THE ROLE OF NATIONS-STATE IN PROTECTING AND SUPPORTING INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

Daisy Byers
daisybyers123@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: https://repository.usfca.edu/thes

Part of the African History Commons, Civil Rights and Discrimination Commons, Conflict of Laws Commons, Constitutional Law Commons, Criminal Law Commons, Dispute Resolution and Arbitration Commons, Ethnic Studies Commons, Human Rights Law Commons, Immigration Law Commons, International Humanitarian Law Commons, International Law Commons, International Relations Commons, Law and Politics Commons, Migration Studies Commons, National Security Law Commons, Nonprofit Organizations Law Commons, Other Political Science Commons, Political Theory Commons, Politics and Social Change Commons, Quantitative, Qualitative, Comparative, and Historical Methodologies Commons, and the Social History Commons

Recommended Citation

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Theses, Dissertations, Capstones and Projects at USF Scholarship: a digital repository @ Gleeson Library | Geschke Center. It has been accepted for inclusion in Master's Theses by an authorized administrator of USF Scholarship: a digital repository @ Gleeson Library | Geschke Center. For more information, please contact repository@usfca.edu.
THE ROLE OF NATIONS-STATE IN PROTECTING AND SUPPORTING
INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

A thesis submitted
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Master in Migration Studies

By
Daisy Leayealee Byers Tallawford

May 2021
University of San Francisco
THE ROLE OF NATIONS-STATE IN PROTECTING AND SUPPORTING
INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

MASTER IN MIGRATION STUDIES

By

Daisy Leayealee Byers Tallawford

May 2021

UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Under the guidance and approval of the committee, and approval by all the members, this thesis project has been accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree.

APPROVED:

Amy Argenal
Advisor

Date

5/14/21

Academic Director

Date

5-18-2021

Dean of Arts and Sciences

Date
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I expand my most significant appreciation to Dr. Amy Argenal for her experiences of information, thoughts, considerations, and article analysis. Likewise, Dr. Argenal for continually holding me under wraps and ensuring that I was rational all through this research. This endeavor would not have been conceivable without the help and backing of the University of San Francisco's Migration Studies Program and more all the Internally Displaced Persons and organization who shared their real individuals and most critical stories with me. I see how hard it was for these people to remember the absolute most excruciating recollections that they experienced. I might likewise want to thank my auntie Kathleen Rocha-Acosta for continually supporting my fantasies and supporting me all through my research. Dr. Benson Onyeji and Dr. Leonard Williams for pushing me to follow my fantasies and for trusting in me. Without their backings and support, I would not be the lady I am today. I might want to thank my companions who kept me typical all through these most recent two years.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS ......................................................................................... ii

ABSTRACT ........................................................................................................ 1

CHAPTER 1: Introduction .................................................................................. 2

  Background ...................................................................................................... 2

  Definition of IDP ............................................................................................ 4

  Causes of Displacement ................................................................................ 5

  The Notion of Sovereignty ............................................................................. 7

  Conditions of Internally Displaced Persons .................................................. 8

  Perception of IDPs vs. Refugees .................................................................... 10

  Fundamental Right of IDPs: Housing and Property Reinstitution .............. 10

CHAPTER 2: History of Liberia and the IDP Crisis ......................................... 13

  The State of Liberia Prior to the Civil Unrest ................................................. 13

  Liberia Civil War: The Beginning of the Dark Days .................................... 17

  Causes of Displacement in Liberia ............................................................... 19

  IDP Laws and Policies in Liberia .................................................................. 22

  Barriers that Prevent International Community from Supporting IDPs in Liberia ......................................................................................... 26

CHAPTER 3: Methodology .............................................................................. 29

  Purpose of Study ............................................................................................ 29

  Research Design and Setting ....................................................................... 29

  Framework ..................................................................................................... 31

  Participants .................................................................................................... 31

  Measurement Instrument ............................................................................. 32
Data Analysis ........................................................................................................... 35
Validity and Credibility .......................................................................................... 36
Strength and Limitations ....................................................................................... 37
CHAPTER 4: Presentation of Findings and Analysis ................................................. 40
   First-Hand Account of IDPs Stories: Interview Conducted in Voinjama, Lofa County, Liberia .......................................................... Error! Bookmark not defined.
Personal Reflections ............................................................................................... 58
CHAPTER 5: Recommendation .................................................................................. 62
Conclusion ............................................................................................................... 67
References ............................................................................................................... 70
ABSTRACT

The rising increase of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) has become a global problem. There are over 40 million internally displaced people globally, and 15.9 million are displaced in Africa. These displacements come into place due to war/conflict, corruption, massive human rights violations, natural disasters, urban renewal projects (at the hands of powerful nations such as America, China, France, UK, etc.), and large-scale development projects. According to UNHCR, refugees are people who have international cross-border. In contrast, internally displaced persons must stay within their own country and stay under the protection of their government, even if the government is the reason for their displacement. However, there is little protection for these people. The purpose of this study is to investigate Internally Displaced Persons in Liberia and to understand how nation-states are protecting them. The research draws on 18 in-depth semi-structured interviews conducted in English/Koloqua, Bandi, and Gbande with internally displaced persons and non-government organizations in Voinjama, Lofa county. Even though there were some differences in the answers gathered collected, almost every IDP interviewed ended their session by beseeching the United Nations to come to their aid, especially in areas such as healthcare and education for their children. Internally displaced persons have and continue to face severe hardships of fundamental human rights. Therefore, appropriate measures should be taken by the Liberian government and the international communities to give assistance and support to those who have been forcibly displaced.

Keywords: IDPs, displacement, refugees, Nations-state, protection, and support
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Background

One may ask, why are countries still struggling with displaced populations despite the 20 years of international, regional, and national policies, efforts, and investment? In 2018, 28 million people were reported to be displaced across 148 countries and territories (GRID, 2019). 10.8 million of the 28 million displaced by war, 4.9 million displaced by armed conflict, 255 thousand displaced by criminal violence, and 995 thousand displaced due to political violence within their countries, and 4.2 million have displaced from communal violence (GRID, 2019). Examples of countries that were negatively impacted were Democratic Republic of Congo, Syria, Somalia, Afghanistan, and Liberia, with more than a million new displacement cases. The cause of displacement, however, varies among different countries. For instance, displacements in countries such as Ethiopia, Nigeria, Afghanistan, and Liberia were associated with both conflict and disaster (GRID, 2019). As of April 28, 2020, in Geneva, the number of internally displaced persons (IDPs) worldwide reaches a new high. According to a recent report from the Internal Displacement Monitoring Center (IDMC), 50.8 million people are displaced inside their own countries due to conflict, violence, and disasters (Internal Displacement Monitoring Center, 2020).

There is no iota of doubt that the fight for human rights and equality has intensified globally in the twenty-first century. However, the mere fact that there are still people living without necessities such as food, water, shelter, security, protection, and support mars any feat achieved in this century in relation to human rights.

Today, millions of people worldwide are forced to flee their homes and leave their loved ones behind due to situations beyond their control. Statistically, more than 50 million
individuals have been forced to leave due to conflicts, violations of their rights, and natural disasters (Internal Displacement Monitoring Center IDMC, 2018). Legally, these people are not considered as refugees. Instead, they are considered as internally displaced persons (UN Guiding Principle on Internal Displacement. Attempts to define who internally displaced persons are, where they come from, or what causes the massive flow of displacement in the world have proved challenging since the cause of displacement is multifactorial (UNHCR Guiding Principle on Displacement). Therefore, herein, internally displaced persons will be defined as a group of people who are internally displaced in their own country due to political instability, civil conflict, or war (Guiding Principle, Sect. I). For this project, I will be exploring the effect of the civil war on displacement in Liberia and holistically review the types of laws enacted in Liberia to protect IDPs. During this research, I will focus on why international protection is needed for internally displaced persons in Liberia and other countries. I hope to provide evidence suggesting that even though conflict is the root cause of internal displacement in Liberia, and while the government may be weak in providing the necessary tools beyond shelter and food, there is an urgent need of international participation in protecting IDPs. To understand the role of international involvement in the IDP quest in Liberia, the following questions will be tackled; (1) what type of policies are in place in Liberia regarding IDPs? (2) What role is the international community playing in Liberia to mitigate the IDP crisis? (3) What barriers prevent the international community from supporting IDPs in Liberia? Addressing issues surrounding IDPs requires a thorough examination of factors such as causes of the displacement, in the first place, the notion of sovereignty, current conditions of IDPs, housing and poverty reinstitution.
Definition of IDP

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) have been defined in numerous treaties and domestic laws. According to the Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement; Kampala Convention, Article 1, “an internally displaced person are persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border” (Guiding Principle on Internal Displacement, art. 1). Other scholars have also attempted to define IDPs. For instance, according to Phuong “Internally Displaced Persons: also means persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, as a result of or to avoid the effects of large-scale development projects, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized State border,” Great Lakes Protocol on the Protection and Assistance to Internally Displaced Persons, Article 1” (Phuong, 2005). Internally displaced persons are different from refugees because they did not cross an international border, leaving them under their government's protection. The concept of internally displaced persons does not particularly have a legal status like refugees does. The term IDPs are descriptive to the individual factual circumstance (Thomas, 1995). According to Thomas, it only applies to those who are forced to leave home, regardless of the cause but remain under the jurisdiction of his or their state. Therefore, it applies to internally displaced citizens, non-citizens, or stateless individuals within the country.
When looking at the protection of internally displaced persons, the primary responsibility lands on the regime. Making the government primary responsible for assistance and protection of internally displaced persons (Phuong 2005). At the international level, no single agency or organization has been designated as the global lead on protection to address these needs according to the collective approach. No one better addressed this than Catherine Phuong. In her book "The International Protection of Internally Displaced Persons," Catherine Phuong shows that even though internally displaced persons have been around since the beginning of time, it is only recently that the concepts and debates on the legitimate rights of internally displaced persons emerged (2005). Phuong then argued that the end of the Cold War and refugees' usefulness as pawns accounts for the sudden interest in internally displaced persons. Hancock also made a point that stood out, the fear that states have over their borders. States fear the refugees flow into their borders to keep displaced persons internal to their countries (Hancock, 2005). Keeping displaced persons "internal" to their states takes the pressure off states while keeping their national borders secure (Hancock, 2005). According to Hancock, an internally displaced person lacks legal status and organizations that address their legal needs.

