

The interaction between women's urban agriculture and peace building processes in Greater Monrovia, Liberia



Master thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the degree of Master of Science in International Development Studies at Wageningen University, Netherlands.

Disaster Studies Group, Wageningen University, the Netherlands.

Host organizations: CARE Liberia in conjunction with CARE Netherlands.

Thesis code: RDS-80733

Presented by: Furaha Siraji

Supervisor:

Ass.Prof. Sarah Southwold



April, 2012

Photo at the front page: This photo was taken on 31/3/2011 in Congo town. This group of women was not in urban agriculture programs of CARE Liberia at the time.

Acknowledgements

First and foremost I thank God for being on my side in this study program. My sincere gratitude goes to my supervisor Assistant Professor Sarah Southwold for being supportive in finishing my thesis. In addition she demonstrated good skills in working and advising students by being skillful in research. Her criticism, recommendations were of paramount importance in making this research a success. My sincere gratitude also goes to Dr. Peter Tamas and Dr. Margreet van der Burg for the support they rendered in the first phase of my thesis. I would also like to appreciate the supportive role rendered by Wageningen University specifically the Head of department of Disaster studies Prof. Dr. Ir. Thea Hilhorst and the Dean of studies Dr. Janneke Hermans for being supportive.

I would also like to thank CARE Netherlands and CARE Liberia for their supportive role in inviting me to carry out this research. Specifically my sincere thanks go to the following persons; Mr. Hubert Charles, Miss. Ana Uzelac, Mr. Merlijn Van Waas and Mrs. Christine Achieng. My appreciation also goes to Mr. Danson Kamugisha who provided me with accommodation in Monrovia.

I cannot finish without thanking the communities of Congo Town, Lakpazee community and Fiamah community who allowed me to get information from them in spite of the fact that I was a foreigner and I did not seek any intervention from CARE Liberia as I did in other townships that are also mentioned in my thesis report. In addition I thank all the five communities where CARE Liberia operates for their time and information they provided to me.

Summary

The topic of this thesis is the interaction between women's urban agriculture and peace building processes in Greater Monrovia, Liberia. This topic is important because Liberia is a country which came out of war recently. As a result of war and conflict there is a need to foster peace building processes. According to the ICAF report (2010), the major causes of 1989-2003 Liberian conflict was poverty, unemployment and ethnicity. In the past years before 2003 the politics in Liberia among other factors were based on ethnicity since each ethnic group wanted to protect its political, economic and social interests. However, this does not mean that all Liberians chose leaders based on their ethnic groups. Though it is claimed by the respondents I interviewed that politics today are not based on ethnicity in Monrovia, ethnicity might be an underlying problem. For instance according to a few people who were not part of the survey, they claimed that the issue of ethnicity still exists most especially in villages.

Liberia is a fragile state depending a lot on international community and the country still faces enormous challenges for instance unemployment, land tenure insecurity and poverty. Women's urban agriculture has been seen by the government of Liberia and CARE Liberia as one of the ways to curb poverty, food insecurity and providing employment opportunities to vulnerable groups most especially poor women (CARE, 2009)

This research was carried out in Greater Monrovia focusing on five townships where CARE Liberia operates and these include: Paynesville Township, Johnsonville Township, Congo Township, Barnesville Township and Gardnerville Township. However, two communities where CARE Liberia does not operate were included to find out whether there were gaps in integrating the whole community into the programs. These communities are: Lakpazee community and Fiamah community. The comparison between the two communities where CARE Liberia does not operate and the five townships where CARE Liberia operates is that Lakpazee and Fiamah community are much closer to the city centre which helps the farmers to get access to market much easier than those far away from the city centre. In addition the infrastructure in Lakpazee and Fiamah community is much better than in other communities which I visited except Congo town which is also close to the city centre. Though the majority of the respondents mentioned that they came to Greater Monrovia due to the war and conflict of 1989-2003, I did not come across any refugee camp. They have all been integrated into the society and considered like any other citizen in Monrovia but not as refugees. The society the women who came into Monrovia during the war are living in is a heterogeneous society with people from different ethnicities. Since the research did not cover the majority of the population one cannot conclude that ethnicity is no longer relevant in causing conflicts. When these respondents came to Monrovia some of

them first lived with their friends and relatives. However, later they started to search for places where they could stay. Some of them settled in abandoned houses, others had to rent. However, those who stayed in abandoned houses, when the owners came back they had to vacate the houses and find their own houses to rent.

Urban agriculture programs have been seen by CARE Liberia as instrumental to peace building through building social cohesion. However, the main objective of CARE Liberia is to foster food security among the vulnerable groups for instance female headed households most especially the landless, families with children admitted to a therapeutic feeding centre during the past two years, elderly headed households, disabled households, families with one or two persons living with HIV/AIDS, very large families and families relying on one source of income. However, in the documents of CARE Liberia I did not find what they mean by very large families. In addition, not all women falling into the above mentioned criteria are integrated into CARE Liberia urban agriculture programs.

