4.1.1.5 Religious Background of Participants

The researcher sought to find out the religious background of participants. Participants of the study had diverse religious affiliations. There were 27 Christians belonging to different denominations (Pentecostal, charismatic and orthodox), six Muslims, two Traditionalist and five people who did not belong to any religion.

4.1.1.6 Educational Background of Participants

The breakdown for the educational background of participants are as follows; six of the participants had completed primary education, 15 were junior high school leavers, 10 senior high school leavers, two tertiary graduates and seven were uneducated.
4.1.1.7 Marital Status of Participants

The marital status of participants was explored and the breakdown is as follows: 15 of the participants were married, three were widowed, 18 were single and four were cohabiting.

4.1.1.8 Ethnic Group of Participants

Participants belonged to diverse ethnic groups. There were four participants who belonged to the Vai ethnic group, 11 were Kru, nine were Khran, six were Kpelle, four were Grebo and six Mano.

4.1.2 Factors Motivating Liberian Refugees to Remain in Ghana

Participants gave several reasons for their decision to stay in Ghana. These reasons are discussed under the following subthemes; insecurity in Liberia, infrastructural challenges in Liberia, unfavorable socioeconomic conditions in Liberia and resettlement opportunity in Ghana.

4.1.2.1 Insecurity in Liberia

Findings of the study revealed that, feeling of insecurity as a result of the Liberian civil war served as an important motivational factor that influenced Liberian refugees’ decision to stay in Ghana. In order to ascertain the experiences of the war and how it influenced their decision to stay, participants were asked to share their experiences. Some participants shared their personal experiences, as well as their observation of other people’s experiences during war. Hajia a 56 year old female refugee participant said:

“The rebels killed my husband, my father-in-law and gang raped my two daughters and shot my right hand…I can’t go back there because I have the scar which reminds me of the pain and loss.”
Moomuni a 35 year old male refugee participant recounted:

“They killed my mum and dad before my very eyes. They hit my head with a gun and chuk (stab) me with a knife in my palm and back (takes off his shirt and shows the scar to the researcher) and they said they will crucify me today...., I have great fear for my life and going back to Liberia....”

Emmanuel (a 37 year old male refugee participant) said:

“I wrestled with the rebels and killed one of them unintentionally because they wanted me to continue being with them but I was tired of seeing blood..., so I escaped to Sanzule in the Western region of Ghana but the people (rebels) pursued me to Ghana, they poured acid on my face (takes off his hat and spectacle) and left me, they have destroyed me for life..., How can I go back?. Aside that the UNMIL is still in Liberia and there is war in Ivory Coast, If I go to Liberia and war start again, where will I run to?. So, how can we say that Liberia is safe?”

These narratives bring to bear the traumatic experiences encountered by participants during the civil war that spanned from 1989 to 2002. Though experiences happened over two decades earlier, findings study showed that the traumatic experiences are deeply ingrained in the minds of the refugees. To the participants, this has resulted in the fear of returning as some of them still believe that the combatants, warlords and rebels who perpetrated these acts were still alive in Liberia. Although fear was generally expressed by all participants, female participants expressed a more intense fear. Female participants attributed their fear to physical abuses such as rape by warlords and violent men during the war hence, their decision to stay in Ghana. Furthermore, fear was attached to anything or names associated with the civil war such as Charles Taylor, rebels, warlords, gunshots and guns. This fear as revealed in the study manifested in the form of dreams and flashbacks.
4.1.2.2 Infrastructural Challenges in Liberia

Findings of the study revealed that one of the factors motivating Liberian refugees to stay in Ghana is the infrastructural challenges in Liberia. Lack of access to housing and infrastructure such as water, electricity, roads, schools and hospitals were mentioned by participants as some of the salient reasons for which they decided to stay in Ghana. According to the participants, the current infrastructural situation in Liberia makes it extremely difficult for repatriated Liberians to have access to basic infrastructure such as housing. Tati, a 30 year old female refugee participant said:

“I do not have a home in Liberia now, they burnt our house during the war, and now if you take me to Liberia and ask me to show you the land I can’t because it’s about 23 years since I left Liberia.”

Dekontee, a 28 year old female refugee participant added:

“I think it’s better here, at least there are free rooms here. Also some of the counties do not have electricity, good roads and health centers.”

Experiences shared by some participants revealed that motivation of Liberian refugees to stay in Ghana was due to readily available facilities such as accommodation, easy access to water and electricity at the camp as compared to Liberia. A 69 year old male refugee participant noted:

“I have decided to remain in Ghana because of accommodation. I pay ₋GH¢7.00(3 USD) for accommodation here and before 2009, I was not paying for accommodation at all. The cost of moderate accommodation in Liberia is about (50 USD) a month…I do not have it. I can’t go roaming the street with my things and say I am from Ghana please give me a place to sleep or I want a place to sleep for free.”
A key Informant added:

“The reality is that there are refugees who do not have homes in Liberia due to the war, some have lost their land and properties to other people.”

A female participant mentioned:

“I do not know where to stay in Liberia if I decide to go back because our house was destroyed in the war and some other people have built on that land and living there.”

From the findings, it is evident that infrastructural challenges influenced refugees to remain in Ghana. All participants mentioned unavailability of shelter as the next most pressing factor to fear and feeling of insecurity in Liberia. Participants expressed fear of not having access to shelter in Liberia due to the following reasons; destruction of properties during the civil war by various factions, fear that others might have moved into their property, high cost of accommodation in Liberia and inability to restitute properties due to loss of supporting documents. Linked to the inadequate infrastructure in Liberia is the minimal repatriation package given to repatriating refugees. Participants mentioned a USD 300 package given to every repatriating adult refugee (refugees aged 18 years and above). The woefully inadequate repatriation package according to the participants did not encourage them to opt for repatriation.

Apart from accommodation, which was mentioned as the basic infrastructural problem, inadequate health, educational and social services was also mentioned by participants of the study. Lack of access to infrastructure, such as schools, health facilities, water, electricity and good roads discouraged Liberian refugees in Ghana from repatriating. While participants unanimously agreed that unavailability of accommodation in Liberia was the major infrastructural reason that deterred them from repatriating, there were varied views on the availability of health, educational and social services such as schools and health facilities. Some
participants mentioned health facilities as the most pressing infrastructural need while others mentioned electricity and good roads. These were based on individual needs and expectations of participants as well as which part of Liberia participants intended to reside upon return. In comparing the availability of infrastructure such as schools and health facilities in Ghana and Liberia, participants expressed willingness to stay in Ghana because they are more accessible in Ghana and at the camp than in Liberia.

Adjoa, a female participant said:

“I am HIV positive and I receive treatment from Korlebu (the biggest hospital in Ghana) in Accra monthly. Although Liberia has hospitals, I hear of regular shortage of ARVs, no support groups and there is no much assistance given like the one I receive here. Two of my friends who repatriated earlier with the same condition, but had to come back a few months after..., so for me I chose to stay so I can live longer and be healthier. I am waiting if things get better and I know they can treat my condition, I will go, I don’t want to risk my life, life is not two it is one, you die once.”

Fatu, a 39 year old female participant added:

“Children have to walk a long distance to go to school in Liberia because the schools are not enough for the children, schools were destroyed during the war but here in Ghana, we have schools right on the camp in fact so many schools.”