**Causes of Displacement**

Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) according to the UNHCR, are "Persons or groups of persons who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of or to avoid the effect of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violation of human rights or natural or human-made disasters, and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border" (UNHCR,
Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement, 1998). The increase in the number of internally displaced persons shows that there are still more conflicts in the world. Internally displaced persons have and continue to face service hardships of fundamental human rights. However, the international community can only provide little protection and assistance for internally displaced persons. Internal displacement within nations can occur due to war and conflict, terrorism, and sometimes a mixture of all. Most of the time, the effect includes the massive migration of people within a country searching for safety.

Throughout history, there has been multiple outbreaks of armed conflicts that has harmed peace, stability, and security in many countries, including Liberia. These outbreaks of armed conflicts have resulted in forceful removal of people from their home countries. Due to armed conflicts, the population of displaced people has increased in the last few decades (UNHCR, 2019). Internal displacement occurs on a massive scale (Global IDP, August 2001). Thus, armed conflict and violence have led to internal displacement in over 50 plus countries. Armed conflict is defined by international humanitarian law when populations are or are likely to be attacked. Such conflicts may arise between states or between states and non-state actors, or between non-state actors. Generalized violence, whose intensity or level may not rise to the level associated with armed conflict according to the 1949 Geneva Conventions and their Additional Protocols I and II. According to international humanitarian law, human rights violation is anything that is deliberately targeting specific populations that may flee in the hope of safety and respite. For example, during the 14-year civil war, which started in 1989 in Liberia, many of the country's population of 2.1 million have been forced to flee their homes and escaped the armed conflict and brutal treatment by militia and rebel forces (James and Stack, 2004;
Kantabadouno, 2020). Factors such as floods, earthquakes, and other natural catastrophes has also led to millions of IDPs globally.

The Notion of Sovereignty

For many years, the concept of sovereignty has become the subject of significant discussion within international law and international relations. The term sovereignty originates from the Latin word "superanus," which means supreme (Bodin, 1530-1596). Sovereignty refers to the notion of having independent authority in a particular territory (Slomanson, p. 286). The idea that a state can be sovereign develops from its ability to cater for its citizens. Therefore, if the government cannot provide for its citizens, the state could not be considered a sovereign state. The concept of state sovereignty today consists of four characteristics, territory, authority, population, and recognition (Slomanson P. 46).

According to Jean Bodin, sovereignty is the highest, absolute, and eternal power over citizens and subject in a commonweal (Bodin 1962-84). He believes that sovereignty is not limited either in power, charge, or time. Hugo Grotius defined sovereignty as the supreme political power vested in him whose acts are not subject to any other and whose will cannot be overridden (2017). Sovereignty, as explained by scholars such as Hobbes, and Bodin, is an essential notion of political independence, and with this independence comes responsibilities such as providing basic amenities for the citizenry. Therefore, it is about time that sovereign states are held accountable for ensuring that all their citizens, including IDPs are safe. However, as stated earlier, cases of IDPs are currently on the rise. The former Special Representative for Internally Displaced Persons, Mr. Francis Deng, emphasized the state’s responsibility regarding IDPs (Deng, 1996). He recognizes internal
displacement as a problem falling under states' sovereignty, whereby sovereignty is seen as a positive concept of state responsibility to protect and assist its citizens.

Conversely, many scholars argue that the notion of sovereignty negatively impacts the ability of international organizations to intervene in countries where cases of IDPs are increasing. This is because the moment a state attains sovereign status, it has the sole power to prevent interference in its internal affairs by international organizations. Some scholars argue that State’s sovereignty has become a significant problem in dealing with internally displaced persons because these displaced persons are still within their own country. For example, in Liberia, during the first, second, and third civil wars, the government and rebel groups banned aid from entering the country even though the people were in desperate need of help from international organizations. During this same period in Liberia, when the Red Cross offered to provide aid to the IDPs in need, the government took control of the aid, and it never got to the people. This makes it difficult for organizations such as the UNSC to deal with events that threaten global peace and security, including issues pertaining to internal displacement (Fitzpatrick, 2000). According to the Guiding Principles, national authorities have the primary responsibility for providing protection and humanitarian assistance to its citizens. Under principle 25 of the Guiding Principles, international systems can offer aid and protection; however, it urges that nation-states need to facilitate the organizations' work which sometimes limits the impacts that these organizations can make.

**Conditions of Internally Displaced Persons**

IDPs find themselves in places that are of extreme vulnerability. They are fleeing from war, conflicts, disasters, and violence, while in the process, their safety and security
are at risk. Women and children are frequently subject to abuse and sexual exploitation. Youngsters are at risk of being kidnapped, trafficked, or forced to be child soldiers. For instance, during the Liberian civil war, women and children were the most vulnerable. During that period children were forced to join the government’s rebel soldiers, and in cases where a child refuses to oblige they were killed, or a family member was killed in front of them (Nmoma, 1997). In addition to the lack of basic needs such as shelter, water, and food, poor healthcare, and education. IDPs also face discrimination and abuse. When it comes to aid and assistance, there is little given to internally displaced persons since there is no agency responsible for the issues of internal displacement. The overall response of the global community has been when necessary or needed. Other than that, there is nothing, and no one is obligated to provide protection or assistance. This is because they remained within their border, making their sovereign state solely responsible for their wellbeing. This makes it difficult for the international community to interfere with an internal matter. For instance, the internal community could not interfere in the Liberian crisis on the onset since it was initially considered a regional threat. Being an internally displaced persons have severe consequences that most do not even notice. While refugees are protected under international law, if they seek safety in other countries, IDPs must rely on their government for protection from violence and persecution. In the case where it is the government the IDPs are fleeing from. They have no one to protect them from their government. It shows why IDPs are among the most vulnerable displaced persons in the world compared to others. When fleeing, IDPs face similar challenges to those faced by refugees. Many lose their livelihood, property, and jobs. Some get injured, some lose their loved ones. Scholars such as Päivi, and Hancock, have both hinted that helping IDPs is far more challenging
than assisting refugees since IDPs fall under their government for protection. There is no international treaty that applied to the needs and assistance of internally displaced persons. The Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement were developed to provide a framework for dealing with the IDPs problem that was taking place across the world. Nevertheless, because it is not a binding principle, countries and the government do not have to obey it.

**Perception of IDPs vs. Refugees**

Although refugees and internally displaced persons go through similar situations, such as fleeing their homes either from persecution, human rights violations, or wars, they do not get the same legal protection. There is an ongoing discussion about merging IDPs and refugees. Scholars such as Luke Lee (1996) argues that refugees and internally displaced persons should be merged into a single legal entity. He argues that whether a person crosses international borders or not should be irrelevant to their legal protections. Crossing international borders should not be the barrier that prevents an IDP from receiving legal protections. Understandably, both groups are fleeing from their homes for the same reasons, and both refugees and internally displaced persons may be in fear of their lives. However, not all internally displaced people are in fear of persecution from their government. Catherine Phuong, on the other hand, sees the issue differently. She argues that synthesizing the two groups removes the home state’s responsibility for caring for internally displaced persons. However, this has been heavily refuted because synthesizing the two groups will create a platform for international organizations to assistance and protect IDPs in cases where countries are unable to provide or care for their internally displaced persons.

**Fundamental Right of IDPs: Housing and Property Reinstitution**
One of the key advocates for housing and property reinstitution for IDPs is Päivi Koskinen. In his research, Päivi focuses on the responsibility of the state for internally displaced people. As stated, before by the United Nations Charter and many scholars, an essential duty that comes from state sovereignty is the populations' responsibility. It derives from the government's state sovereignty legitimacy, regardless of the political system or the ideology behind it (Päivi, P. 15). He argues that the enjoyment between the government and its citizens, in an ideal universe, should ensure the pleasure of human rights standards or at least guarantee food, shelter, safety, and essential health services (2005). In many places like Liberia and others where internal armed conflict occurs, causing massive displacement, the country is divided on the fundamental aspect of things that legitimacy and sovereignty are sharply contested. Päivi argued that the principle of national sovereignty as a doctrinal limit to the possibility of joint international actions in internal affairs is diminishing as more and border ground for intervention becomes accepted (2005). During any conflict or intervention, the relationship between the national and international legal systems can become problematic (2005). Another notable scholar, Hancock, argues that people have been forced to flee their homes due to armed conflicts most often find it difficult to return to their original residence as a result of poor housing and property reinstitution programs (2005). Some Internally Displaced Persons stay displaced because the returned is not possible for several reasons, such as destruction of housing, unstable security situation, essential services, and infrastructure, not the mentioned problem by reclaiming their property (Koskinen, 2005). Liberia is a perfect example of a country whose citizens are struggling due to a poor housing and property reinstitution program. For instance, after the peace agreement was signed in 2002, it was impossible for most
Liberians to return to their homes because the war had destroyed their homes and there was no effort on the part of the then government to house and integrate them back into the society.
CHAPTER 2: HISTORY OF LIBERIA AND THE IDP CRISIS

In Africa, refugee and displaced persons have become proof of political instability which may sometimes result from the breakdown in government where the people have become either victim at the hand of their government's abuse or that of an external aggressor coherent government ceased to exist. Civil war, ethnic strife, human rights abuse, coups, and oppressive government are the most critical factors responsible for many refugees and displacement on the continent. As of today, Sub-Saharan Africa hosts more than 26 percent of the world's refugee population (UNHCR, 2019). In recent years, a vast number of displacements in the continent have resulted from disputes. Unfortunately, in most cases, governments that are supposed to protect and ensure political stability in these countries are the sole orchestrated of these internal conflicts. Therefore, those who are displaced and living within the territories controlled by their government have not received support from the international organization because they have not been invited or are not permitted by the government. Furthermore, the experience that refugees and the internally displaced person go through, having to uproot from his or her home and country, is terrifying. As Jack C. Miller once stated:

"No sound is more distressing than the plea of the homeless. Their cry expresses the pain of hunger, thirst, and disease and denotes the fear of death, insecurity, and repression. The outcry is not pretentious but a reflection of grim reality. It is an expression of the tragedy occurring daily, especially in Africa, where one of every two refugees reside” (Miller, 1982).