In addition since poverty was among the causes of conflict in Liberia, urban agriculture can support poor women and men to earn more income which can raise the earnings of the poor who are under the poverty line level (earning less than 1 dollar per day). These earnings come out of the surplus which they sell. However, some of them also exchange with their friends, neighbors to get the food item they do not have. Therefore, urban agriculture is seen by CARE Liberia as one of the ways to curb poverty and invariably, aid food security. However, due to the fact that most vulnerable women in the seven areas where I did my research in Greater Monrovia there is land insecurity, their food security is not guaranteed and all the respondents claimed not to have the financial capacity to buy food from the market always. In Monrovia, land is mainly owned by the rich and the middle class who are above the poverty line level (earning above 1 dollar per day). However, not all people who are rich own land. There are also other people who earn more than 1 dollar per day but they do not have land in Monrovia. There is a lot of land tenure insecurity in the townships where I did research for instance there are instances where a person rents land but to find that the person who gave out the land is actually not the real owner. Land tenure insecurity has led to a lot of conflicts in the society of Monrovia and Liberia in general.

In this thesis, a set of questions was designed and theoretical concepts adopted to help capture the entire rationale of the study; the interaction between women's urban agriculture and peace building processes. The specific questions focused on the eligibility of members in urban agriculture programs, ways in which women control and access resources to participate in urban agriculture, the relationship between peace building and women's urban agriculture. The focus was also on the aspects of urban agriculture that can

be a hindrance to peace and the last question focused on the food security status of women in urban agriculture programs and women who are not in those programs.

In my analysis I used the following concepts; the concept of peace building, food security, livelihood, urban agriculture, access and control of resources, social cohesion, social capital.

I spent 1 month on the field in Monrovia carrying out this research. The methods used in carrying out this research included; interviews with 14 respondents practicing urban agriculture but not in any way associated with the programs of CARE Liberia, 18 respondents practicing urban agriculture and are part of the programs of CARE Liberia. The remaining 16 do not practice urban agriculture and are not part of the CARE Liberia programs.

However, I also used participant observation and non-participant observation as ways to get more information to support the interviews and focus group discussions. I used the mentioned methodology to help me in getting access to plausible stories that could answer my questions. In addition participant observations, non-participant observations, interviews, focus group discussions were helpful in getting views based on the research questions and objectives of my interviews from forty women and eight men as my respondents. A few men were included to identify whether there was exclusion in urban agriculture programs based on gender.

Using the methods mentioned in the above paragraph I came up with findings which are also summarized as follows: in spite of the fact that CARE has integrated poor and vulnerable women into its programs of urban agriculture, women are still in poor conditions and the majority of them would prefer to be supported to go back to the interior (countryside) where they have their own land. But they claim that they are unable to go back due to the fact that social services were destroyed during the war. According to respondents, urban agriculture can stimulate food security and poverty eradication. However, due to land insecurity and lack of inputs urban agriculture does not guarantee strong food security and poverty eradication. For my thesis topic there are challenges in enhancing urban agriculture and peace building processes in Greater Monrovia and specifically in these areas where my research was carried out. For instance from the findings the main challenge that is affecting poor women doing urban agriculture is lack of land and inputs. Considering my case study of Greater Monrovia I focused on seven areas of Greater Monrovia.

According to the women respondents, urban agriculture programs have helped in building cooperation, trust and networks among its members. In addition they have helped building cooperation with CARE staff involved in urban agriculture programs. These networks have helped them to learn to help each other in solving problems. It was also clear that women

in urban agriculture programs have access to more inputs in comparison to those who are not in urban agriculture programs. This cooperation and network building are important in poverty reduction strategies. Poverty having been one of the catalysts of the 1989-2003 conflicts, urban agriculture can support peace building process. However, urban agriculture might lead to inequalities in these communities between those who are selected into the programs and those who do not get information to join or who are not selected. These inequalities can be an impediment to peace building by causing conflicts between those selected and those who have not been selected into the programs. In addition these inequalities and exclusion will worsen the widening gap between the poor and the rich.

Table of contents

Chapter 1: Introduction	12
1.1. Problem statement.....	13
1.2. Objectives	14
1.3. Research questions.....	15
1.4. Limitations of the study	15
1.5. CARE Liberia	16
1.6. Relevance of this research	17
1.7. Site selection	18
Chapter 2: Contextual information	19
2.1. Monrovia.....	19
2.2. Townships where the research was carried out.....	20
2.3. Position of the target group and who they are	21
2.4. War and its impact on the circumstances of target group and their livelihoods	24
2.5. Urban agriculture	25
2.6. Access to land	26
2.7. CARE Liberia Urban agriculture program	27
Chapter 3: Literature review	31
3.1. Livelihood	31
3.2. Food security.....	32
3.3. The concept of Peace- building.....	35
3.4. UA.....	37
3.5. Access and control over resources for UA	38
3.6. Social cohesion, social capital	39
Chapter 4: Methods.....	41
4.1. Introduction.....	41
4.2. Interviews.....	41
4.3. Sample.....	42
4.4. Focus group discussions	42
4.5. Participant observation and non-participant observation.....	43
4.6. Data analysis	45
Chapter 5: Research Findings	47
5.1. Demographics of respondents.....	47