Mr. Po, a male participant said:

“Not all of us are from Monrovia..., the roads to the hinterlands are not good, no light, no water..., unlike from Buduburam to Accra, Kaneshie or Circle where you can get car at any time. In the town I come from in Liberia, the roads are destroyed, cars don’t go there regularly and some parts do not even have electricity... So I won’t move from a
camp where there is light, water and good road to my country and go and live like a villager, I hope you understand?, life is better here.”

4.1.2.3 Unfavorable Socioeconomic Conditions in Liberia

The socioeconomic condition in a post conflict nation is vital in influencing refugees’ decision to either stay in the host country or to return to the country of origin. As found in this study, unfavorable socioeconomic conditions in Liberia influenced refugees’ decision to stay in Ghana. Participants described anticipated socioeconomic conditions that could hinder their progress and successful integration into Liberia. Unfavorable socioeconomic conditions mentioned included lack of family support, lack of employment opportunities and lack of nostalgic attachment to Liberia due to their prolonged stay in Ghana. Serena, a 29 year female who has been in Ghana for 15 years shared:

“...I have no business, no qualification and no skills... going back to Liberia means starting life afresh and competing for the same job which is almost unavailable with so many people. I don’t know how to start and am afraid I might fail because I don’t have anybody there to support me.”

Tarlue, a 30 year old male participant who has been in Ghana for 23 years stated:

“...No job, no money in the system, everything is expensive and everybody is in Monrovia because that is where there is ‘life’ and you can find everything. I don’t have friends there, I don’t have a family....”

It was evident from this study that the cost of living in Liberia is high and in order for a person to meet basic needs, access to employment was vital. Upon return to Liberia, a person could be unemployed or lack requisite employable skills for a lengthy period of time, therefore, family support could make life more meaningful and bearable. However, this is not the case for some refugees, because they do not have families to support them upon return to Liberia. This
suggests that returning to Liberia could lead to inability to sustain livelihood, resulting in poverty. Liberian refugees therefore consider the services they receive and benefits they enjoy in Ghana as more significant than what Liberia, their home country offers them upon should they return.

Furthermore, participants mentioned dependence on each other at the camp as a buffer for hunger and poverty. The refugees however, had uncertainties regarding support from family and friends should they return to Liberia. During the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, it was revealed that participants, especially those below age 35, had concerns regarding unemployment, lack of nostalgic feeling and lack of family support as factors that discouraged them from returning to Liberia. Participants aged 55 and above mentioned that their decision to remain in Ghana was because they did not have enough resources that would enable them to return and live a decent and independent life in Liberia.

To affirm this assertion, Jordan, a participant below age 35 said:

“There are no jobs and no family to ask for help when you need it. If my parents were alive I would have a reason to go back”.

Ama, 30 year old female participant added:

“For me I decided to stay in Ghana because my case is different and personal. I was 11 years old, I just followed people to Ghana. I don’t know where my parents are till now, I have never been nurtured by them ever since that time (war)...if I get up and say I am going to Liberia, where am I going after living in Ghana for over 18 years?... for I am not attracted to go back, I don’t have any affection for Liberia...”
4.1.2.4 Resettlement Opportunity in Ghana

As a durable solution, resettlement is the most preferred alternative yet, only about one percent of the world’s refugee population has the opportunity to be resettled. From the findings of this study, it was evident that participants’ decision to remain in Ghana was two-dimensional. On one hand, refugees opted to stay because they faced two situations; either voluntary repatriation or local integration. Participants mentioned that they felt compelled to choose a durable solution or face the application of the cessation clause (where they would no longer be regarded as refugees and would not have the protection of UNHCR and the international community), hence, their choice to remain in Ghana (local integration). Participants expressed that weighing the two options made available to them, deciding to remain in Ghana, provided them a better opportunity to be resettled (transferred to a developed country) in the near future. In expressing her views, Emmanuel, 37 year old participant noted:

“The UN said there were three durable solutions, but later they came back again and said there was only two; either you stay or you go, for me my situation I can’t go home, so I chose to stay in Ghana and my hope is that resettlement will come for me one day as I stay in Ghana.”

Ada, a 40 year old female participant added:

“For me I chose to stay because when Ghana is tired of hosting us, they will turn as over to the UN and the UN will look for other countries like America, Sweden and Australia and send us where life will be better. I chose Ghana because for me resettlement is more possible in Ghana than in Liberia”.

A 27 year old male participant called James expressed:

“My hope is that one the UN will activate the resettlement package and I will have the opportunity to go abroad maybe to Canada, United States, Australia or anywhere outside Africa, that is why I decided to stay in Ghana instead of going home (Liberia).”
From the perspectives of the refugees, included in the study, they had a greater chance of being resettled in a developed country if they stayed in Ghana than if they repatriated to Liberia. Although not explicitly mentioned, majority of the participants expressed a desire to be resettled in a developed country and mentioned their preference for resettlement as a durable solution as compared to voluntary repatriation and local integration.

4.1.3 Challenges Faced by Residual Liberian Refugees after Voluntary Repatriation.

Findings of the study revealed that participants faced diverse challenges after voluntary repatriation. These challenges are however compounded after repatriation where the remaining (residual) refugees wait to be integrated. The challenges faced by Liberian refugees in Ghana as found in the study are categorized into four subthemes; competition between host community and refugees over camp resources, increased criminal activities, disrupted social network and increased rate of unemployment after repatriation.

4.1.3.1 Competition between Host Community and Residual Refugees

Participants were asked describe their relationship with the host community. Responses from participants indicated that the relationship between the host community and Liberian refugees is not as cordial, like it was upon their arrival on the camp. From the study, it was made evident that, there is often an expectation by the host community that refugees are temporary guests, and thus their prolonged stay serves as a threat to the host community. Competition and conflict between host community and refugees was over land and other camp resources such as water. Grand Pa, a 69 year old participant in describing the situation said:

“Our relationship before repatriation was good and I must admit that the host community has been good to us...These days things are not the same with our people (host community) again, they fight with our people over almost everything including...
common water...we Liberians are the cause of all this . . . me of the refugees going on repatriation sold houses and in some cases lands to the Ghanaian. . . .”.

Sister Jay, a 45 year old participant added:

“I went to fetch water at the Point Hope (an NGO) water station, and then suddenly a certain Ghanaian woman came to lift my bucket and put hers there. When I asked her why she did that, she said whether I like it or not she will fetch before me, if I can’t bear it I should go to my country. Several of my colleagues also complain of similar incidence on the camp”.

Delving into the issue of competition between host community and refugees, it was evident that the host community previously had a cordial relationship with refugees, but this relationship had turned sour, due to the prolonged stay of the refugees. The prolonged stay of the refugees could suggest that host community members who owned lands that had been converted into the camp had lost their lands to the government until the refugees repatriate or relocate. Furthermore, findings of the study revealed that host community and refugees did not only compete over camp resources, such as water, but also over other resources, such as land and houses. Participants shared that on several occasions (during the time of voluntary repatriation and especially after repatriation), they received threats from Ghanaian individuals and groups claiming the houses they lived in belonged to them.

Miss Peach, a female participant noted:

“I was in my room when two men knocked on the door, they said the land and the house is for them, so I should tell my cotenants and that they will be back... Later they came again and this time they were very aggressive, so I went to report to the camp manager who intervened.”
Another female participant affirmed:

“...they said the house and the land I live in belongs to them and that they bought the house from a Liberian refugee who had gone on repatriation, so they will eject me after two weeks, These threats are common, sometimes you wake up and it’s a demarcation on your house or a land post on your land which signals that your house has been sold....”