The State of Liberia Prior to the Civil Unrest
To better understand the Liberian civil war that caused millions of people their lives and forced them to leave everything they knew and love, we must first understand Liberia's history, which will then provide insight into the refugee and displacement crisis. The history of Liberia can be understood in four cycle, namely, (1) arrival of free slaves in Liberia, (2) beginning of civil war under Samuel Doe, (3) the second civil war by Charles Taylor, and (4) the third civil war and the time of return.

Liberia is about Louisiana's size. It was established as a land gained for free US enslaved people by the American Colonization Society, which founded a colony at Cape Mesurado in 1821 (B. Jones, 2020). The two largest organizations were the Maryland Colonization Society and the American Colonization Society, driven by the Abolitionist Movement in the United States (Nmoma, 1997 and B. Jones, 2020). At the time, Liberia served as a place of refuge for freed Black American slaves. Later, when Britain declared slavery illegal and enforced the ban by its robust anti-slavery naval patrols, Liberia and Sierra Leone also became the places where "recaptured" Africans taken from vessels involved in the Atlantic slave trade were settled by the British (Nmoma, 1997; B. Jones and Kantabadouno,2020). Before the Black American settlers (known as the Americo-Liberians), Liberia was a nation that belongs to the indigenous community. There was a civilization in the region before the arrival of the descendants of the settlers. The indigenous community (Liberian) had a government ruled by kings and village elders. Institutional moral rules and laws bound the community, and stability was achieved through kinship and loyalty to the needy society (Nmoma, 1997). Americo-Liberians made up about three percent of Liberia's population during the early settler days. Americo-Liberians were considered and characterized as being light-skinned people who professed
Christianity and controlled the reins of powers. Thus, at the time, no dark-skinned person had been president of Liberia; E.J. Roye, the founder of the True Whig Party, was the first dark-skinned president to break the color-bar of the lighter-skinned Liberians (Saha, S., & Kieh, G. 1994).

The indigenous Liberian people consisted of several ethnic groups. During the time of colonization by the American the population of these groups were, Kpelle (298,500), Bassa (214,150), Gio (130,300), Mano (125,540), and Kru (121,400). Other smaller groups consist of: Grebo (108, 099), Gola (106,450), Loma (60,840), Bandi (30,870), Kissa (25,500), Vai (24,000), Krahn (18,464), Mandingo (over 10,836), Del (7,900), and Belle (5,386) (Nelson, 1987; Saha, S., & Kieh, G. 1994; Nmoma, 1997). The oldest of the indigenous people were the Golas. They migrated from Central Africa to western Africa. The Bassa, Kru, and Grebo people were the first to encounter the Black American Slaves. The Gola and Vai are located near the Republic of Sierra Leone border, and the Mendi is also split between the Republic of Sierra Leone and Liberia. Mano and the Gio are interior tribes living along either side of Liberia and Ivory Coast's border. At the same time, the Krahn is also split between Liberia and the Republic of Coté D'Ivoire. You can find the Mandingo and Kpelle people in both Liberia and Guinea. Once the black Americans settled into, they took the roots as they imposed the same treatment they received from the US. They treated the indigenous Liberian population in the same manner as they had experienced during slavery. They systematically suppressed and imposed the same political, economic, and social systems they endured over the indigenous people. The Liberian people were limited to a nominal position on the national social significance (Saha, S., and Kieh, G. 1994). Liberia's first President, Joseph Jenkins Roberts, an
Americo-Liberians, made it impossible for the indigenous people to access education to keep them from contending with the elite class (Americo-Liberians). Those indigenous individuals who were lucky to an occupied position in the government before 1980 were married to Americo-Liberians or those born to Americo-Liberians.

From 1870 to 1980, the Americo-Liberians controlled the government and the economy. They owned more than 60 percent of the country's wealth (M. A Vogt, 1992). Until recently, the legislative, judiciary, and executive branches were ruled by the elite family (relatives and family members of President William Tubman) (M. A. Vogt, 1992). At the same time, the country was also ruled by the single party, the True Whig Party (Nmoma, 1997). They are only playing by their rulers if it benefits them. The party upholds and advances the privileges enjoyed by the minority Americo-Liberians in the country. Moreover, those who disagreed with the True Whig Party were forced out of the political, economic, and social privilege groups. However, all that changes when Samuel Doe's lead, a military coup, leads to President Tolbert's death. In April of 1980, a coup was led by Samuel Doe, which contributes to the death/assassination of President Tolbert which brought an end to the Americo-Liberian power (Okolo, P. 152).
The first civil war in Liberia started and claimed the lives of about 620,000 people (Adler, 2019; Kantabadouno, 2020). This war got to the point where ECOWAS had to intervene. This civil war began when Samuel Doe led a coup that brought down the elected government of Williams R. Tolbert in 1980 (Nmoma, 1997; Kantabadouno, 2020). After the death of Williams, R. Tolbert, Samuel Doe was elected president. Doe was the first non-Americo-Liberian president since the free slaves established the country. Doe established a military regime called the People Redemption Council (Adler, 2019; Kantabadouno, 2020).
Kantabadouno, 2020). He received much support from the indigenous people who had been excluded from power and poorly treated at the Americo-Liberia's hands (Kantabadouno, 2020). To the Liberian people, Doe was supposed to be their savior, but he proved them wrong in no time. Following the 1985 election, in November, the former commanding general of Liberia's armed forces, Thomas Quiwonkpa, was forced to leave the country by the newly elected president. Thomas later returned and attempted to overthrow Doe (Kantabadouno, 2020). However, his attempt failed, and he was killed. Charles Taylor was part of the Samuel Doe government but was later accused of embezzlement. Taylor fled to the US, however, he was captured and arrested. Taylor spent sixteen months in Massachusetts jail before escaping (Capper, 2012).

After he escaped, Taylor went to Côte d'Ivoire, where he organized and trained indigenous people in the northern part of Côte d'Ivoire (Capper, 2012). From 1985 to 1989, he assembled a group of rebels which later became known as the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) (Capper, 2012; Kantabadouno, 2020). On December 24 of 1989, the NPFL, along with support from the Gio and Mano tribes, invaded Nimba county, forcing the Liberian Army to retaliate against its entire population (Kantabadouno, 2020; Nmoma, 1997). This invasion led to many innocent civilian deaths, and the village was burned to the ground, which caused numerous people to flee and seek refuge elsewhere in the country. Those who could escape out of the country sought refuge in neighboring countries such as Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire (Adler 2019; Kantabadouno, 2020). In reaction to the invasion, Doe sent out two AFL battalions, including the first infantry battalion to Nimba from December 1989 to January 1990, under colonel Hezekiah Browen (Kantabadouno,
2020). The AFL went into Nimba county, where thousands of civilians were brutally killed in what became known as the Monrovia church massacre.

Many people grew tired of the way Doe was ruling the country. From the birth of the NPFL came other groups like the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (Adler 2019; Capper, 2012). The group was formed when Prince Johnson and NPFL fighters left the group to start his rebel group. After the INPFL was formed, they, together with the NPFL, continued to lay Siege on Monrovia and the APL continued to defend. On September 9, 1990, Samuel Doe was captured by the INPFL when he traveled to the headquarters of the ECOWAS. Doe was taken to Caldwell based on being brutally tortured before being killed and dismembered (Kantabadouno, 2020; Brabazon & Stack 2004). The power struggle between INPFL and NPFL continued after Doe's death. Monrovia's streets were covered with innocent people's blood that was caused by both the INPFL and NPFL. ECOWAS had to step in to restore peace between INPFL and NPFL leaders Taylor and Johnson (Kantabadouno, 2020). One could not have predicted that the civil war that broke out in Liberia at the end of 1989 would have led to the 14-year cycles of conflict and displacement that would directly affect three other countries and indirectly affect many more. The 1989 Liberia civil war had caused undeniable violence and suffering between Sierra Leone, Guinea, and Cote d'Ivoire, which had also created a problematic displacement internally and externally in the region.

**Causes of Displacement in Liberia**

There is no doubt that the 14-year civil war which started in 1989 is the root cause of internal displacement in Liberia. Leading the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) and with support from Cote d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso, and Libya, Charles Taylor launched an
armed rebellion in Liberia's North part against Samuel Doe's regime. Taylor and his army attacked the border town of Butuo in Liberia from Cote d'Ivoire. This attack started the 14-year conflict deeming it one of the worst civil wars in history. This civil war claimed the lives of more than 250,000 people and displaced a total of 780,000 people externally and 500,000 internally. Samuel Doe responded by sending his troops to Nimba County, where they killed members of the Gio and Mano tribes under the idea that they supported Taylor. This conflict saw the rise and decline of many factions, formed mostly along ethnic lines. This conflict brought the height of 20 armed groups such as: the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) (Kantabadouno, 2020; Brabazon & Stack 2004); the United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO K and J), which was an amalgam of the Movement for the Redemption of Muslims (MRM) (Brabazon & Stack 2004) and the Liberian United Defense Force (LUDF), the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) (Adler, 2019). These groups were composed of various national army factions, the regional force of the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), and rebel groups. Though the effects of displacement vary, the war's insecurity has seen entire communities become vulnerable to poverty, human trafficking, and exploitation.

In 1990, the Economic Community of West Africans States (ECOWAS) and ECOMOG agreed to send troops into Liberia to bring orders. Other non-ECOWAS members such as Uganda and Tanzania joined the mission of ECOWAS to help bring peace to the Liberian people. Primary objectives of ECOWAS were to establish a compulsory cease-fire and stop the violent death of civilians and launch an internal government until an election would be held and ensure the safe removal of foreign nationals from Liberia.
ECOWAS also wanted to help prevent the spread of the civil war to the neighboring countries.

This peace did not go beyond Monrovia; however, the rest of the country was being ruled by Taylor and other self-styled freedom fighters battling over the country's rich natural resources. April 1996, the four Liberian Warlords signed the fourteenth peace agreement since the warring outbreak, providing for the warring faction's disarmament, followed by a presidential and parliamentary election in 1997 (Reliefweb). Charles Taylor won the election by a landslide; however, the peace lasted for a brief time. In 1997, an armed group crossed the border from Guinea and attacked the town of Voinjama in northern Lofa County; the Guinean accused Liberian forces of entering its territory and attacking the border villages. Afterward, in 1999, conflict broke out again between government forces and the new rebel groups Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy. It grew worse with another rebel movement's appearance in 2003, the Movement for Democracy in Liberia, which attacked the border neighboring Cote d'Ivoire. This conflict caused more displacement in Monrovia's capital, causing humanitarian and human rights crises (Reliefweb). The arrival of ECOWAS troops in August 2003 and the involvement of the United Nations Mission in Liberia peacekeepers helped bring some orders to Monrovia while President Taylor was forced into exile due to pressure from the international community.