5.2. Participation, women’s control and access to resources in UAP 51

 5.2.1. Participants in UAP by age, gender, household, food security and poverty level 51

 5.2.2. Information sources for participation in UAP 51

5.3. Expectations and activities of CARE programs..... 52

5.4. Problems of land lease in UA 53

5.6. Access to and control of resources by women doing UA but not in programs 57

5.7. Problems faced by women doing UA but not in programs..... 58

5.8. Summary discussion of being in /out of the programs. 60

5.9. Access to resources by women not doing UA and not in programs 61

5.10. Comparison of women in /out of programs 61

5.11. Summary of findings..... 62

Chapter 6: Analysis of the research findings 64

 6.1. Role of UA in Food security and Peace Building..... 64

 6.2. UA and Access to resources 65

 6.3. Importance of CARE Liberia UAP in Food Security 66

 6.4. Access and control of resources by women outside of CARE programs 67

 6.5. The impact of being outside the UAP..... 69

 6.6. Access to land by women not doing UA and not in programs 70

 6.7. Comparison of women within and outside the UA..... 70

Chapter 7: Conclusion..... 71

 7.1 Conclusions..... 71

 7.2. Recommendations to CARE Liberia and respondents..... 73

ANNEXE 1: Questions I asked the respondents..... 74

Annex 2: Problems faced by women urban agriculturalists 80

Annex 3: Photos I took on the field 81

Annex 4: Map of Liberia and its neighboring countries 83

References..... 84

List of Tables

Table 1: Organizational structure and team from CARE to implement urban agriculture programs.....	29
Table 2: Africa 2000 Network.....	30
Table 3: RUAF (Resource Centers on urban agriculture and food security) staff.....	30
Table 4: Methods used in data collection.....	49

List of abbreviations

ICAF-Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework

UA -Urban Agriculture

UAP -Urban Agriculture Program of CARE Liberia

Chapter 1: Introduction

Transformation of cities from not only being consumers of food and other agricultural products but into vital sources of resource-conserving, health-improving, sustainable generators of these products, gave rise to the concept of urban agriculture. Within a broader context; "urban agriculture has been defined as *"food and fuel grown within the daily rhythm of the city or town, produced directly for the market and frequently processed and marketed by the farmers or their close associate"* (Smit and Nasr, 1992). The concept of urban agriculture has been receiving more attention in a bid to build sustainable cities where improved nutrition and health, environment for living, entrepreneurship and equity become integral part of urban areas. According to Foeken and Mboganie "urban agriculture is as old as towns and cities themselves". "However , particularly in less developed countries, urban farming has grown enormously since the 1980's especially among the urban poor" (Foeken and Mboganie-Mwangi, 1998). Foeken and Mboganie continue to mention that increased urban agriculture has been caused by increased unemployment and food prices hiking. Foeken and Mboganie continue to mention that "at least one quarter of the heads of low income farming households in both Korogocho and Pumwani/Eastleigh had completed Secondary school education". In addition Foeken and Mboganie continue to mention that unemployment is a major factor that caused many of the farmers to join urban agriculture.

In Greater Monrovia, urban agriculture has been seen by CARE Liberia as an important component of strategies to support the livelihoods of poor women (CARE, 2009). This is in consonance with the fact that, "*Agriculture plays an important role in fulfillment of basic physiological needs for instance hunger and thirst*" (Tollens, 2003). The role of urban agriculture as a means of livelihood then becomes important for the empowerment of the people, especially in the light of poverty and unemployment being some of the major causes of the civil war in Liberia (ICAF, 2010). In addition urban agriculture is deemed important by CARE Liberia in fostering food security.

The conditions in which food production suddenly becomes important in a city are emergencies from civil, weather or macro-economic upheaval, often combined with a high incidence of poverty, inaccessibility to adequate food supplies from rural areas or imports and good growing conditions (Nugent, 2000)

Liberia, having come out of approximately two decades of civil war, and in dire need of peace, requires capacities for the enhancement of peace building processes. The conflict in Liberia was caused by a number of factors including *"failure to provide sufficient*

employment opportunities, lack of democracy, poverty, and ethnicity" (ICAF, 2010). Further, according to the ICAF report, due to the mentioned factors many disgruntled women and men joined the conflict to fight alongside the warring factions. Addressing these causes of the civil war is paramount to preventing a possible reoccurrence in the nearest future. To sustain the present peace system, capacities may be developed in form of livelihood opportunities to build peace. Poor and vulnerable women can be singled out for the first set of empowerment through urban agriculture. Prior to the civil war, a large population of Liberia has been involved in agriculture and it is estimated that 70% of the population are employed in the agriculture sector (NIBL, 2008). Resorting to urban agriculture as an important empowerment tool for peace building is informed by the agrarian nature of Liberia. Although, a large percentage of the population used to be rural, but since the civil war, most now occupy the urban areas, returning back to their homes looks elusive as infrastructures, capitals and security are still not available in such places; hence, the need to empower the women via urban agriculture (ICAF, 2010).