Johnson, a male participant added:

“They have started worrying us about the houses we are living in. They said the land is for them and not for government and UNHCR and that they gave the place (land) to UNHCR and Ghana government for 20 years which is long overdue. They also said that repatriation has taken place and ended so they expect all Liberians to leave but we are still here. My landlord called a meeting and told us he was selling the house so we should pack out”.

The experiences shared by participants bring to bear the issue of conflict over resources. In explaining further the cause of conflict, a Key informant narrated:

“The refugees themselves did certain things that has come back to hit at them. When the camp was becoming full, some of them went into negotiations with people for their land at that time everybody thought refugees will be here for 4 or 5 years and go back but they kept longer than that...Some of these people want their land back because they have waited for too long, in addition some of the refugees sold their lands and houses when they were going on repatriation without telling the land lord. . . .”
Another Key informant mentioned:

“They always come to me complaining about conflicts and quarrels among Ghanaians and themselves (refugees), in some cases I have to mediate in order to ensure there is peace”.

Experiences shared by participants indicated that claim of land ownership resulted in conflict between the host community and the Liberian refugees. There were two main factors that led to the competition and tension among the host community and the refugees. The first was the misconception by the host community that all Liberian refugees would repatriate to Liberia, hence, their presence after the repatriation posed a threat to the host community. Secondly, the re-renting and selling of houses and lands by the refugees culminated in a state of insecurity among the refugees, as they felt the camp was being taken over by Ghanaians depriving them of their freedom of movement. The competition could generate into conflict between refugees and the host community, thereby threaten security in the refugee camp and of Ghana as a host country.

4.1.3.2 Criminal Activities at the Buduburam Refugee Camp

Participants were asked to describe the security situation on the camp after voluntary repatriation. Findings of this study showed that although the Buduburam refugee camp has records of criminal activities, the aftermath of voluntary repatriation has resulted in rampant criminal activities almost on daily basis. Criminal activities such as theft, armed robbery and mobile phone snatching, among others, were mentioned by the participants. These criminal activities, as revealed by the study have resulted in restricted movement on the Buduburam camp, due to fear of attacks by the perpetrators who operate especially at night. In describing the impact of criminal activities on the lives of refugees on the Buduburam refugee camp, Maatu, a female participant mentioned:
“Thieves and phone snatchers are too many on the camp these days. There are places that are not safe to pass whether broad day or night. These attackers will attack asking that you bring everything you have and if you don’t give it to them, they will chuk (stab) you with a knife. Things were not like that before the repatriation. Before the repatriation it was only Liberians and we felt safe”.

Brown, a male participant recounted:

“The criminal activities are too much now. I stepped out to buy food at the market and in 15 minutes when I returned, my net had been burnt and my tape taken away. This is just a few of the example. Electrical wires are cut every day and there are some places that you cannot pass alone after 6:00pm”.

Ajo, a female participant added:

“Police officers are always around especially at night looking for criminals who are hiding here. Mobile phone snatching and stealing of items are very common these days”.

According to the participants, criminal activities especially theft, mobile phone snatching and armed robbery in the camp are on the rise. These activities put fear in the refugees, as they don’t know when, where and who could be the next victim. The effect of these nefarious activities has resulted in the restricted movement of refugees especially at night. From the study, two reasons were given by respondents as major factors contributing to the increase in criminal activities in the camp. One of the reasons is the relocation of other nationals into the camp due to the low cost of accommodation and the use of the camp as a den for nefarious activities. The second reason is the unavailability of the Neighborhood Watch Team (NEWAT), a Liberian refugee based security team, who provided security services especially at night to supplement the efforts of the Ghana police in the camp. The implication of the absence of the NEWAT is that the level
of security on the refugee camp is reduced as the police is unable to provide security at various locations on the camp. Furthermore, other secluded places at the camp where the NEWAT safeguarded are left vacant hence, giving way to criminals to operate.

4.1.3.3 Disrupted Social Network among Residual Refugees

Another challenge mentioned by the participants was a disruption in their social network. Social network according to this study were immediate, as well as distant relationships refugees depended on for survival. A disruption in the social network of a refugee implies a break or reduction in ones source of livelihood and low social cohesion among the refugees. Refugees’ social network included close relations such as wife, husband, children, cousins as well as neighbors, refugees belonging to the same ethnic or religious groups and non-refugees whom refugees could contact for help. Mr. Tom, a male participant said:

“There is a break in our connection and dependency on each other . . . I could go to people for oil, rice and chili. Now majority of the people have left, so my support base has reduced.”

To affirm this Sister Jay, a 45 year old female participant recounted:

“I use to go to Area U every evening to boss (chat) with my friends. If I am hungry, by the time I return from area U. I am satisfied . . . I can borrow anything from them: dress, pepper, rice. That association does not exist any longer because the people I used to visit are gone. It is difficult for me now because for my entire life here I have depended on people.”
Mrs. B, a female participant expressed:

“We opted to repatriate but later I changed my mind, my husband repatriated so I am here with two of our children and we hardly hear of him. I am taking care of them, their school fees and everything. It’s not easy.”

The effect of voluntary repatriation on refugees’ social network was negative due to dependency that existed among the refugees as shared by participants of this study.

4.1.3.4 Increased Rate of Unemployment among Residual Refugees

Findings of this study revealed that voluntary repatriation had resulted in an unusually high rate of unemployment. Unemployment was found to be one of the challenges experienced by residual Liberian refugees in the Buduburam camp after voluntary repatriation. All participants admitted that the refugee camp had some level of unemployment since its inception, mainly due to lack of requisite qualifications and documents demanded by employers in Ghana. Yet, it was noted that the voluntary repatriation exercise had worsened the unemployment rate on the camp by affecting both refugees and non-refugees in the following ways. The first is the drastic reduction in the population size of refugees from about 11,000 to 5,000, consequently resulting in low patronage of businesses, especially trading in merchandise and food vending which are the predominant economic activities on the Buduburam camp.

Secondly, the repatriation of the refugees led to the withdrawal of some Non-Governmental Organizations on the camp, this resulted in the redundancy of its employees. A vivid example given was the National Catholic Secretariat that had to lay off about 13 of its HIV/AIDS Counselors. Another reason for the high rate of unemployment among residual refugees was the closure of schools especially private pre and basic schools. This is because aside the fact that some of these schools were owned and managed by Liberian refugees who repatriated, the study

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also revealed that repatriating parents went with their children. An implication of parents repatriating with their wards was a reduction in the number of students especially at the primary basic school level. Furthermore, most of the schools which are still operating on the camp required a Teacher Training College certificate which most of the refugee teachers did not have therefore rendering them unemployed. The high rate of unemployment and lack of an alternative means of survival could result in some refugees involving in social vices which could pose security threat not only to other refugees but Ghana as a host country.

Zelda, a female participant said:

“I was working as an HIV/AIDS counselor in the St. Gregory Clinic for an NGO but I am jobless now because the number of people on the camp has reduced and so is the number of people who patronized our service . . . Currently, there are only two counselors working there out of 13 counselors, the rest of us were asked to go home.”

A male participant narrated:

“I use to sell about GH¢70.00 worth of provisions or more in a day, after repatriation the maximum I sell is about GH¢30.00 a day, you see the difference that is what am talking about, business is not good anymore.”