In April of 2006, IDP crisis in Liberia was believed to have ended since about 314,000 internally displaced persons had been returned to their homes. More than 35 IDP camps in the country were closed while at the same time the political process was taking place by former president Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, which got the international community's
attention and drew donors to help with the corruption and achieve financial accountability (2007, July 27). With all this advancement, yet Liberia remains broken. Much more needs to be done for Liberia to be once again the country that it was before Charles Taylor. Years of conflicts that started at the hands of Samuel Doe and Taylor and poor government have destroyed Liberia's infrastructure and economy, leaving Liberia to be one of the world's poorest countries. Even with the political progress and new policies to help the nation with its internally displaced person crisis, it is not enough. The internally displaced person may have been returned to their homes. However, they are in areas without essential social services or opportunities to survive independently, which is indifferent from their previous conditions. Due to the lack of support that they are receiving and the fact that these people do not have the necessities to provide for themselves, over 28,000 of them continue to occupy former camps, living in abandoned and public buildings in the capital Monrovia which are in deplorable conditions.

**IDP Laws and Policies in Liberia**

Internally displaced persons are the most vulnerable groups in the world. They are most often forgotten about or neglected, and they fall between the crack of both international and domestic protection. In terms of numbers, the internally displaced person has outnumbered refugees over the past few decades, and they continue to do so even as we speak today. As of July 2014, the number of internally displaced persons that the IDMC reported was 33.3 million. By the end of 2018, there are 25.9 million refugees in the world, 41.3 million internally displaced persons, and 3.5 million asylum-seekers (Internal
Displacement Monitor Center, 2019). Looking at these numbers, one will expect an internally displaced person to have an international framework that protects them. However, that is not the case. Not only do IDPs do not have any international legal protection, but they also do not have an institutional sponsor or agreed international legal framework that is put in place for them.

In contrast, a minor refugee in numbers benefits from a well-developed institution and legal effort through the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). Thus, some measures have been taken to put in place rules and guidelines on how states should deal with their internally displaced crisis; none has been legally binding on the international level. In the international arena, laws such as the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacements (1998) serve as the international standard to help guide governments and international humanitarian and development agencies in helping and protection to internally displaced persons.

The only legally binding document for internally displaced persons is the Kampala Convention, also known as the African Union (A.U.) Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa. In October 2009, the African Union adopted the first and only legally binding treaty to protect internally displaced persons within their country. The Kampala is built upon the 1998 United Nations Guiding Principle on Internal Displacement while integrating international human rights and humanitarian law norms as they relate to internal displacement and embodying some of the principles from the African regional standards such as the African Charter on Human and People Rights and the Great Lake Protocol. The Kampala convention gives these non-binding principles the force of law in Africa. It is also the first regional treaty to address the severity
of the internal displacement completely. In this treaty, some key factors are underlined in the Convention: the first and most important being that the treaty recognizes that the primary responsibility is to provide protection and assistance for internally displaced persons within their borders; however, this responsibility is not exclusive. The treaty also acknowledges that internal displacement is not a legal status. Thus, it recognizes that IDPs have the right to get protection and assistance from their government or other actors willing to provide any help and support.

While many countries had adopted or recognized the United Nations Guiding Principle of Internal Displacement and the Kampala Convention, many more have not yet adopted them. Liberia is one of those countries that have adopted both the United Nations Guiding Principle and the Kampala Convention. On the national level, Liberia has a policy that "protects internally displaced persons." I use this term very loosely. Because Liberia has adopted a policy to protect their IDPs, it is a question of how well these policies are implicated. In 2002, Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission adopted the Declaration of the Rights and Protection of Liberian Internally Displaced Persons. This policy does not reference the Guiding Principle; however, it has a slow pattern of returns. The effectiveness of this policy is minimal. In this policy, Liberia recognizes the partnership between the government of the Republic of Liberia and other international organizations such as the Manor River Union (MRU), ECOWAS, African Union (A.U.), United Nations (U.N.) and other international organizations desire to enhance the partnership as mentioned earlier and thereby protect IDPs (National Legislative Bodies / National Authorities, 2002). The Liberian government is also aware of the large numbers of women and girls who are in IDPs camps who are victims of sexual gender-based
violence (SGBV); thus, the government had invited other N.G.O.s to help with the IDPs crisis, the government itself have not done much for an internally displaced person in the country. Although the Human Rights Conventions cover IDPs, there are no international legal instruments specifically designed to protect them from IDPs. Aside from this flaw, there are no specific international agencies like UNHCR with exclusive responsibility for IDPs. According to international law, internally displaced people are the government's responsibility if they have not crossed international borders.

On the national level, Liberia has adopted a domestic IDP policy. In 2002, the Liberia Refugee Repatriation and Resettlement Commission adopted the Declaration of the Rights and Protection of internally displaced Liberians. It does reference the Guiding Principle; however, it has a slow pattern of returns. The effectiveness of this policy is limited. In this policy, Liberia recognized the positive partnership between the government of the Republic of Liberia, the Manor River Union (MRU), ECOWAS, African Union (AU), United Nations (UN), and other international organizations with the desire of enhancing the partnership as mentioned earlier and thereby protecting IDPs (National Legislative Bodies/National Authorities, 2002). Liberia's government is also aware of the vast numbers of women and girls in IDP camps and are victims of sexual gender-based violence (SGBV). Thus, the government has invited other NGOs to help with this crisis; the governor himself has not done much for IDPs. In 2004, Results-Focused Transitional Framework Working Committee adopted the National Community Resettlement and Reintegration Strategy. The policy's effectiveness is progressing better than the Declaration of the Rights and Protection of Liberian Internally Displaced Persons and other procedures toward IDPs in the country. However, the issue with this policy is that it excludes
protections and other internally displaced persons (such as tribal groups). Liberia also adopted the Guiding Principle of Internal Displaced Persons in 2004. While there may not be much protection and assistance for internally displaced persons within Liberia, Liberia has put a National Disaster management policy in place which describes refugees and internally displaced persons as a disaster due to the situations' tricky measures. Therefore, they are guaranteed protection and should be provided with basic needs such as shelter, water, sanitary, and health amenities (National Legislative Bodies/National Authorities).

**Barriers that Prevent International Community from Supporting IDPs in Liberia**

Liberia, Rwanda, and Syria, what do three countries have in common? Answer, war, human rights abuse, displaced population, and consent to suffer. Now, what set these three countries apart, even though they have all suffered from human rights abuse and violation? Rwanda and Syria had international support and intervention during their crisis, economically, Rwanda and Syria are more developed with larger populations than Liberia. Thus, Liberia went through a 14-year civil war, Rwanda went through a 100-days war, and the Syrian civil war has been going on for about ten years now. The first Liberian Civil War killed more than 250,000 people and 1.2 million internally displaced out of a pre-war population of only 2.5m, and the second civil war killed nearly 300,000 people. The 100-day civil war in Rwanda claimed the lives of between 206,000-800,000 people, and the U.N. data report that the war in Syria had killed about 594,000 people. What is the point of all this, the point is not to take away or belittle any one country suffering or to say that what happened in Rwanda or what is happening in Syria is not essential? No, the point that I am trying to make is that it does not matter the size of the country's population or economy or rather if the country is economically stable or not. What should matter is that when
human rights abuse and violation occur in any country, their sound is equal protection and intervention from the international communities.

While I understand that the international community cannot intervene in other countries' affairs without an invitation from the host country government, some law overrules sovereignty in terms of human rights abuse and violation. Many barriers prevent international communities' bodies from intervening in other countries affairs, such as the notion of sovereignty, political interest, economic gain, and developmental interest. Moreover, in some cases, the size of the country also plays a factor in international intervention.

In Liberia, the barrier that prevented the international community from stepping in during the civil war was sovereignty, political interest, and economic gain exists. Also, Liberia is one of the world's poorest countries, with a population of 5 million people who went through a 14-year civil war. From 1989 to 2003, Liberia went through a brutal Civil war that claimed the lives of over 550,000 people, destroyed the country economy beyond repair, and left the citizens with little or no hopes; because the citizen feels that the international communities and their government have given up on them, therefore see no hope. Furthermore, years of civil war have destroyed Liberia's economy and has left the country in huge debts, both foreign and domestic.

Liberia is a tiny country with few resources to offer to the rest of the world. Therefore, no country wants to get involved. Liberia is also such a tiny country that most people today do not even know that it exists. During the 14-year civil war, the only organization that did anything to bring peace to Liberia was the member nations of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS). After a year into the bloody
civil war in Liberia, August 1990, the Anglophone ECOWAS member established the Economic Community of West African States Military Observer Group (ECOMOG) to intervene in the civil war Liberia. This regional body intervened in the civil war because of political and economic interests. The involvement of ECOWAS was also because the civil war in Liberia had caused a massive flow of migration into neighboring countries, and the war had also spared the Guinea Republic and Sierra Leone, making it a regional war, therefore calling for regional intervention.
CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to examine internally displaced persons in West Africa by examining the role that these nation-states play in supporting and protecting internally displaced persons within their territories. This study will focus mainly on the effect of displacement in Liberia and the laws Liberia has enacted to protect IDPs. This study will explore initiatives taken by the Liberian government to tackle this problem, and the international community's involvement in combating this crisis. Therefore, the research questions that would be evaluated are, (1) What type of policies are already in place regarding IDPs? (2) What is the role of the international community in the internally displaced person crisis in Liberia? and (3) What barriers prevent the involvement of the international community in Liberia?

Research Design and Setting

The study will be conducted in Voinjama, Lofa county, Liberia. Voinjama is a small city that serves as Lofa County, Liberia, which is located in the hilly, far northern part of the country near the Guinean border. As of the 2008 national census, the population stood at 26,594. Before the Liberian civil war, it was a busy crossroads town with a large weekly market. The population was principally from the Lorma and Mandingo tribes, with other ethnic groups from surrounding areas also present. Liberia was chosen for this research because it is one of the world's poorest countries (GNI per capita: $730), with a population of 5 million as of 2020. Liberia has been in an on-off civil war which lasted for about 14-years (1989 to 2003). The 14-year civil war killed about 200,000 people,
displaced about 1.2 million people, and forced another 750,000 Liberians to flee to neighboring countries (Capper, 2012; NRC, 2001).