Having worked as an intern with CARE Netherlands, I was introduced to CARE Liberia and became interested in the project of CARE Liberia on urban agriculture. The main reason for this research is that I wanted to know the ways in which women's participation in urban agriculture is supporting peace building processes in Greater Monrovia. In addition it was interesting to me because I wanted to know the role of urban agriculture programs in stimulating food security, poverty reduction, social capital, and social cohesion leading to peace building.

This research about the interaction between women's urban agriculture and peace building processes is based on exploratory research. Questionnaire interviews with 48 respondents in seven areas around Greater Monrovia were made. In addition two group discussions, participant and non-participant observations were taken into consideration. The research was carried out in close collaboration with CARE Liberia. The essence of CARE activities in Liberia is captured in their mission, *"to bring hope, tolerance and social justice where people can overcome poverty and live in dignity and security"* (CARE, 2009). The major concepts that were used in this research include: food security, livelihood, access to and control over resources, social cohesion and social capital. These concepts have been chosen to explore the relationship between urban agriculture and peace building in Greater Monrovia. These concepts are explained further in the literature review.

1.1.Problem statement

Urban agriculture is carried out by both women and men in Monrovia but the main focus is on women. Poor women are considered to be among the most vulnerable groups and CARE

Liberia is focusing mainly on poor and vulnerable women. In addition, for the purpose of this research eight men were included out of forty eight respondents to know whether men are also included in urban agriculture programs.

Women's participation in urban agriculture has been seen by the Ministry of Agriculture in Liberia to be of paramount importance in fostering food security and employment opportunities to poor women and other vulnerable groups (ICAF, 2010). Since poverty is considered to have been among the causes of conflict in Liberia, urban agriculture is seen as one of the ways to support poor and vulnerable people in poverty reduction, building social cohesion, social capital and peace building among those involved in urban agriculture. In addition urban agriculture is helpful in stimulating food security. Also to mention is that urban agriculture can provide wage and employment for the vulnerable people to earn a living for instance working on other people's garden for a monthly salary. In addition through meetings of urban agriculture programs, cooperation and networks are stimulated which can help in peace building. However, with respect to the focus of this study on women, in many places where women's urban agriculture is carried out they are faced with a number of challenges like lack of access to land and information (Hovorka et al., 2009).

Liberia as a country still face different challenges like lack of enough educational opportunities, poor health facilities, access to economic opportunities such as micro credit institutions, unequal distribution of income and access to land (ICAF, 2010). All these problems do affect women and their households in achieving good living conditions and also pose challenges to women's participation in urban agriculture. I assume that urban agriculture could help women involved in it to earn a living which can support their children's education through food security. I based this assumption on the fact that when children do not have enough food is one of the factors that can affect their education.

1.2. Objectives

In order to fully capture the essence of this study, four research objectives were designed and are discussed below:

- (a) Finding out the beneficiaries of urban agriculture programs.
- (b) Finding out women's access and control over resources for urban agriculture.
- (c) Finding out the relationship between urban agriculture and peace building processes in Greater Monrovia.
- (d) Finding out the food security condition of urban poor women who are not selected into urban agriculture programs in comparison to those who are selected and other women.

1.3. Research questions

Given the above objectives, the main research question of this study is: What, if any, is the interaction between food security, social cohesion, social capital through women's urban agriculture and peace building processes in Greater Monrovia?

Specific questions

- (a) Who are the beneficiaries of urban agriculture programs?
- (b) How do women control and access resources for urban agriculture?
- (c) What, if any, is the relationship between urban agriculture and peace building?
- (d) What is the food security condition of urban poor women who are not selected into urban agriculture programs compared to those who are selected and other women?

1.4. Limitations of the study

This sub-section presents the limitations of the study. This gives an overview of the areas where I carried out my research. In addition it reflects on the negative and positive aspects of doing my research with CARE Liberia in this study area.

(a) Study area

The findings of this research are limited to the case study of Greater Monrovia and specifically in five areas where CARE Liberia is working but also in two communities where CARE Liberia is not operating. Therefore, this research is limited to Paynesville Township, Johnsonville Township, Fiamah community, Congo Township, Barnesville Township, Gardnerville Township and Lakpazee community. The distribution of informants in the mentioned townships and two communities is indicated in table 4. These two communities where CARE Liberia does not operate include: Fiamah community and Lakpazee community.

(b) Access to the respondents.

During my data collection, some things went on well since I was assisted by CARE Liberia in terms of transport and helping me to get access to respondents most especially those in CARE Liberia urban agriculture programs. However, I could not travel to the field everyday due to lack of enough vehicles to take people to the field. In most cases I travelled with CARE staff in the department of Urban / peri-urban agriculture project to the field when they had field work.

The negative implication is that sometimes whenever I would be with CARE staff I would have a feeling that my respondents in CARE programs will not give me information which is contradicting or anything negative about CARE Liberia. To deal with this problem I made sure that we had privacy during interviews with my respondents and I always made sure that the respondents understood that I was not an employee of CARE Liberia.

Another challenge is that some people expected me to give them money or gifts since I was identified as someone working with a big organization which they considered to be a very rich organization but I made sure that I explained to them the purpose of my research and who I was. However, I was granted freedom by CARE and they never imposed anything on me.