A 28 year old female participant added:

“I sell water... when we were all Liberians, the water pump on the camp was not enough so people were buying from me and that’s what I use in taking care of myself, husband, and children. But now we are few, so they don’t buy water as they used to because our number has reduced.”
4.1.4 Minimal Access to UNHCR Facilities after Voluntary Repatriation

UNHCR provides diverse support for the welfare and protection of refugees. Findings from the study showed that access to education, health care and other UNHCR sponsored activities were limited to a few people or had ended. Participants mentioned that although UNHCR sponsored activities and services over the years were not as accessible as it was during their arrival in Ghana, voluntary repatriation came with an abrupt end to most of UNHCR’s services. For instance, it was revealed that health care and other complementary health services were totally free for all at the early stages of their arrival, which was later restricted to the vulnerable (aged, chronically ill, HIV/AIDS positive persons, malnourished children and orphans) as at 2010. Refugees including the vulnerable were after repatriation required paying for health services or producing National Health Insurance card before they accessed treatment. In sharing her experience Maatu, a female participant said:

“They stopped giving charity (free health care) in the clinic, you need money or health insurance and sometimes the health insurance does not cover all the medicines, you have to go and buy. This is not good because I am not working and anytime I am sick, I go to the pharmacy because I can’t pay for hospital”

A male participant noted:

“There is no food and non-food distribution for our clients (persons living with HIV/AIDS) anymore, they are not giving transportation when they are going to Korlebu hospital as before . . . because there is no funding from UNHCR for those things anymore . . . .”

A Key Informant noted:

“It is true that they have to pay for their health care, there is no more charity (free health care), giving charity to refugees ceased some years ago. Meanwhile measures are
being put in place to get refugees registered with the National Health Insurance Scheme.”

Miss Peach a female participant mentioned:

“I am HIV positive . . ., I can’t remember the last time we received food or non-food ration from UNHCR… no transportation allowance to Korlebu, no home based care and support, in fact there is nothing for us now”.

Apart from healthcare, the study also explored refugees’ access to educational institutions. Findings of this study showed that unlike health care, UNHCR educational institutions for basic and senior high education on the camp were functioning and accessible though not completely free. Participants added that the only difference was that the schools had been handed over to the Ghana Education Service (GES), which implied a modification in curriculum. The implications are that, schools were no longer managed by refugees. In the same vein, Liberian teachers had been replaced with Ghanaians as noted by some of the participants. Relatively, majority of the participants said that, education at the camp had become expensive as they had to pay for their children’s school fees, especially at the junior and senior high level and other costs such as Parent Teacher Association (PTA) levies, Maintenance charges among others. Mr. Bold, a male participant shared:

“The schools have been handed over to the Ghana government, no grade school like we call it in Liberia anymore, now it is primary, JHS and SHS. About the teachers, some of them have repatriated while the rest don’t have the qualification for teaching.”

With regard to access, Mrs. B, a female participant mentioned:

“There is no UN school anymore, you pay for every school whether private or public. Three of my children drop out of school because I can’t pay their school fees... Two of
my children were in St. Gregory but now they are paying fees and I lost my job. So only my last two children 15 and 9 years are in school, for them I can manage and pay their own while the other three they are quite old so they can work.”

A Key Informant said:

“The schools and the vocational institutions have all been handed over to Ghana government and it is part of the UN processes. There is nothing like Liberian or UN school anymore, refugee and Ghanaian children are expected to be in the same school, same classroom, to help enhance the integration of the refugees into Ghana”.

Another key informant added:

“The schools are not totally free, every child or student is expected to pay a stipulated amount which will be used to maintain running of the school. But that is a very small amount as compared to private schools and schools outside the camp”.

The findings reveal that education is not completely free as it was before repatriation; however, participants admitted that the cost of education was relatively cheaper than schools outside the camp. Through the Ghana government’s Free Compulsory Universal Basic Education (FCUBE) policy, basic education was free. However, students were required to pay supplementary fees such as registration fees, exam fees, extra tuition fee, and maintenance fees among others. The demand for these extra charges is unbearable for some refugees who have their children enrolled in this school. An effect of the demand for these charges may lead to high rate of school drop-outs as parents may not be able to pay.
4.1.5 Coping Strategies Adopted by Residual Liberian Refugees after Voluntary Repatriation

Coping strategies are vital for the psychological wellbeing of people who experience stressful events such as war. In responding to challenges experienced by Liberian refugees after voluntary repatriation, involvement in religious and economic activities were the two main coping strategies adopted by residual Liberian refugees in Ghana. These two coping strategies enabled the refugees to forge ahead even in the face of several challenges they faced after voluntary repatriation. Findings of the study thus revealed that participants employed both problem-focused and emotion-focused coping in dealing with problems.

4.1.5.1 Involvement in Religious Activities as Coping Strategy

The use of religion was mentioned by all participants as the first coping strategy. Evidence from findings of the study showed that involvement in religious activities helped residual Liberian refugees overcome most of their daily challenges. Emphasis was placed on prayer, hope and faith in God as a way of overcoming difficult moments of their lives. According to the refugees, prayer was adopted from the onset of the war and throughout their movement to Ghana. Prayer, thus, served as a source of energy from which refugees drew strength and courage to continue living while hoping for an improved situation. In describing the importance of prayer in coping with situations, a Banduku (a male participant) said:

"Prayer is the key; we have come this far because of God. From that fire (Liberia) throughout the journey, God has been good and continues to be good to us. The challenges that we are facing now I pray to God every day and I know he will answer."

Miss Pink (a female participant) expressed:

“We depend on God, He takes care of us…He (God) created us. Sometimes there is no food to eat, my son is in school and that one alone is a burden but I don’t worry too
much. When I have, I eat and relax my mind and when I don’t have, I say, God you take the rest, you know why I am here....”

Ada added:

“For me anytime I am get anxious or going through difficult times, the first thing I do is to pray. Prayer makes my mind settle, calms my heart and gives me some peace within me. Anytime I pray, my mind just tells me that I will overcome whatever difficulty it is”.

Finding of the study further revealed that refugees did not always pray alone but in some cases belonged to prayer groups.

4.1.5.2 Involvement in Economic Activities as Coping Strategy

The study revealed that involvement in income earning activities was a coping strategy adopted by residual Liberian refugees in Ghana. Participants mentioned that instead of being idle and remaining worried about the future, they rather started small scale businesses. Refugees carried out income earning activities such as petty trading, food vending, carrying goods for money, selling of mobile network recharge cards and purified sachet water among others. Furthermore, some of the refugees mentioned their voluntary involvement with organizations outside the camp. The refugees used the word volunteering to mean minimal or casual jobs in the camp, which meant that refugees volunteered or offered help in anticipation of material or financial reward thus to the participants volunteering is considered an economic activity. In sharing her thoughts,

Aba, a female participant noted:

“Now there is no UN again... I have decided to think of the future by starting a pure water business and any money I get, I put it into the business. ..although it is not booming, I see coins every day.”
Mr. Tom (a male participant) added:

“There is a health center around Opeikuma (a nearby town) where they do massage, homeopathy and other things. I volunteered there and am working as a receptionist, sometimes I do anything am asked to do. Once in a while the owner gives me money. It keeps me busy so I don’t worry about problems on the camp..."
4.2 Discussion of the Findings

4.2.1 Factors Motivating Liberian Refugees to Remain in Ghana

4.2.1.1 Insecurity in Liberia

Issues related to security were explored and it was revealed that Liberian refugees feel insecure to return to Liberia due to trauma and fear. Finding of this study is consistent with Omata (2012) and Sessay (2004) who assert that refugees, especially women were reluctant to repatriate due to their experiences during conflict and the fear of being attacked by rebels, warlords and combatants. As evident in the findings, this fear is attributed to the various forms of abuses meted out to people especially women during conflicts. An explanation for the fear and trauma expressed by many women can be attributed to the fact that in most conflict situations, women become victims and are unable to defend themselves with their physical strength or by using defensive ammunitions such as guns, hence, making them vulnerable and defenseless.