This research draws on 15 semi-structured interviews conducted with internally displaced persons and three semi-structured interviews with employees of the Red Cross and the WFP in Voinjama, Lofa country, on specific issues affecting them today in Liberia. I chose to adopt a qualitative research method to study the displaced population's experience in Voinjama, Lofa county, since it is the best way to understand their experiences. As such, qualitative interviews are the best way of grasping human experiences (Bernard, 1988; Cohen, D, & Crabtree B 2006). A semi-structured interview is chosen because it allows leeway for follow-up questions during the interview process. For this research, a qualitative case study would be used to examine internally displaced people in Liberia—looking at the type of policy in place to protect them and their rights while also looking at the institutions responsible for security and assistance for IDPs. The two forms of methodologies that will be implored in this project are case study and qualitative analysis.

Thus, to conduct this research, I traveled to Liberia at the end of November of 2020 to meet with the Red Cross and WFP. During my time in Liberia, I went to Voinjama, Lofa county. While in Voinjama, I met and interviewed individuals who spend most of their lives fleeing from camps to camps, bush to bush. I also met with employees from the Red Cross and World Food Program (WFP) and interviewed them. The goal was to conduct field research during face-to-face interviews. However, due to the pandemic, I ran some interviews through WhatsApp, phone, and Skype to protect myself and those I interviewed.
I also had the privilege of visiting old IDP camps at the Liberia border and interviewed a few people who lived in the displaced camp during the second civil war.

**Framework**

For this research, I will be doing qualitative research and case study. I will be doing a case study that will examine Internally Displaced People in Liberia—looking at the type of policy to protect them and their rights while also looking at the institution for security and assistance for IDPs. The two forms of a framework that I will be implored in this project are intervening and reframing. With the intervention approach, my research will be calling for the intervention of the international communities and the United Nations, and other organizations that are against human rights violations. This methodology will work in my study because I advocate for the international community for human abuse rights. I will also recommend better laws/policies and protection for IDPs' lives in Liberia and other West African nations. This research's focus groups are IDPs; thus, I will be interviewing various governmental and non-governmental organizations. My focus is mainly on IDPs experiences before, during, and after the civil war. At the end of this research, the goal is to understand better how IDPs in Liberia are treated and understand the policy and laws governing internally displaced persons worldwide.

**Participants**

The Participant in the study will be non-governmental organizations and community-based organizations that are on the ground working with IDPs and the communities and those working in the refugee and IPDs camps and IDPs themselves. The participants for this research were selected with me calling agency to ask for names and volunteers as well as using the snowball sample (in which I started with one person and I
asked them to recommend others). The participants will be selected based on the following established criteria:

1. An individual (male or female) who are 18 years or older.
2. Individuals who are internally displaced and live in IDP camps.
3. Individual who works with NGOs and community-based organization (In Liberia, such as organization leaders and employees)
4. Individuals currently in Liberia, Lofa county

Informed consent was given by these individuals whose identity by protected by assigning them generated pseudonym. The age range of participants in this study is people who are 18 years and older. The age range of 18 and older is chosen because they were able to give a consent for participating. These criteria were established to ensure all participants were displaced and Liberians who were forced to flee their homes due to the civil war.

**Measurement Instrument**

This research was collected through semi-structured interviews, which covered various aspects of the IDPs' lives. The first part of the questions focused on the Participant's early experiences before the civil war begins. I hoped to understand what life was for the participants before everything changed by asking these questions. And by also gaining an understanding of the push factors for these IDPs and establishing the demographics of this population. In the second part of the interview, the question touch upon their time in IDP camps, the support they received while in the camps, and what aid they received either from their government or NGOs. in the last part of the interviews, the questions focused on suggestion and life improvement for them and the Liberian people. These questions are
important because they touch upon a more significant issue of the length that these people went through and what life was like for them in the IDP camps. There was a total of sixteen questions in the interview protocol, all of which are open-ended. Below are the interview questions:

**Interview Questions for Organizations:**

1. What are the factors that pushed you to be in this field?
   - What inspiration did you get to be involved in this type of work?

2. What is your understanding of humanitarian crises?

3. The African Union Convention for the Protection and Assistance of Internally Displaced Persons in Africa (Kampala Convention) of 2009 shaped the responsibilities required of African states towards their IDPs. Have you seen any country that has lived up to that expectations?
   - Have them respond to the different responses within the continent in general.

4. How did you become involved with this organization?
   - Can you tell me what your daily schedule looks like?

5. What do you think are some of the challenges you face while doing day-to-day work?
   - Focus on lingual, ethnic, religious difference and how that creates compounded levels of difficulty to work with IDPs
   - Militia presence in IDP camps
   - How do you deal with these challenges as an individual and as an organization?
6. How is your relationship with the government?
   • Focus on government ban, interference, corruption within the country

7. What would you suggest can be done better?
   • Policy recommendation
   • Addressing key organizational challenges

8. Where do you see the future of Liberia going within Africa in the next few decades?

9. What are the problems faced by the displaced people? From your experience.

**Interview Questions for internal displaced person:**

1. Can you tell me about your experience in Liberia before the civil war?

2. Where are your from in Liberia? Where are you from before coming to your current locations? How did you come to be in this IDPs camp?

3. How long have you been displaced?

4. What support do you think you have reservice from the international community?

5. What support have you receive from Liberian Government?

6. Do you feel informed about the kind of aid available to you? what information do you need?

7. Does the aid you currently receive cover your basic needs?

8. What are your most important needs that are not met?

9. In your opinion, do you think the support reaches the people who need it most?

10. Are you treated with respect by the aid providers?

11. Do you know how to make suggestion or complaint to aid providers?
12. As an IDPs, do you feel your views are considered in decision made about the support you receive?

13. Do you feel safe in your place of residence?

14. Do you feel like you have the support and services you need to live without aid in the future?

15. Overall, is life improving for people in Liberia? If not, what do you need to improve life for the Liberian IDPs?

16. Is there anything that you need from the government, that you feel that he is lacking in?

Data Analysis

A total of 18 people were interviewed (i.e., 15 IDPs and 3 organization members). Of the eighteen individuals that were interviewed, five were female, and twelve were male. Each interview lasted between twenty minutes to an hour, depending on how willing the participant was with answering questions and telling his/her stories. Each participant was read a consent form in their language of preference, either English/Koloqua, Bandi, and Gbande, and any question they might have, and answered before the interview. Five of the participants were referred to me by the Red Cross, and ten participants were referred by Shadrach, a researcher/WFP member, and the rest were directed by other participants during their interviews.

The first interview was conducted on the phone on Thursday, December 17, 2020, in Montserrado, Liberia, with an individual who spend half of his life in IDP camps. The remaining 17 of the interviews were conducted through a combination of in-person and
through WhatsApp from December 29 to January 3, 2021. 11 of the interviews were conducted in English/ Koloqua. And the remaining seven interviews were conducted in Bandi. Those interviews that was conducted in Bandi required a translator, Shadrach, due to language barrier. Of all the participants, only four had a high school diploma or equivalent to Liberia (i.e., one medical doctor, and three bachelor’s/master’s degree holders). The rest did not have any schooling due to the war. The participants are in different age groups; they range from the age of 20-54 years of age.

All 18 interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. Each participant was assigned an appropriate pseudonym based on their country of origin, gender, and year of birth. I had help from Shadrach and the website, which provides statistics on the most common names in each specific county/country each year and assigned a pseudonym accordingly. Shadrach is 24-year-old political science and environmental researcher at the University of Liberia. Shadrach also work for the INRC and the Lofa community school. He is also familiar with the local community and he speak the language. He was my connection between the IDPs and the NGOs. I used different colors to highlight the transcription element, which speaks to each part of the research question, early life, camp life, supports, etc. The highlighted information was categorized into specific themes: Interviews with NOG which include the role that they play during the Liberian civil war and after the civil war. IDPs experiences before and during the civil war, the types of assistance or protection they receive while in displaced camps, government and NGOs involvements, and their current needs from the Liberian government as well as the international communities.

Validity and Credibility
To confirm the authenticity of the research, its validity and credibility are essential. The data was obtained through semi-structured interviews conducted with the internally displaced person in Voinjama, Lofa county Liberia. Due to the nature of the research method, I cannot guarantee that all participants' information is accurate. However, since all the participants are natural, there would be no compensation for their participation. I can guarantee that the participants wanted to share reliable information about their experiences as internally displaced persons in Liberia. Furthermore, the utilization of pseudonyms and the protection of their confidentiality made the participants feel comfortable and safe to share their experiences. Additionally, by sharing my own experiences of being born in Liberia and watching my family home get destroyed due to the war. Watching my uncle get killed in front of me. Sharing my experiences with the participants helped me build a genuine connection with them, creating a secure space for the participants to share their stories.

Strength and Limitations

This study, like much other research, has its own set of strengths and limitations. This research's power lies primarily in the topic discussed; there have been few studies done on internally displaced persons (IDPs), especially on IDPs in Liberia and on the role of the Nations-state in protecting and supporting IDPs in Liberia. You can find documentary film on the library civil war and its effect on the people on YouTube. This is a very recent topic, and not many scholars and people know about the Liberia IDPs crisis. There is a lack of literature on this, so this research is even more important to add to the limited literature on this topic and serve as preliminary studies for future research on the issue. Furthermore, this research required in-depth discussions with Liberians who were in
displaced camps during and after the civil war, who can speak about their experiences as internally displaced persons (IDPs).

One of the limitations was the study period and the global coronavirus pandemic which struck the world during the time the study was conducted. Due to the pandemic, this research could not have gathered enough information. The pandemic also limited the direction the research was supposed to go which impacted the setting. The initial research design involved travelling to Liberia to conduct in-person interviews with all the participants, however, there was a slight change in plans due to the pandemic. The first round of interviews was conducted on the phone in Montserrado, Liberia, with participants through WhatsApp. With this mode, interviews were conducted safely for all parties involved. However, it was impossible to observe and document the in-person elements that constitute a qualitative interview. Conversely, the second round of interviews was conducted in-person in Voinjama, where observations of participants’ facial expressions, hand gestures, and other things that help provide context to their words were documented. The in-person interviews were conducted in a safe and open environment, the participants and I had face cover and other things needed to ensure safety.