Another challenge is that being a male researcher to some extent not all women were free to tell me about all their stories in their households for instance on the issue of misunderstandings and conflicts in the household some women would say that it had never happened in their homes but they have heard of it in other homes. Basing on their non verbal communication and reply I could realize that they considered it to be more of a secret and sensitive issue not to tell strangers. To overcome this I started asking them such questions indirectly by giving them examples in other societies.

The other limitation is that being a foreigner there are some aspects of the culture, beliefs and language I never knew. This hindered also my access to information for instance due to my English accent whenever I talked to people they realized that I was not a Liberian. As a result this took some time for me to develop trust and to explain a lot about myself. But in areas where I would be accompanied by CARE staff or my Liberian friends it was much easier to discuss with people. To overcome this I got close to some people for instance in the Church and neighborhood which really helped me to get friends and to develop trust.

The biggest challenge of all was time limitation. I had one month on the field. If I had more time I would have done more work than what I did in just one month. To try to deal with this challenge I worked almost on a daily basis. For instance if I was not on the field interviewing respondents, I would have informal conversations, participant and non-participant observations.

1.5. CARE Liberia

CARE Liberia is a non-governmental organization involved in development and humanitarian activities in Liberia. The main principles of CARE Liberia include: promoting empowerment, opposing violence, seeking sustainable results, opposing discrimination,

ensuring accountability and promoting responsibility and working in partnership with others (CARE, 2009). CARE resumed its work in Liberia in September 2008 after 25 years out of operation. It has its offices in Bong County, Monrovia and Gbarnga. Basing on (CARE, 2009), CARE Liberia has collaborated with the government of Liberia in poverty reduction strategies. In addition it has also aligned with local non-governmental organizations involved in agriculture for instance Africa 2000 Network and Project New outlook (CARE, 2009) CARE Liberia has a vision of focusing on building social cohesion, helping people in the areas where it operates in accessing resources and services, capacity building and governance. Currently its major focus is on food and income security. By the time I was on the field in April 2011, CARE Liberia mainly focused on urban agriculture, loan and savings. According to the respondents these mentioned programs integrate both women and men. The target group of CARE Liberia include: female headed households, the landless, disabled persons, families with persons living with HIV/AIDS, very large families, families depending on one source of income, families with children admitted to therapeutic centers for more than two years¹. The specific ideas I found about women, development and peace building included: women's urban agriculture as a way of reducing poverty. In addition it is seen by CARE Liberia as one of the ways to stimulate food security. It is also considered as one of the ways to build social cohesion. However, by the time I was in the field CARE Liberia had no program that is specifically focusing on peace building. CARE Liberia considers women's urban agriculture as one of the ways to build social cohesion. In addition CARE Liberia considers social cohesion through urban agriculture as one of the ways to bring peace (CARE, 2009)

1.6. Relevance of this research

This research is relevant to Liberia and specifically Greater Monrovia where food insecurity among vulnerable women is rampant. In addition it is necessary to carry out this research on how urban agriculture can help to improve the livelihoods of women hence poverty reduction. The research focuses on the interaction between women's urban agriculture and peace building processes. This will help to give an understanding of the problems that are existing in CARE urban agriculture programs and whether urban agriculture can be used to stimulate food security, social cohesion, and social capital.

The research is relevant because it will give information to researchers, students who want to do more research in the field of urban agriculture and peace building. In addition it will help CARE Liberia to improve its work in areas where gaps have been identified. The gaps that were identified in the literature show that woman in urban agriculture lack access to resources and access to information. In addition the topic is relevant to the work that is being

¹ Proposal document of CARE Liberia to the EU 2009

carried out by CARE Liberia, most especially the integration of gender issues in all its projects including urban agriculture as a means of livelihood.

1.7. Site selection

The area where I did my research was chosen because urban agriculture is practiced in these areas. In addition, five out of the seven areas were chosen because CARE Liberia operates in this geographical area. The research areas where CARE Liberia operates include: Paynesville township, Johnsonville township, Congo Township, Barnesville township, Gardnerville township. This was important because I wanted CARE Liberia to support me in accessing the respondents. For the two areas where CARE Liberia does not operate include: Lakpazee community and Fiamah community. These two areas were close to where I was staying and this would make it easy for me to get respondents since I had made friends with in the neighborhood.

Chapter 2: Contextual information

This chapter presents the contextual information about Monrovia, the townships where the research was carried out, the target population, war and its impact on the populations' livelihoods, urban agriculture, and access to land, organization and the structure of CARE Liberia. Due to the fact that I spent only 1 month on the field I did not exhaust all the data that would have been collected if my research was for a longer period of time.

2.1. Monrovia

Monrovia is the capital city of Liberia. It is situated just close to the Atlantic Ocean. Monrovia was named after the American president James Monroe in 1822. As the city grew it was divided into two sections one for the returning African-Americans and the other for existing local population². The city continued to grow as many people migrated from the country side to the capital city. "During the 1989-2003 conflict many refugees came to Monrovia. Nearly half of 2.5 million people before the conflict ended were forced to flee their homes giving Liberia the largest percentage of refugees internally displaced in the world" (Swiss et al., 1998). Monrovia today is the most densely populated town in Liberia with more than 1 million people. Monrovia is composed of all the tribes in Liberia. These tribes include, Dei, Bassa, Gola, Kissi, Kru, Khran, Grebo, Kpelle, Gio, Mano, Loma, Vai, Mende, Mandingo, American Liberians, Congo and Caribbean. The Kpelle, Gio, Mandigo and Vai migrated from the empire of Mali³. However, it also has many people from other countries in the city. However, I was not able to find out the specific nationalities of foreigners residing in Monrovia.