A contrast between the findings of the study and that of Sessay (2004) is that whereas this study showed that Ghana as a host country was absolutely safe for refugees, Sessay (2004) found that host countries could be threatening to refugees. Disparity in the findings of this study and that of Sessay (2004) could be due to the focus of the study and the target group for the study. Whereas the current study focused on residual Liberian refugees in Ghana which included both men and women, Sessay’s (2004) study focused on abused Sierra Leonean refugee women in Senegal and Sierra Leone.

Linked to the feeling of insecurity expressed by the participants of the study is the presence of the United Nations Missions in Liberia (UNMIL) and conflicts in neighboring countries. Fear expressed by participants with regard to the presence of the United Nations Missions in Liberia stems from the fact that the United Nations Missions in Liberia comprises mainly of large
troupes of foreign military and police personnel. Furthermore, the United Nations Missions are usually found in countries where there are wars or in post war countries where peace is perceived to be fragile. Additionally, these military troops use heavy ammunitions which cause fear. Furthermore explanation given by participants of the study is that the presence of the UNMIL suggests fragile peace in Liberia.

Participants further mentioned that neighboring post war countries such as Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast also have the United Nations Missions present but Ghana does not have. To them the absence of the United Nations Missions in countries such as Ghana, Burkina Faso and Togo and its presence in countries such as Liberia, Sierra Leone and Ivory Coast is a clear indication that the United Nations Missions is found in countries that are not political stable and secure. This study contradicts Cook (2005) who asserts that the presence of the United Nations Missions in Liberia is an indicator of peace and tranquility to its fled nations. In reality, the presence of the United Nations Missions is to protect citizens of that country during conflict but their role is sometimes misconceived.

4.2.1.2 Infrastructural Challenges

During conflicts, private as well as state owned assets are destroyed leaving a country in a deplorable condition at the end of conflicts. Findings of this study support Fransen and Kuschminder’s (2012) study on Burundian refugees. They found that Burundian refugees, who returned to Burundi, faced infrastructural challenges, especially access to land and houses. Their study revealed that refugees had their land taken over by Burundians who remained and property restitution was impossible.

Some of the Liberian refugees in Ghana during the study noted that due to their prolonged stay in Ghana, their properties have been taken over by those who remained, most especially their farm lands and it would be extremely difficult, if not totally impossible, to reclaim due to
ineffective property restitution laws. In effect refugees become reluctant to repatriate as reclaiming of property only remains a dream.

Ineffective laws and policies could lead to the deprivation of refugees from reclaiming their properties upon return to their home country (Kibreab, 2003). Furthermore, findings of this study support the major tenet of the migration theory propounded by Lee (1966). The theory posits that migrants carefully weigh migration factors at the origin and destination areas, and would migrate if the factors at the area of destination are perceived as being capable of meeting their needs. Drawing on the theory of migration, some Liberian refugees having lived in Ghana for a long time consider Liberia as a country that cannot meet their needs, due to its inability to meet their infrastructural needs, hence, their decision to stay in Ghana.

4.2.1.3 Unfavorable Socioeconomic Conditions in Liberia

Apart from infrastructure, one of the factors that determine whether refugees will return to their country of origin (post war country) is the socioeconomic conditions. Findings of the study revealed that refugees’ decision to remain in Ghana was due to the unfavorable socioeconomic situations in Liberia. The study supports Omata (2011) who mentioned that unfavorable socioeconomic conditions such as lack of family support and lack of employment opportunities deter refugees from repatriating. Unlike the Buduburam refugee camp where Liberian refugees depended on one another, returning to Liberia could have two main effects on their lives. First is the loss of interrelationships that existed on the camp. Secondly, Liberian refugees upon return may not have adequate social support from both close relations and the Liberian government.

Unavailability of these support systems could result in deplorable socioeconomic conditions which could lead to delayed integration of the refugees into Liberia. In order therefore for refugees to fully and successfully integrate into their home countries, social support from family play a key role as refugees who have family support may face less socioeconomic challenges
than those without family support (Hegre et al., 2009; Omata, 2011). Furthermore, from the findings personal factors such job availability, a person’s qualification, a person’s social contact and the stage of life of a person influence their migration decision to stay in Ghana hence, supporting Lee (1966) tenet of migration. Findings of this study, however, refute Lambo (2012) who argues that unfavorable socioeconomic conditions in refugees’ home country cannot have a negative effect on refugees’ integration into their home country.

4.2.1.4 Resettlement Opportunity in Ghana

Resettlement opportunity was one of the issues raised during the study. Many refugees desire to be resettled because it gives them an opportunity to start a new life by helping them overcome conflict related issues such as poverty, insecurity and trauma. Evidence gathered from the study undoubtedly shows that Liberian refugees in Ghana are expecting resettlement. Furthermore, the study revealed that resettlement is the ultimate choice of residual Liberian refugees and they would do anything possible to be resettled.

Findings of this study support Essuman-Johnson (2011) who asserted that Liberian refugees in Ghana generally perceive Ghana as a conducive space which they can hang on until their dreams are realized. Essuman-Johnson added that Liberian refugees see their stay in Ghana as an opportunity to be resettled in a developed country. For most of these refugees, repatriation is not an option because it implies losing a possible resettlement opportunity. Additionally, repatriation implies peace in a refugee’s country thereby nullifying the reasons for resettlement which is safety of the refugee.

4.2.2 Challenges Faced by Residual Liberian Refugees in Ghana

4.2.2.1 Competition between Host Community and Refugees

One of the main causes of conflict in a community is the competition for limited resources (Lynn, 2005). In this study, it was evident that refugees and host community competed over resources. Refugees felt threatened and faced threats of ejection by the host community.
However, these ejection threats according to the participants, were as a result of the attitudes of some repatriated refugees who had connived with some community members to eject refugees in order to sell camp land and houses. Some repatriating refugees, according to participants of this study, sold or rented out houses and lands to Ghanaians and other refugees without officially informing the local authorities and the camp management. This attitude of some repatriated refugees led to fight over lands, because in some cases, more than two people might have bought or rented the same property without the knowledge of the bona fide owner, local authority and the camp management.

Findings of this study is similar to Agblorti’s (2011) findings in which it was noted that the longer the stay of refugees in the host community, the higher the level of tension and competition for resources. This study also supports Veney’s (2007) assertion that there is usually a cordial relationship between refugees and host community, which later turns sour due to the competition for resources. Tension is created when the host community seems not to be benefitting from the refugees, which is the case of Liberian refugees in Ghana. Thus, the prolonged stay coupled with the host community’s inability to access expected humanitarian benefits received by refugees further worsens refugee-host community relationship. This study, thus, contradicts Berry (2008).