Another notable limitation of this research study was the lack of equality of male and female participants. There were only five female participants from a total of eighteen participants. Unfortunately, this lack of representation means that the study cannot fully capture all the IDP women's experiences in Liberia IDP camps. However, although the number of women participants is low, this research is still very pertinent. It is essential to look at the experiences of IDPs' lives before, during, and after the civil war in camps and outside camps. Besides, this research will raise awareness, contribute to the literature on
internally displaced people in Liberia or other countries, and provide policy recommendations for responding to displaced populations' waves.
CHAPTER 4: PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS

Each of the participants spoke of the different hardships they encountered as IDPs navigating a system that wasn’t built to provide them with the appropriate protection. Each participant shared their very personal and heartfelt stories for the purposes of this study. Throughout the interviews, I was able to identify three different themes: lack of international/national support, the hardships of living in IDP camps and finally the post-civil war situation and assessing their needs. I also include a section on my personal reflections and my major take-aways from conducting fieldwork in Liberia, my home country.

1. Lack of international/national support

During the first Civil War in Liberia, there was not much international involvement. Most of the IDPs that I interviewed said that they did not get much support from the international community until after the war. Those in displaced camps near the Guinean border alluded that they received support and aid from Non-governmental organizations such as the ICRC and IRC. After the war, the red cross ICRC was doing cash flow rehabilitation. They ask the National society to give them volunteers so that they could go in helping the people to rehabilitate their cash go from village to village. Ten people were selected as a volunteer, said Mr. Richard Morly and Amos Banna, two former IDPs. We used to go and measure the farm, then we would take people from the community to help with the farm and cash rehabilitation program, and the ICRC would pay them. This is what we were doing. Most of the villages you see today in Lofa county where you see coffee,
cocoa, oil pump, it was all because of the ICRC. Every oil pump that you see across Liberia today was because of the ICRC and the LNRC.

However, after the peace agreement that was signed to declare the war over, in early 2005, the Liberian government opened more counties for the return of internally displaced persons (IDPs) and refugees who fled their home during the civil war. Some of the counties that were open for the returning included Lofa and Nimba counties in the north of Liberia. These two counties experience some of the worst fighting and killing in the country. In 2005, the Security Assessment Committee for Resettlement (SACR) declared 13 of the 15 counties in Liberia safe for refugees and IDPs to return. According to the United Nations data in 2005, about 350,000 people fled to neighboring countries during the 14-year civil war in Liberia, while more than 464,000 people became internally displaced. Those who were unable to flee into neighboring countries create IDPs all over Liberia. Some of the biggest IDP camps were around the capital city. At the end of August 2003, the UNHCR reported 100,000 refugees and IDPs had returned to their villages. However, the developed program to help return Liberians back to their home country had been slow in the resettlement process.

Signing the Peace Agreement and passing the bill, that called for the return of Liberians in 2003 by former President Ellen Johnson, served as a building block to reintegrate these displaced Liberians back into their country. However, those who returned home (about 350,000 refugees and IDPs) had nowhere to go due to poor housing and property reinstitution measures. According to one interviewee, Joseph S. Nyuma, “people had to take refuge on the street with no support from NGOs or the government.”
"I came home in hopes of receiving some support from the people who told us that it was okay to return home. But when I came home, I did not get the support that I needed from my government. So, like many, I return to the camp because while life in the camps was not the greatest, we still had support. Most people went back to the displaced camp in Fungus. As of today, if you go to Fungus, you will see many Liberians in the camps, because they came back home and saw that there was no hope," said Joseph S. Nyuma.

"For those of us who came back, we came with the assumption that the government will go in and really give them meaningful assistant, for example shelter, foods, better education, school facilities etc. these are things that we all expected to see when we are in camps. But when we came, we did not see these things, some of us was strong to face the situation that we were put into, and now we are integrated into our environment, but some went back to the IDP and refugee camps because they were not strong enough or did not have the assistant that they needed from their government," said S. Nyuma.

After the 14-year civil war, Non-governmental organizations such as the World Food Program (W.F.P.), the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the Liberian National Red Cross (LNCR), and the International Rescue Committee (I.R.C.) all got involved in trying to rebuild Liberia. I had the opportunity to interview some staff members of these fantastic organizations while in Monrovia this winter. I met with W.F.P.
staff member Tommy Doe to see what the W.F.P. has been doing in Liberia since the Civil War.

Tommy is 24-year-old men who spend nearly seven years of his life moving displaced camps to displaced camps. Currently, He work for the W.F.P. in Lofa county.

Tommy was a high school student before the civil war. During the war, Tommy, like many Liberians, fled their homes, left everything they ever knew behind, without knowing if they will ever return. Unlike the other interviewees, Tommy did not live in official IDP or refugee camps, yet he was displaced within his own border. When I asked Tommy, what life is/was like for him during the civil war and after the civil war, this is what he had to say:

"During the war, life was not good for me. I was a student in high school when the war came into my village. I had to leave school and go stay with my family in Nimab. When I was there, I was not going to school because we were afraid that the rebel or the army would come and attack. I spent most of the time moving from village to village before finding myself in Monrovia at the displaced camp," said Tommy.

He continued:

“After the war, I wanted to go back to school and get my degree. After I graduated from high school, I did not have a job to provide for my family and me. It is a challenge for students to get jobs even after obtaining degrees because how bad the
country is. Everybody wants to seek greener pastures like having something to do for themselves, so when I graduated from high school, enrolled in college, and had kids, I knew I had to find a job to sustain my family. I have a kid that is in twelve grades now you know. So, when I was in an environment where young boys sit and go to have fun, I was picked by a lady in the community who recommended me to the human resource at that time. So, I went there and at that time, things were not coming forth trying to get me on payroll was hard. So, I had another thought about joining the army. In the process of going through all those bureaucracies to join the military, this man from my town saw how hardworking I was, and he told me that the army was not for me. He got me from the army to the G.S.A. which is where I work now," said Tommy.

Along with working with the G.S.A., Tommy works for the World Food Program in Liberia as well. After the war, the W.F.P. began as the leading humanitarian organization in Liberia. W.F.P. does in Liberia, mainly in Lofa county, is delivering food assistance and working with the communities to improve nutrition and build resilience. In Liberia, the W.F.P. has been heavily involved with developing aid and rehabilitation programs for the community. Besides being involved with helping Liberia rebuild, the W.F.P. was also involved with the Ebola outbreak in 2014 that claimed the lives of over four thousand people in a year and highlighted Liberia's fragility. Thus, the war and Ebola crisis are over in Liberia; the W.F.P. remains in the country and aims to provide safety to strengthen food and nutrition security through school feeding and social protection measures and strengthen Liberia as a whole.
With this information, I asked Tommy about some of the challenges that the W.F.P. face in helping IDPs and the Liberian community. He mentioned that some of the challenges that he faces in his daily work come from the government and the lack of support they get from the Liberian government. Moreover, when I asked about W.F.P. relations with the Liberian government, this is what Tommy had to say:

"W.F.P. as an organization itself, has a great working relation with the government. Our mission statement aligns with the mission of the government, which is to provide safety, food and nutrition security through school feeding and social protection programs and to help strengthen Liberia's capacity to own and implement hunger solutions. However, in terms of financial support, we do not get much support from the government. Most of everything that this organization does come from the support of the communities, local churches, and local N.G.O.s. With the pandemic, the government had provided a stimulus package distribution of $36,000 in Montserrado county. We are starting the distribution with the less fortunate people, disability, and women and children," said Tommy.

While conducting interviews in Lofa county, Liberia, with individuals displaced in the country due to the 14-years civil war, they did not get support from their government. During my interviews with organizations and IDPs themselves, I ask, what support, if any, did you or have you received from the Liberian government? Some said that the government did not provide any support or assistance to them. At the same time, others say that they receive support from their government through rice. The government provide rice seeds, so they are about to farm. It appears that some IDPs were fortunate to receive
support from the government depending on the IDP camp that they find themselves in. Most people who find themselves in camps where they were considered rebel groups had it tough because they did not receive assistance or support. Both government groups and rebel groups also targeted them. Some also talked about their experience with the fears, terrors, and torture they endured in the IDP camps.

"When we were in the displaced camps (Monrovia), people thought that we were rebels, so we did not receive any type of support from our government. When we did get aid from the Red Cross, those aids did not go to everyone in the camps." I was taken to Firestone, to the director of P.P.D. because they thought I was creating rebels' group, said Mr. Amos Banna. Other individuals also stress the same consent with me.

2. Hardships of living in IDP camps

Out of the 18 interviews that I conducted, 14 said that they did not receive support from their government while in camps and even after they were told to return. Most IDPs said that they received aid from the Red Cross during the first civil war. However, this also depended on where you were at, what camps you were in, and relatively whether it was close to the Guinean border or not. Those who found themselves in displaced camps close to the Guinean border had different stories regarding the type of aids and support that they got. Thus, one thing that was consistent in every IDP story was that no matter where they were, 'they did not feel safe.'
Prince and Basemath, are brothers; age 48 and 30, and they are Khran. During the beginning of the civil war in Liberia, when rebel groups were killing the Khran people, they flee the country into Guinea. While in Guinea, they spend four years in Lainé, Kola and Kouankan in N’zerekoré, Guinea camps. They told a story about their time in the Lainé, Kola, and Kouankan in N’zerekoré, Guinea camp. They said that when they were in the camps, they had support from the Red Cross. The Red Cross staff will bring them food, medicine, blanket, and other supplies. Others told similar stories like that. However, they also said that when they left the camp and went to Monrovia to a different displaced camp, they did not get any support. Compared to Kola, their experiences in the Monrovia camp were not good. The camp that they were in targeted by military groups. They were in constant fear of their life because they military groups thought that they were rebel groups. However, it was not easy for them being Khran as well. Therefore, like many IDPs who seek refuges in Monrovia where they were driven out to another location. They also, expresses constant about the lack of safety in the surrounding the camp. Other IDPs shared similar stories.