Monrovia is both the commercial and administrative city of Liberia. There is a lot of business going on in the capital city. Among these businesses that are carried out there is the selling of agriculture products. For instance there are many street vendors who sell fresh fruits like pineapples, bananas, oranges ,passion fruits to mention but a few. Some of these fruits and other crops sold on the street come from the country side and others are grown within the city and in other townships. Urban agriculture is a practice that is common in Greater Monrovia within the city and in peri-urban areas. Fishing is also another activity that is carried out in Monrovia. This is due to the fact that Monrovia is situated near the Atlantic Ocean which has a variety of fish. However, the fishing industry is mainly dominated by foreigners who fish around the coast.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Liberia

³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Demographics_of_Liberia

Urban agriculture is carried out mainly by the poor populations who have access to some resources which enable them to cultivate. The majority of the population in Monrovia is poor but only some appear to be engaged in urban agriculture. Food insecurity is rampant among the poor and vulnerable groups in Monrovia.

According to my observations, in Greater Monrovia the majority of the respondents that live close to the city centre of Monrovia live in poorer neighborhoods in comparison with other communities. In these slums the conditions of living are not good. For instance there is poor waste management in the slums. This affects crops and the harvest. For instance in one area called Lakpazee community there was a lot of garbage near a rice garden. In addition in this area it is swampy when it is a rainy season the water destroys the crops.

2.2. Townships where the research was carried out

The townships where I was to do the research include: Paynesville Township, Johnsonville Township, Fiamah community, Congo Township, Barnesville Township, Gardnerville Township and Lakpazee community. Congo town is in the south east base of the peninsula, Paynesville is in the east, Lakpazee and Fiamah are communities found in the middle of Monrovia, Barnesville lies in the North, Gardnerville in the North East and Johnsonville is in the further North East. Due to time limitation I had to spend on the field I could not gather all the information about these townships for instance I was not able to get information concerning their establishment. The communities closer to the city centre at least less than 10 kilometers include: Congo Township, Lakpazee community and Fiamah community. Due to time limitation I had to spend on the field I could not gather all the information about these townships for instance I was not able to get information concerning their establishment. I was not able to find specific literature on the townships where the research was to be carried out. However, I was able to observe the characteristics of different townships where I carried out my research.

Some of the characteristics include: the communities in the city have access to more infrastructures like roads compared to those far away from the city centre. The roads in the out skirts of the city are deplorable. There is also insufficient clean water in these townships. The townships in the city for instance Congo town has a variety of businesses ranging from large scale to small scale. Some of the large scale businesses include: hotels, restaurants. However, there are other small businesses like vendors selling food stuffs, drinks on the road side. This is quite different from the townships far away from the city centre where there are no big businesses being carried out. The townships close to the city centre have more collar jobs in comparison to townships which are far away from the city. In addition the townships far away from the city centre have fewer services in comparison

to townships in the city. For instance in peri-urban areas access to schools, hospitals is much more difficult in comparison to townships closer to the city centre. However, in general all the poor people in all the townships have little capacity to pay for the social services like going to health centers in case of sickness.

The townships closer to the city centre of Greater Monrovia are densely populated unlike townships far away from the city centre which are sparsely populated. This brings more competition for the little housing opportunities in the city.

Urban agriculture is more common in peri-urban areas (areas in the out-skirts of the city/town) in comparison to townships near the centre of Monrovia. The crops grown in the townships closer to the city centre can easily get to market in comparison to those townships which are at least more than 10 kilometers from the city centre. In addition the transportation is much difficult for the people far away from the city centre. This makes it a bit difficult for them to access bigger markets in the city centre which can give better prices. The women doing urban agriculture who are closer to the city centre have better chances of getting better prices on the market place.

2.3. Position of the target group and who they are

According to CARE Liberia, the direct beneficiaries are selected from vulnerable communities for instance islands in the mangrove swamps, slums having people living in deplorable living conditions for instance without enough food to eat in their households. For instance there are some households which eat less than 3 meals a day. In general I considered the criteria of the target group mentioned in the next paragraph as a way of finding women in deplorable conditions. The targeted townships were selected because they have vulnerable persons and CARE is operating in that geographical area. This does not mean that women in these townships are the poorest in Monrovia because I did not find specific information indicating that they are the worst affected in the whole city. The research was to target poor and vulnerable women both in urban agriculture programs and those not in urban agriculture programs. In general the target group focused mainly on women and a few men that is to say 8 men out of 48 respondents.