4.2.2 Criminal Activities at the Buduburam Refugee Camp

Generally, crime is one of the activities that threaten the security of people. Criminal activities were raised as a major issue during the study. The study revealed that criminal activities on the camp were perpetrated mainly by non-refugees (mainly Ghanaians and Nigerians) who had moved into the Buduburam refugee camp after voluntary repatriation. Findings of this study support Hough (2013) and Vogler (2006) who postulate that refugee camps are characterized with criminal activities. However, whereas this study revealed that theft, armed robbery and mobile phone snatching were notable criminal activities perpetrated on the Buduburam refugee
camp, Hough (2013) and Vogler (2006) mentioned rape, physical and sexual abuse as the criminal activities noted.

Whereas this current study found that criminal activities were perpetrated by mainly Ghanaians and Nigerians nationals, Hough (2013) and Vogler (2006) mentioned that security men were the perpetrators of criminal activities. The nature of the Buduburam refugee camp is unrestricted which allows the free movement of people, consequently making it possible for non-refugees to penetrate. The unrestricted nature of the camp as found in this study is due to the withdrawal of security services provided by the Neighborhood Watch Team (a refugee-based security task force) and limited police staff at the Buduburam police station.

4.2.2.3 Disrupted Social Network among Residual Refugees

Social network is vital for the survival of refugees due to the fact that some refugees lose family members during civil wars and thus depend on other refugees who may not be their immediate relations. Although very scarce, it was evident from the responses given by some participants that, the repatriation resulted in the separation of their family and other close relationships. This separation was attributed to two main causes. One of the causes according to respondents of the study was the hasty implementation of the voluntary repatriation exercise by UNHCR which did not give them much time to carefully consider the options of staying permanently in Ghana (local integration) or returning to Liberia (voluntary repatriation). Thus having uncertainties about the aftermath of repatriation and not knowing the consequences, some refugee families divided their families. One part of their families repatriated thus receiving repatriation allowances, while others remained in Ghana awaiting what benefits would accompany that decision.

The second reason given by the refugees was the repatriation package of USD 300 for adults and USD 150 for children. Although, all refugee participants had initially admitted that the repatriation package was woefully inadequate to start up a meaningful life in Liberia, some
participants admitted that due to the monetary package, they allowed part of their family members to repatriate. This separation was planned such that usually one spouse (especially husbands) and some of their children repatriated with the hope of returning to Ghana after receiving the monetary package. However, some family members could not return for various reasons as initially planned, hence, the break in social network. For refugees who did not belong to families, the disruption in social network was due to the repatriation of neighbors and friends who usually provided support to the residual refugees.

Findings of this study confirm Jerusalem et al., (1996) who asserted that there is usually a break in refugees’ social network during refugee movement which is one of the major challenges refugees face. This is because refugee movement such as repatriation decision is a prerogative of an individual, hence, some refugees decide to repatriate while others don’t. However, this study opposes Hovil (2010) who asserted that voluntary repatriation does not lead to disruption of refugees’ social network. Disruption of social network of refugees could affect the complete development of the refugees.

**4.2.2.4 Increased Rate of Unemployment among Residual Refugees**

In host countries, one of the challenges experienced by refugees is unemployment. Reasons for refugee unemployment usually depend on a country’s refugee and employment policy and the general economic situation of that country. Findings of this study showed that the major cause of unemployment was due to the repatriation of Liberian refugees. The repatriation had resulted in the drastic reduction of the number of refugees, closure of schools, withdrawal of NGOs and low patronage of goods and services by residual Liberian refugees after repatriation.

The findings of this study corroborate Mattheisen (2012) who stated that unemployment is generally high among refugee populations. Contrary to this study is Ott (2011) who mentioned that refugees in some parts of the United States were employed. Reasons for the difference in
findings could be due to the location and the level of industrial development of the host countries. Thus, whereas this study was conducted in Ghana where the general rate of unemployment is high, Ott’s (2011) study was conducted in the United States which is a more developed and industrialized country thereby enabling refugees have access to employment.

4.2.3 Minimal Access to UNHCR Facilities after Voluntary Repatriation

Limited access to health care could have a negative effect on the residual refugee population because not all of the refugees can afford health services. Furthermore, the National Health Insurance Scheme does not cover all diseases and medications which can have a debilitating effect on some vulnerable groups of people such as refugees living with HIV/AIDS. Further complicating the problem of limited access to health care is the withdrawal of all supplementary health services such as food and non-food support for persons living with HIV/AIDS and free ambulance escort for referral cases. The withdrawal of such services could be detrimental to persons with urgent health needs who may be unable to pay these treatments or services.

Hopkins (2011) and Phillips (2003) however maintained that refugees have easy access to free health care and other supplementary needs such as food and non-food rations throughout their stay in the host country. The difference in findings can be attributed to the application of the cessation clause on Liberian refugees which deprives them of privileges they use to receive from UNHCR including healthcare. This study supports Andersen (1995) behavioral model of health service utilization. In employing the Andersen’s behavioral model of health service utilization, it is revealed in the study that refugees’ limited access to education and health care is due to enabling factors as described by Andersen (1995). Unavailability of factors such as family’s resource, adequate health insurance, health facilities among others deprived the participants of this study access to health care.
4.2.4 Coping Strategies Adopted by Residual Refugees

4.2.4.1 Involvement in Religious Activities as Coping Strategy

Involvement in religious activities was identified as one of the coping strategies adopted by participants. By participating in religious activities, participants used emotion-focused coping to overcome challenges they experienced. Furthermore, through prayer groups some of the refugees receive financial and other material assistance through contribution and gifts from members. Thus, through religious activities, emotional, psychological and physical needs of refugees were met.

The current study supports Pahud et al., (2009) and Khawaja et al., (2008) who asserted that prayer is the first coping strategy adopted by refugees in coping with challenges. In Pahud et al.’s view prayer enables refugees build up emotionally to overcome challenging situations. The study also supports Boateng (2006) who noted social network helps refugees strengthen their social capital, hence, enabling them cope better with challenges.

4.2.4.2 Involvement in Economic Activities as Coping Strategy

Another coping strategy adopted by the participants is involvement in economic or income earning activities on the refugee camp. Involvement in economic activities played a dual role as it served as a coping strategy by keeping refugees busy thereby reducing the extent to which they worried about their daily challenges. On the other hand it also enhanced the economic wellbeing of the refugees.

Positively, the repatriation has provided refugees the opportunity to create businesses and to devise positive means of survival thereby being able to meet their basic needs. The current study supports Dick (2002) who asserted that one of the coping strategies of refugees is by creating job opportunities and volunteering in order to receive monetary or material reward.
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction

The study sought to examine effects of voluntary repatriation on residual Liberian refugees in Ghana with the Buduburam Refugee Camp being the study site for the research. This chapter provides summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations for the study.

5.1 Summary of the Findings

The study sought to examine effects of voluntary repatriation on residual Liberian refugees in Ghana using the Buduburam Refugee Camp as the study area. There were four objectives that guided the study; to explore factors that motivate Liberian refugees to remain in Ghana, to investigate challenges faced by residual Liberian refugees in Ghana after voluntary repatriation, to determine refugees’ access to UNHCR owned facilities after voluntary repatriation and to explore coping strategies adopted by residual Liberian refugees after voluntary repatriation.