Winnifred, a 45-year-old woman who lost her husband and her three sons during the first civil war while in Salala IDPs camp, Bong County (Salala District). She watched her husband and her three-son got killed in front her for refusing to join the rebel group. After that, she flees from Bong county to Montserrado County where she seeks refuges in Perry IDPs camp. Currently, she is living in Voinjama, trying to get a nursing degree. Winnifred shared her experience in IDPs camp.
"During the time we were in the displaced camp, we didn't have food or anything. People had to break wood to burn coal and sell before they could eat. Sometimes we will go for weeks and months in camps before we can get food," said Winnifred.

However, after the Civil War was over, the Liberian government did develop a program designed to help IDPs and return refugees integrate back into society. This program was called the (DDP). Thus, this program exists, many IDPs and refugees still struggled with integrating back into society. Most also expressed thought about the program. According to the interview with Tarmuekollie and other IDPs, they said that they were looking forward to coming back when they heard about the program. However, when they returned, the program was not what they thought it would be. "Yes, the program covers our basic needs for the most part, but it did not provide us with shelter, or land for us to get back on our feet," said Tarmuekollie, Prince, Tenga, and Basemath in their interview.

"The way that the Liberia government tried to display the Convention was through this program called (DDP). This program was a Liberian government to integrate those who come from exile and to also to give support to the IDP Sanner Liberia was in some way playing a little part into the African Convention program. The type of aids provided by this program was the basic need for support, such as food and shelter through the Liberian government. They were also giving protection to women. Somehow, the Liberia government was doing what it could after the war to provide for its returnees," said Joseph S.
Soka 56, grew up and worked in Firestone’s rubber plantation in Liberia where she met her husband, and they began raising their family. Soka had a child at the time civil war brook out, however, all that change when Taylor groups entered Firestone. In 1989, when Charles Taylor’s forces came into Firestone and attacked the Doe government and occupied Firestone plantation and were confronted by Doe troops. Firestone was at the frontline of the Liberian civil war. When I asked Soka about her experience during the Civil War, this is what she had to say:

“I was in Firestone when the Taylor groups attack Doe government troops. I was there when the American government came to took away its citizen leaving us to survive on our own. We thought they were going to protect us. The rebel came into town and they started raising hell there. Doe troops started killing and knocking down doors and yelling at us to come outside. When you are not blessed by God, they kill you and shoot you in front of your love ones. There was no way to running. My husband at the time was working at firestone. The soldiers then just grabbed him and killed him. I watched my husband get killed in front of me. Then the soldiers came and grabbed me and rape me. I was in tears crying, they put the gun in my mouth and say to me, ‘if you don’t do it, I will kill you’.

When the fighting first broke out in Firestone, where Soka lived with her husband and her daughter. Unfortunately, by the time they decided to flee it was too late and Soka witnessed the death of her husband (who was shot by rebel group because of the ethnic group that he belongs too) and her daughter (raped by several of Taylor men and bleed to death). Trying to Keep herself together, Soka fled to Blamas seh camp, Montserrado
County. She was in Blamasseh IDPs camp for a short time before fleeing to Lofa county in hope to trying to make it to a refugee camp in Guinea.

She continued:

“They catch one of my children. My daughter was about 13-year-old. There were about three men that raped her. There was no hospital for me to take my child too. I watch as they raped my daughter and I also watch her bleed to death hours later”.

“Life in Blamasseh camp was very difficult for me. I had no one there with me. All my family were killed by rebel groups and I was all alone. At night was I was afraid to sleep because it wasn’t safe. I was always scared of the solider coming and hurting me. I remember one time, the solider come and started killing all the men and some women that was in the camp. They asked us if we were Krahn, and if you were, they killed you. So, it was not safe in the camp”.

She continues….

“we didn’t have food, shelter, or water. I at the time made shelter out of things that I would find, which was plastic, and I would sleep on a mat on the ground surrounded by other shelter with displaced families.”

After the war, Soka returned to her home in Firestone, but she like many IDPs could not reclaim their homes. Today, she is living in Lofa (Voinjama) where she sells fish for living.
In conclusion, many IDPs share similar stories about the international community/organization's involvement during the civil war and after the civil war was declared over. During the first Civil war in Liberia, N.G.O.s such as the Red Cross (ICRC) and the Canadian Red Cross were on the ground. Furthermore, many IDPs tell a different story about the involvement of N.G.O.s during the second and third civil war. According to my interview with Mr. Kanneh, 52, live in Monrovia and work in Lofa as a volunteer teacher. Said when he returned to Liberia from the Kola camp after Former Liberian President Charles Taylor's election. He said that once the second civil war started, there were not any N.G.O.s in Liberia. Furthermore, others shared the same stories.

When the 14-year civil war was over, and international communities such as the U.N., UNHCR, ICRC, and the Liberian government try to help return refugees and IDPs to their homes, many concerns came up with refugees and IDPs.

Mr. Richard Moly 54, was a student who was forced to flee his home to Guinea and live-in refugee camp during the first civil war and later returned to Liberia after the first war was over, shared some concerns about the SACRA. When the second civil war started, he and his family could not escape to another country. They spend most of their lives running and hiding in bushes, fleeing from place to place to escape being captured by the rebel and military groups.

"I was afraid of being captured and being forced to fight in the war or be killed."

After the war was over, I lost everything that I had and knew. I lost my brother and mother both to the war; I did not have anything left to go to. When I heard that we
could go home, at first, I was happy then I was afraid. I was afraid because I did not have anything to return to. Everything I had had gotten destroyed by the war. My family is gone, and in my village, we did not have access to food, medicine, housing to sleep in. Not only that but we did not have the materials to build new houses or money to restart our life”, said Mr. Moly.

Mr. Moly was not the only one who shared these concerns with me. Others like Mr. Amos Banna 53, also shared the same concerns. Before the First civil War, Mr. Richard Moly worked with Bong highway when the rebels entered Liberia through Nimab county. When the rebel got to Bong, he walked from Bong to the capital city Gbarnga where he met with his people who resided there. On July 5th the rebel entered Gbarnga, where they collected everyone and took them to the market. They were kept there for hours. While in the market, someone pointed him out to the rebel and told them that he was a gold miner, putting his and his family in danger.

"I was pointed out by a fellow cultural properly (or someone who takes care of people in the community, always looking out for the young children and women) from Bong. I never knew that he was with the rebel groups because he was always nice to me and everyone in the village. I remember sometimes he will come to my family market and I used to meet with him because I embraced him. I did not know he was with the rebel group because I had a good relationship with him. So, I was surprised that he was the one who brought the rebel to Panta and Gbarnga", said Mr. Amos Banna
Mr. Amos Banna, like most Liberians, spent the past 14-year during the war hiding in bushes, moving from one to another hiding in fear. Even while in displaced camps, they were not safe because they were considered rebels. Therefore, making it harder for them to receive aids from NGOs and even their government. Other IDPs also shared similar stories about the different treatment they receive in refugee camps compared to IDP camps.

He continued:

"In the refugee camp, we were safe, we had NGOs who would come in and provide us with food, medicines and other supplies. But when I was in the first displaced camp in Monrovia, we were told to move because 'we were rebels'. This was something that we face in almost every displaced camp that I find myself in," said Mr. Amos Banna.

"Also, in the IDPs camps we were not safe at all. We live in constant fears. Because at nighttime, the rebel will come, and they will attack the boys and men. They would grab us to fight in the war, and if we do not go with them, they will kill you in front of your family and friends. Whenever we saw the army or rebel coming, all the men and boys will run and hide in the bush till they leave. The IDP camps were not safe for the women and girls either. Our women and girls would sometimes be taken at nighttime and get sexually assaulted by the rebel and government army," said Mr. Amos Banna.
"When I was told that it was safe for us to return home to Lofa, I was happy because I thought the U.N. and other NGOs were coming, and I thought our government was going to help us when we returned home. But that was not the case. I came back to Lofa with nothing, I did not have access to food because our farm was gone, and there was no medicine. Basically, we are home to nothing. Some of my friends who were in displaced camps and refugees went back to the camp because in the camps, NGOs and other organizations were providing us with food and other supplies. Even though, these supplies were not guaranteed, they did not care because at least, they were somewhat safe and protected," said Mr. Amos Banna.

Another interviewee, Mr. Marlow shared his experience at the Kpakamai camp (Lofa)

Marlowe, 44, like many Liberian, is currently struggling to make means for himself and his family in Liberia. He works in the bush cutting down trees and making coals for a living. Mr. Marlowe sells coal in the surrounding community. He is also taking care of children who were in displaced camps with him. During my interview with Mr. Marlowe, I asked him what it was like for him before the war?

“Before the war started, I was studying to be a missionary in my church. My brother and I will go into communities sharing the word of God. Nevertheless, all that changes when the rebel started killing Khan and other people. At first, I did know what was happening. When I came to learn, it was too late for me. The rebel was already in Lofa, killing people. There was nowhere to go. I made my way to my family in Salala, but my entire family was killed when I got there”, said John Marlow.
"When I was in the displaced camp, I was not safe, my family was not safe. Because anything can happen at any time. Anyone can arrive at the camp at any time; the army would come into the camps and take men and boys away. The rebel groups would come in and take our young men and force them to join them, or they will kill them in front of their family. So, when it comes to safety in camps, we were not safe," said John Marlow.

Interview with Joseph S. Nyuma fled Liberia and seek refuge in Guinea when the civil war started. He was in Guinea until ECOWAS brought peace to Monrovia. He was unable to flee the country during the second outbreak of the civil war. Joseph finds himself in multiple camps. After the war was over in 2003, he joined the Liberian Red Cross and DDP to help people. Joseph is currently working with the Liberian Red Cross and DDP. He got involved with the DDP because after the war in Liberia, he saw the need to bring an end to the violence in Lofa county, as well as helping with the integration process of those returning from refugee and displaced camps in nearby counties. Joseph also said that they saw gender during the alarming war, which pushed him and others to get involved with the DDP because the Red Cross was already doing work alone that line to help the Lofa community. This pushes us to come together and help women and children integrate back into society safely, said Joseph.

During the interview, Joseph also shares some challenges that the Red Cross faced when it came to the integration process and working with the Liberian government. "There are many challenges that come with the work that we do."
3. **Post-civil war: Assessment of current needs**

During my interviews with the IDPs, I asked them what their needs are and if they could get support from the international communities or their government to fulfill their need. Almost every one of them had the exact needs and requests. IDPs in Lofa, Bong, and Montserrado need shelters, food, medicine (healthcare system), water, education, and construction material. They need agricultural tools and seeds to do farming, particularly needed in a community where over half of the population is vulnerable to food insecurity. In Lofa county, essential social services for IDPs are non-existence. IDPs are denied their fundamental right to health and education. Many of the IDPs living in Lofa and Bong live in destroyed abandoned buildings, warehouses, and old agricultural compound centers.