The target group of CARE urban agriculture programs includes: female headed households most especially the landless, families with children admitted to a therapeutic feeding centre during the past two years, elderly headed households, disabled households, families with one or two persons living with HIV/AIDS, very large families and families relying on one source of income (CARE, 2009). Due to time limitation since I was on the field for one month, I was not able to have in-depth interviews with some of the women whom I thought

were vulnerable. I would have collected more information if I had more time on the field but due to the crash program to finish my master's degree and due to financial constraints I could not meet all of them. However, even those I interviewed were a target group I was interested to interview.

According to CARE Liberia, urban agriculture program integrates both women and men who fulfill the above criteria of beneficiaries mentioned above. However, the majority in general are females in comparison to men. Within these groups of beneficiaries some women and men thought to be of good morals that is to say their reputation in society must be good are selected to guide their fellow farmers in improving urban agriculture. These women and men selected by CARE Liberia act as food security facilitators. The food security facilitators first get trainings in communication, mobilization and facilitation⁴. These women and men are given information to teach their colleagues in the community about better urban agriculture practices. However, CARE Liberia officials they offer trainings to the farmers for instance they train farmers how to save. However, I did not get the exact criteria of selecting the food security facilitators from the respondents themselves. The question I have is whether the selection of food security facilitators is not biased. In future whoever might want to do more research on my topic can find out whether this criterion indeed is transparent. Not all women in urban agriculture programs are selected to be food security facilitators. According to CARE Liberia the food security facilitators must full fill at least one of the following criterion: studied at least up to grade six, should have the interest and willing to make a farm, must be a single parent, must be a vulnerable youth, must be vulnerable adult, must have basic agriculture knowledge, must have basic saving and loan knowledge, must be a resident of the community⁵.

However, at a personal level I find this criterion at times might bring more widening gap between the poor. In the long run it can also be viewed as social exclusion because other poor women are not included. In the long run I assume that it can lead to conflicts in a sense that social exclusion can lead to hatred and conflicts. In addition, I assume that CARE Liberia will be perceived as exclusive by those who do not get a chance to be selected yet they are vulnerable.

The social characteristics of the respondents include that their families are based strongly on kinship bonds for instance some families depend on each other in solving their problems like sharing the food in case one family does not have what to eat. However, there were some households without kinship bonds. Kinship is a characteristic of the communities where I did research because family relations are deemed important and

⁴ CARE Liberia's Budget line report (2009)

⁵ CARE Liberia's Budget line report (2009)

valued. Some of these kinship relations are much easier to diffuse information because some relatives live in the same households. Some of the resources accrued by respondents through kinship include: information for instance those in urban agriculture programs they pass on the information to their relatives. However, not all women pass on the mentioned resource to their relatives. It gave me an implication that kinship relations are important in accessing resources. Although I did not focus a lot on kinship relations but I found out that in the townships where I did research, kinship relations are considered to be of paramount importance in accessing resources than getting it from outsiders. Kinship relations help them in sharing information that can support women's livelihoods for instance urban agriculture programs. However, in these heterogeneous communities also women get information through friends, neighbors although not all women get information from them. Kinship relations are of paramount importance in network building among women in urban agriculture programs. Among other aspects that have helped the women in urban agriculture programs to get information resources about CARE Liberia are networks through kinship bonds. On the issue of religion the majority of the target group is Christians. Though I do not have the specific statistics of the religious groups Christians are dominant in the townships where I did research. However, the research does not focus on a particular religion or race.

Though I do not have the exact number of respondents who had extended families (through kinship bonds) but in general extended families are common. Unlike in most African societies majority of women in these townships are the bread winners for the household since they are able to get engaged more in urban agriculture in comparison to men. The majority of men claimed not to be working at all. Urban agriculture is the major source of food for the respondents mentioned in table 4 doing urban agriculture. The majority of the target groups of CARE Liberia mainly depend on urban agriculture though some of them can get informal jobs once in a while. However, by the time I was on the field urban agriculture could not provide enough food for the households for instance women were not able to get at least three meals a day. Though I do not have the specific numbers but there are a few of them who sell soft drinks, fruits, vegetables by the road side.

Some members of the target group who are in urban agriculture programs are involved in the loan and saving scheme of CARE Liberia. There are a few women in small associations where each member can contribute 50 Liberian dollars and they rotate the fund. The association was identified in Paynesville Township but it is not organized by CARE Liberia. Women organized themselves without any outside intervention.

My plan was to include all women from any ethnic group that I came across. However, due to time limitation on the field I could not talk to all the people. All the ethnic groups could

not be reached. The following ethnic groups were included Loma, Gbandi, Kpelle, Gola, Kru, Bassa, Grebo and Bella.

2.4. War and its impact on the circumstances of target group and their livelihoods

The war and conflict in Liberia began in December 1989 when the National Patriotic Front of Charles Taylor waged war against the government of Samuel Doe (Swiss et al., 1998). As a result of war many women and men were forced to flee their homes to find areas which were more secure. Many of them came to Monrovia where they expected to be more secure than in villages. Though, some women and men might have migrated to Monrovia before the war, my focus here is about those who migrated due to the conflict. However, it is possible that other people migrated before the war looking for better living standards. As a result of the war their livelihoods in general were affected since many of them could not carry on their main livelihoods. This affected the economic status of the target group making them poorer. As a result of the war they could not practice in agriculture which is the major livelihood for the majority of Liberians. This increased food insecurity which already existed in the society.