Findings of the study showed that traumatic experiences in the past due to the Liberian conflict was the most pressing factor that motivated Liberian refugees to decide to stay permanently in Ghana. Notably, refugee women expressed greater fear as compared to their male counterparts. This fear was as a result of violence such as rape, physical assault and abduction perpetrated by warlords and rebels which has resulted in a feeling of insecurity thus their willingness to return to Liberia. Furthermore, it was evident from the study that there was a high level of uncertainty due to the unfavorable socioeconomic conditions of Liberia after the war, infrastructural challenges and an expectation that remaining in Ghana may provide travel opportunities to developed countries. It was evident from the study that all refugee participants of the study had a desire to be resettled to a developed country.
From the study, it was evident that there was competition between refugees and the host community over resources on the refugee camp which was one of the major challenges refugees encountered. This led to conflicts between refugees and the host community (Buduburam) as well as threats of ejection by host community members. Although, the Buduburam Refugee Camp just like other refugee camps are noted for criminal activities, findings from the study showed that there was an increase in the rate of criminal activities which was attributed to the relocation of people into the camp as well as the absence of the Neighborhood Watch Team. Furthermore, refugees experience disruption in their social network and high rate of unemployment due to the voluntary repatriation exercise.

Voluntary repatriation had resulted in the handing over of UNHCR facilities, such as schools on the camp to the Ghana government, which is usually the modus operandi of UNHCR. Health and complementary health services such as provision of food and non-food support, support for drugs among others have been withdrawn. The implication is that refugees with health conditions that require immediate care might not have access thus depriving them of health care when needed. Finally, findings of the study revealed that although refugees face numerous challenges as a consequence of voluntary repatriation, coping strategies such as involvement in religious and economic activities has enabled them overcome some of these challenges.

5.2 Conclusions

The voluntary repatriation of refugees as a durable solution is a global concern that generally affects refugees’ development. Voluntary repatriation negatively affects all aspects of residual refugees’ life. As explicitly revealed in the study, the psychological, economic and social lives of refugees are affected by voluntary repatriation. Relationships are disrupted, access to services such as health care are indirectly restricted as a result of voluntary repatriation. This has a far reaching effect as it makes refugees more dependent, thereby increasing their level of
vulnerability. Voluntary repatriation leads to unemployment and non-productivity resulting in a cycle of poverty among residual refugees. This is because the repatriation of refugees results in the closure of businesses and other profit and non-profit institutions that could provide employment for some of the refugees.

Furthermore, as the study revealed, voluntary repatriation does not only affect residual refugees but also affects the host country. This is because the findings of the study showed that voluntary repatriation of refugees resulted in conflicts between refugees and host community. The host community’s expectation was that voluntary repatriation implied the repatriation of all refugees and subsequent handing over of lands and other properties to the host community. A consequence of these conflicts when unresolved could affect the security of Ghana as a host country.

Although the UNHCR and the international community are usually burdened with new refugee crisis daily, it is imperative that refugees in protracted refugee situations like that of Liberian refugees in Ghana be given the necessary assistance to enable them fully integrate in Ghana with minimal challenges. This is because for some refugees repatriation is never an option worth considering due to their experiences, while the protracted situation also makes it difficult for especially the aged and refugees who left home very young to return to their country of origin where there are no support systems available to ensure their smooth integration. As per findings of this study, it is necessary that refugees who remain after repatriation be attended to with urgency. Finally, as each voluntary repatriation exercise is unique depending on the refugees and their duration of stay in the host country, strategies and interventions in handling the aftermath of voluntary repatriation should be well managed.
5.3 Recommendations

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) has undoubtedly contributed immensely to the lives of Liberian refugees in Ghana since the inception of the Buduburam Camp in 1990. However, findings of the study show that the assistance offered by UNHCR for residual Liberian refugees was inadequate thereby making life unbearable for them. It is therefore recommended that, UNHCR as a mandated organization responsible for the welfare of refugees in Ghana should put up pre-implementation plans that seeks to assess the needs of refugees prior to the implementation of voluntary repatriation as a durable solution. In this regard, the psychological, social and economic needs of refugees will be identified in order to avert the negative impact of repatriation such as disruption in social network and families, unemployment and restricted access to UNHCR facilities and services as found in the study.

Additionally, it is recommended that food and health support be sustained for residual refugees after voluntary repatriation especially, for vulnerable refugees such as refugees living with HIV/AIDS, malnourished children, aged, unaccompanied as well as orphaned children after voluntary repatriation. This is because findings of the study revealed that there was limited access to health care and complementary services for residual refugees after voluntary repatriation. The restriction of access to these services coupled with the increase in unemployment rate as found in the study could be detrimental to the health and general welfare of the refugees hence the need to sustain these services.

In addressing the problem of unemployment and to assist refugees sustain their livelihood in Ghana, it is recommended that intensive skills training and provision of start-up kits and capital be incorporated into interventions planned for refugees. This would enable refugees to become self-reliant and capable of meeting their economic needs with minimal challenges. This is necessary because although UNHCR generally provides skills training for refugees, it must be
targeted at specific group of refugees depending on whether they intend to stay in the host country or repatriate.

Furthermore, it is recommended that timely education and sensitization programs be organized prior to the implementation of voluntary repatriation and especially in cases where it comes with the application of the cessation clause. Education and sensitization would help inform refugees on voluntary repatriation and the implications of the cessation clause especially for residual refugees. This is because as shown in the study, some refugees were not well informed of the implications of voluntary repatriation and the cessation clause on their decision to stay in Ghana.

Next, voluntary repatriation should be made attractive in order for refugees to be encouraged to repatriate. It was evident in the study that the USD 300 given to repatriating refugees was woefully inadequate considering the fact for some of the refugees, returning to Liberia implied starting life from the scratch, hence, some refugees decided to stay in Ghana instead of repatriating. Furthermore it was evident in the study that some refugees did not have homes to return to in Liberia. Therefore, it is recommended that refugees be assessed and their needs be provided based on findings of the assessment. Moreover, an age and gender mainstreaming exercise that considers the needs of refugees based on their ages, gender and other criteria is recommended. This is because as per the findings of the study the needs of refugees vary based on their age, gender and experiences.

It is also recommended that the durable solutions be revised by UNHCR and other stakeholders considering other options, such as African refugees settling in other African countries apart from the host country. Furthermore, UNHCR, host and home governments of refugees should show commitment in the implementation of the durable solutions especially voluntary repatriation and local integration. This is because repatriation to country of origin for some of
the refugees is not possible due to fear of persecution, unfavorable socioeconomic conditions among others.

Additionally, the use of bottom–up approach involving refugees and host community should be adopted in the planning and implementation of long-term interventions for refugees through focus group discussions, durbars and workshops. Furthermore, it is necessary for opinion leaders, chiefs and very influential people in host communities to be updated on refugee related issues. This would keep opinion leaders in host communities informed of new developments as well as provide an opportunity for refugees as well as host community to feel part of the planning process, thus, avoiding tensions and competition between refugees and host community over camp resources as identified in the study.

One of the major findings of this was the feeling of insecurity due to traumatic experiences during the war, hence, refugees’ reluctance to repatriate. It is therefore recommended that refugees be provided counseling services by professionals, such as social workers and clinical psychologists. These services could be organized for specific individuals who are found to be severely traumatized. Furthermore, group counseling sessions could be organized for specific groups of refugees with regard to age and sex. This is because although refugees may be perceived as homogeneous, findings of the study showed that females had greater than males. These sessions should be a continuous process until it is determined that refugees have overcome their traumatic experiences. Finally, it is recommended that further studies be conducted on the effects of voluntary repatriation on specific groups of refugees such as the aged, the chronically ill, orphaned children, and women among others. This will help understand the effects of voluntary repatriation on these groups of people and the necessary interventions provided.
References


Appendix I: Consent Form

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

The researcher is an M. Phil student of the University of Ghana, Department of Social Work, conducting a study on the topic “Examing Effects of Voluntary Repatriation on Residual Liberian Refugees in Ghana”. As part of the ethical requirements for the study, participants will be assured of the following:

Informed Consent: The researcher will clearly mention the purpose of the research and will proceed only after the participants have agreed to be part of the research.