My Interview with Foya. Foya is 28 mothers of two children who sell water on the street of Lofa for a living. Foya was around the age of 13 when rebel groups enter her village outside of Voinjama. Foya was separated from her during the civil war on their way to Bong. She was taking away from her family by rebel men. Since then, she has not seemed her family. Like many young girls, Foya was not safe in a displaced camp. She was raped and abuse. When I asked her about her experience in IDPs camp, this is what she had to say.

“After I was taking from my family, I was in Baysah camp (Bong county). I was not safe there, because I was afraid of the rebel coming and hurting me. I was only a child with no family at the time, so I didn’t have any protection. One night when I was sleeping, these man camp into the camp, and they took some of us girls and
they raped us. After they are done with us, they left. I was in Baysah camp for years before I left and went to Kingsville. When I was at the Kingsville, did not much security. The women and children especially, we faced threat of being harassed and raped every time. It was only by God grace that I am alive today”, said Foya.

When I asked Foya ‘is life-improving for IDPs people in Liberia? If not, what do you need to improve life for the Liberian IDPs? This is what she had said,

“Things here in Lofa for the IDPs is not good. We are being denied service from our people. We do not have food to give to our children and we have no money to send our children to school because the school system is so high. Both of my children are not in school right now. They go on the road with me to sell water and coal. It the only that we are living”, said Foya.

She Continues:

“We understand that it is our government responsibility to provide us protection and assistances, however, we are also asking the international community to also aid and support for us. We are not able of rebuilding our country alone. Our government isn’t do much to help us. Therefore, we are appealing to the UN, UNHCR, AU, and any other NOGs out there to please help us. We have trained nurses and doctors here, but there is no medicine. Here in Lofa especially, we only have one clinic with no doctor. So, if somebody hurt themselves, there is no
hospital, they will be left to die. And we expect government to fix these problems. Even the education system in this country is too expensive today. Student will go to university and graduate, but they cannot get jobs. Therefore, the help that we need as IDPs and as Liberian as whole is with our healthcare and educations system for our children”, said Foya.

Overall, what IDPs need is a little support to push them in the right direction or help them set things up for themselves. Water and sanitation, as well as health, are also urgent needs for IDPs in communities. The main health problems within communities are malaria and diarrhea. Regarding educations, children from many IDP camps have no access to education. There is a lack of school buildings and materials (such as notebooks, pencils, etc.) in rural areas. Many of the teachers in Lofa are volunteers. Furthermore, those teachers who are on government payroll are not regularly paid. In most cases, they are not qualified. School fees and the cost of uniforms are other reasons why IDP children are not in school.

4. Personal Reflections

An incredible thing about doing this research was going to Voinjama and meeting with the displaced populations. During my visit there, after interviewing the displaced community, I asked them one last question. I asked if they could get support either from their government or the international community; what type of support would they want? Their answers were shaken. Almost every one of the interviewees said they understand that their government’s responsibility is to provide protection and assistance. However, they ask the United Nations to aid and protection for their children and them. The Liberian people cannot rebuild their country alone, and the government is not doing much to help
them. Their children are out of school because education is too expensive. The health care system is terrible to the point where people are refused services. I had a first-hand experience of the terrible healthcare system during my visit. During my visit to Liberia, I was involved in an unfortunate car accident that took me to the E.R. When I was rushed to the hospital, my driver went inside to get help from the nurses, but they turned him away. Finally, a nurse on her break saw me bleeding, and she asked if I had been helped. I showed her my passport, and within a minute, I was taken in and attended to by a doctor. I was surprised that irrespective of the severity of the injury sustained, I was asked to wait outside for hours until I showed my American Passport. My driver, on the other hand, was refused treatment because he was Liberian. Their excuse was that he cannot afford the bill. I had to ask the doctor who was treating me to help my friend/driver because I was going to foot his bill.

A territorial map of the first Liberian Civil war:
Map of Liberia:
Liberia IDPs and Refugee Camp
APPENDIX A.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PARTICIPANTS</th>
<th>AGES</th>
<th>GENDER</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Liberia IDPs and Refugees Camps

Total Refugees = 37,000
Total IDPs = 80,282
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Gender</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mory</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Amos</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nyuma</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tommy</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JL</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tormuekollie</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basemath</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morlow</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winnifred</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Foya</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Soka</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph M</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wlilwe</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akola</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kpoto</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Borley</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>Male</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jallah</td>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**APPENDIX B.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IDPs CAMPS</th>
<th>LOCATION OF CAMPS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kpakamai</td>
<td>Lofa County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Salala camp</td>
<td>Bong County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blamasseeh</td>
<td>Bong County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maium I</td>
<td>Bong County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yancee</td>
<td>Bong County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Location</td>
<td>County</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kingsville</td>
<td>Montserrado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pumko</td>
<td>Montserrado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Perry</td>
<td>Montserrado</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zolowo</td>
<td>Lofa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Konola</td>
<td>Margibi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gbao</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER 5: RECOMMENDATION

There is an urgent need for the international community to intervene and assist countries in their attempt to protect and reintegrate their internally displaced persons back into a progressive society. As the Secretary-General of the United Nations once stated: "internal displacement is the great tragedy of our times." An internally displaced person is the most vulnerable group in the world. They are most often forgotten about or neglected, and they fall between the gaps of both international and domestic protections. Per the experiences from these noble interviewees and information gathered from literature reviews, I believe these recommendations can be the genesis of improving the quality of life for IDPs and other displaced groups:

1. The Kampala Convention should be the standard guide for Internal displaced Persons because it is the first regional Convention comprehensively to address internal displacement, including prevention, response, and durable solutions. It explicitly protects the rights of people displaced by natural disasters, armed conflict, generalized violence, human rights violations, and development projects. It reiterates existing international and A.U. law, including human rights and international humanitarian law standards.

2. The Guiding Principle on Internal displacement should be a legally binding document. They are making it where it is no longer an option for nations for the protection of IDPs. IDPs need a legal framework/organization that protects them and cares about their well-being.

3. The U.N. needs to create a policy that will work across every country equally. Having a unified and equally improved policy will ensure that displaced persons
take some hope in their current government instead trying to cross borders into displaced camps in nearby countries.

4. The primary intent of Liberians is clear on this issue. The failure and negligence of their government has forced them to seek help from international organizations in relation to providing them with basic necessities and development of a better educational, healthcare, and agricultural systems.

5. There needs to be some type of limitation to the notion of sovereignty. I understand that the nation-state's purpose is that the big nations do not intervene in other nations without permission or invitation. However, in situations where a given nation-state is doing nothing or little to improve the wellbeing of its citizens, then an international organization should have a say-so with the interest of the citizens in mind.

6. The U.N. should not wait to intervene in matters when human lives are at risk. In Liberia's case, the Liberian government Charles Taylor was at the core of the killing and violating the rights of Liberians. The U.N. should have stepped in to put an end to it. Instead, they left the Liberian people to survive on their own and fight for themselves from their government, all in the name of sovereignty.
CONCLUSION

Overall, we find out that state sovereignty has become a significant problem in dealing with IDPs because they are still within their own country. Sovereignty also makes it impossible for aid and organization to help with the need of displaced person because under the Guiding Principle, the national authorities have the responsible for providing protection and humanitarian assistance to its citizen. We also learn that even though IDPs has been around since the cold war, their issues are now becoming a global problem. IDPs, have protection under international law, only when there is human rights violation involved. But outside of that, outside of that, these vulnerable people (women, children, and men) who have been through hell and back, have lost their loved ones and family, their homes and everything that they know has no protections other than the one that is ‘maybe’ giving by their government. IDPs, goes through the same situation as refugees, like refugees internal displaced person have also fled their homes for safety but the only thing that set them apart is that refugee crossed a border and IDPs are still within their own country. IDPs and refugees’ reason for fleeing are the same, but they are under protection of their government, even if that government caused their displacement. And if that is the case, then these IDPs are even more vulnerable.

It is undeniable that IDPs face inhumane challenges both in internal and external displacement camps. Irrespective of these challenges, few policies and laws are in place to protect and assist them. One of the key challenges established from this project is the notion of state sovereignty. Conversely, although internally displaced persons do not have legal binding laws that protected them, they are entitled to enjoy equally and without discrimination. According to the Guiding Principle, as human beings, IDPs are entitled to
all-relevant guarantees of human rights, humanitarian law, international criminal law applicable to the citizens or habitual residents of the country concerned. Thus, the failure of these nation-states is an indication that international organizations need to step in, intervene and help IDPs living in these countries. Even though organizations such as the U.N is doing an incredible job with its peacekeeping programs, its involvement in areas such as protecting human rights and helping displaced populations is below par. One of the biggest problems with the U.N. is the Security Council. The UNSC comprises five permanent members, including the United States, France, China, Russia, and the United Kingdom. These are the countries that decide whether a country in need should be assisted or not. Furthermore, the UNSC does not fairly represent the seven continents equally. Africa, which is the second-largest continent after Asia, has no representative on the Security Council. Not to mention that Africa is the wealthiest continent, which produces over 30% of the world's natural resources.

Results gathered from the interview in this research shows that IDPs in Liberia need agricultural, vocational education, and medical assistance. By this, they are asking that the I.M.F. and the World Bank stop giving money to the Liberian government because the people do not see the money. Each time money is sent to Liberia for developmental purposes or to help with the country's economy, the money always ends up missing. The people ask their government to set better policies against corruption and punish those who are corrupt. On the issues of displaced population and IDPs, the government needs to review and set up programs that will improve the overall wellbeing of these vulnerable population. This will start with a nationwide database that accounts for all displaced persons and refugees in Liberia. Regardless of everything that Liberia has been through
and is still going through today, such as the 14-year civil war, the Ebola outbreak, corruption, and poor economy, I still have hope that it can turn things around. I am always optimistic about the future of my country. I am also a firm believer that someday, our government will put the people's needs above their own. Liberia has the resources it needs to rebuild itself from all the damages; all it needs is some help from the rest of the world to help guide them in the right direction.
REFERENCES


INTRODUCTION. *By Veronica Nmoma.*