Voluntary Participation: Participants of the research will be engaged voluntarily without being coerced in any way. Participants can opt out at any stage of the study. Also, they will not be forced to answer any question they are not comfortable with.

Confidentiality: All information given will be kept confidentially and will not be disclosed to a third party under any condition, without the consent of the participant. Information given will be used for academic purposes only.

In order to facilitate the interview process, the researcher will use a voice recorder, only if permission is granted by participants of the study.

Thank you.

Signature

……………………..………………………………

Ernestina Adu
(Researcher) (Participant)
Appendix II: Interview Guide for In-Depth Interviews

UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK

Topic: Examining Effects of Voluntary Repatriation on Residual Liberian Refugees in Ghana.

The researcher is a student of the University of Ghana, Department of Social Work conducting a research on the topic mentioned above. The researcher humbly seeks to involve you in a brief discussion that will enable her understand issues in relation to her research topic. Participation is voluntary and you can opt out at any stage of the research.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

1. Age range:
   a. 25 – 35
   b. 36 – 45
   c. 46 – 55
   d. 56 – 65
   e. 65 and above

2. Sex: .................................................................

3. Level of Education: .................................................................

4. Religion: .................................................................

5. Marital Status: .................................................................

6. Number of Children (if applicable): .................................................................

7. Occupation.................................................................

8. Location on the camp (Zone) .................................................................

9. Ethnic Group: .................................................................

10. Duration of stay in Ghana: .................................................................
Questions related to the following were asked:

A. Factors that motivate Liberian refugees to remain in Ghana.

Sample of questions:

- Why have you decided to remain in Ghana?
- How do you understand your stay in Ghana?

B. Challenges faced by Liberian refugees in Ghana after voluntary repatriation

Sample of questions:

- How has life on the camp been for you after voluntary repatriation?
- What are some of the difficulties you experience as a result of voluntary repatriation?

C. Effects of voluntary repatriation on refugees’ access to UNHCR-owned facilities in Ghana?

Sample of questions:

- Is UNHCR still active on the camp?
- Who is managing UNHCR facilities on the camp now?
- Are there any changes with regards to access to UNHCR facilities after voluntary repatriation?

D. Coping strategies adopted by residual refugees after voluntary repatriation.

Sample of questions:

- Have you been affected in anyway by the voluntary repatriation program?
- What are some of the things you do to manage the effects of voluntary repatriation?
- How do you meet your basic needs (food, shelter, health care, sanitation)?
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANTS-
GHANA REFUGEE BOARD (GRB)

Topic: Examining Effects of Voluntary Repatriation on Residual Liberian Refugees in Ghana.

The researcher is a student of the University of Ghana, Department of Social Work conducting a research on the topic mentioned above. The researcher humbly seeks to involve you in a brief discussion that will enable her understand issues in relation to her research topic. Participation is voluntary and you can opt out at any stage of the research.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

1. Occupation………………………. 
2. Sex………………………………….
3. Position held………………………

Questions related to the following areas were asked:

Sample of questions:

- What are the reasons given by Liberian refugees for their decision to remain in Ghana?
- What is the role of the Ghana refugee board in handling refugee related issues in Ghana?
- What is the role of the Ghana Refugee Board after voluntary repatriation?
- What is the decision of the Ghana government and UNHCR on residual Liberian refugees in Ghana after voluntary repatriation?
- What is the fate of the residual refugees after voluntary repatriation?
- Are there any measures in place to address the needs of residual Liberian refugees as they await local integration?
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANTS- Camp Manager

Topic: Examining Effects of Voluntary Repatriation on Residual Liberian Refugees in Ghana.

The researcher is a student of the University of Ghana, Department of Social Work conducting a research on the topic mentioned above. The researcher humbly seeks to involve you in a brief discussion that will enable her understand issues in relation to her research topic. Participation is voluntary and you can opt out at any stage of the research.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents
1. Occupation
2. Sex
3. Position held

Questions related to the following were asked:

Sample of questions:

A. Factors motivating Liberian refugees to remain in Ghana
   • What are some of the reasons given by Liberian refugees for which they want to remain in Ghana?
   • How does the camp management see the decision of Liberian refugees to remain in Ghana?
   • What are the implications of not repatriating on a residual refugee?

B. Challenges faced by residual Liberian refugees in Ghana after voluntary repatriation
Sample questions:
   • What is the fate of residual Liberian refugees in Ghana after voluntary repatriation?
   • What are some of the complaints received from residual Liberian refugees after voluntary repatriation?
   • What is the decision of the government of Ghana and UNHCR on residual Liberian refugees in Ghana?

C. Effects of voluntary repatriation on refugees’ access to UNHCR facilities
Sample questions:
   • How different is the camp management role in handling refugees’ issues after voluntary repatriation of Liberian refugees from Ghana?
   • To what extent do residual refugees have access to UHNCR facilities such as schools and health care?
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANTS-

Project Coordinator National Catholic Secretariat (NCS) and Camp Social welfare Officer

Topic: Examining Effects of Voluntary Repatriation on Residual Liberian Refugees in Ghana.

The researcher is a student of the University of Ghana, Department of Social Work conducting a research on the topic mentioned above. The researcher humbly seeks to involve you in a brief discussion that will enable her understand issues in relation to her research topic. Participation is voluntary and you can opt out at any stage of the research.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

1. Occupation……………………………
2. Sex……………………………………
3. Position held…………………………

Questions related to the following areas were asked:

A. Challenges faced by residual Liberian refugees after voluntary repatriation
Sample of questions:

- What are some of the complaints received from residual Liberian refugees after voluntary repatriation?
- How are these needs being addressed by your organization?

B. Effects of voluntary repatriation on Refugees’ access to UNHCR facilities
Sample of questions:

- What is the role of your organization before and after voluntary repatriation?
- Do residual Liberian refugees still have access to UNHCR facilities such as water, schools and health care) after voluntary repatriation?
- Do you receive funding from UNHCR after repatriation?
- What are some of the measures put in place to address concerns of residual refugees prior to their integration?
UNIVERSITY OF GHANA
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL WORK
INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR KEY INFORMANTS-
Country Director, Point Hope

Topic: Examining Effects of Voluntary Repatriation on Residual Liberian Refugees in Ghana.

The researcher is a student of the University of Ghana, Department of Social Work conducting a research on the topic mentioned above. The researcher humbly seeks to involve you in a brief discussion that will enable her understand issues in relation to her research topic. Participation is voluntary and you can opt out at any stage of the research.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

4. Occupation…………………………
5. Sex…………………………………
6. Position held…………………………

Questions related to the following areas were asked:

C. Challenges faced by residual Liberian refugees after voluntary repatriation

Sample of questions:

• What role was your organization playing for Liberian refugees before and after voluntary repatriation?
• What are some of the complaints received from residual Liberian refugees after voluntary repatriation?
• How are these needs being addressed by your organization?