Ethnicity was one of the causes of the conflict in Liberia and this developed disintegration, disunity and hatred in society. However, currently in areas of my research ethnicity is no longer an issue. People are living in areas with a mix of ethnic group. In addition, I did not find any area which is occupied by one ethnic group only. In addition some families were separated from their relatives and many of them died as a result of the conflict. The war destroyed the few social services like roads, hospitals schools that were existing at the time. This increased the levels of poverty most especially among the poor. The result of this war also is that many young people joined the rebel forces which became a hindrance to their education. The majority of these youth today they are on streets which are also a threat to security. For instance there is a risk that these young women might be used in future to join rebel activities. Many of the target groups have no capacity to cater for their children. This is increasing the number of street kids.

The war affected the lives of women in a way that their property was destroyed during the war. In addition today there are not able to go back to the interior (Villages) since there are no social services for instance roads, hospitals and schools. This has left big land in villages not being used for agriculture and other activities which would support their livelihoods. Due to the fact that many refugees came to Monrovia, the population increased tremendously in the city. As a result of population increase in Monrovia there is a lot of

competition for land and this has resulted into conflicts and making the land quite expensive. Since the land is too expensive some poor women find it too expensive to rent land for urban agriculture in Monrovia.

Furthermore, the war and conflict caused loss of lives. This reduced on the number of women previously involved in urban agriculture and other economic activities which increased poverty. Also during the war a lot of infrastructure was destroyed this had an impact on the livelihoods for instance transportation of agricultural products became more difficult. The war affected the investment in entrepreneurship in Greater Monrovia because majority of foreigners from other countries no longer invested in Liberia. In addition it reduced the market for those involved in urban agriculture and other livelihoods.

2.5. Urban agriculture

Urban agriculture is carried out on private, leased or rented land in peri-urban areas, in back yards, on roof tops, on vacant public lands such as vacant industrial or residential lots, roadsides, on semi-public land such as school grounds, in prisons, and other institutions, as well as in ponds, lakes, and rivers (Hovorka et al., 2009). Studies on the role of urban agriculture showed that it can play an important impact on food security especially in urban areas. For urban agriculture in the townships of Greater Monrovia, there are a variety of crops grown in both urban and peri-urban areas. For instance cabbage, okra, rice, beans, yam, sweet potatoes, cassava, maize and mangoes. Though I do not have the exact number of respondents who carry out intercropping, in most gardens I observed that intercropping is a common practice. Intercropping refers to growing of different types of crops on the same plot of land.

Urban agriculture is carried out both for home consumption and for selling the surplus to the market place. When the surplus of urban agriculture production is put on the market it creates more networks among the participants and the outside community. Networks are also developed through the sharing of food within families and the communities. In communities there is an element of exchange of food stuffs and barter trade where people exchange what they have for other food stuffs they do not have. This exchange develops networks and cooperation. During the process of selling their products they get access to new connections with outside communities. For instance in search for market they meet new people. In addition in urban agriculture programs when women come together in meetings, it builds social cohesion among the participants. The women involved are taught how to deal with urban agriculture challenges in a collective manner.

In spite of the fact that urban agriculture is an important livelihood for poor women and men in Greater Monrovia, there are a lot of challenges in carrying out urban agriculture. For instance the soil is infested with plant diseases that affect the crops grown, there is lack of storage facilities, lack of farm inputs, the crops harvested are bought at low prices and lack of land security is rampant in Greater Monrovia and Greater Monrovia in general⁶. In addition the farmers are faced with marketing challenges for instance unregulated internal markets, lack of processing facilities and lack of infrastructures most especially among the farmers who are in townships a bit far away from the city centre in Monrovia.

2.6. Access to land

Greater Monrovia is a small city but densely populated. The land is mainly owned by the rich people or the middle class, some of them do urban agriculture. Land conflicts are a major obstacle to peace building in Liberia today (ICAF, 2010). Access to land for poor and vulnerable women is mainly through renting and squatting. Squatting takes place on some vacant land owned by the government. However, there are some people who give out land to women to look after their land and they authorize them to use it for urban agriculture. In this case I met a few women (do not have exact number) who had been given land to take care of it since the owners were living abroad like in the United states of America they gave it to them to look after it.

Land is also accessed through renting. However, at times the land women and men involved in urban agriculture rent is not secure because someone can get land from fake dealers who pretend to be the rightful owners. Later on the women or men who rent the land are forced to vacate the land they are occupying when the rightful owner comes. This has led to several conflicts in all communities all over the country (ICAF, 2010). The land for squatting is much more insecure since there is no guarantee that these women can grow crops for a long time without being forced to vacate that land.

The target group in this research owns no land in Greater Monrovia. However, most people have their own land in the country side. The types of land in Greater Monrovia where urban agriculture is carried out include: road side land used through renting or squatting, privately owned land used through renting, government owned land used through squatting.

⁶ CARE Liberia report 2009

2.7. CARE Liberia Urban agriculture program

The urban agriculture program is located in Monrovia and Gbarnga Town, Liberia. I was not able to get the exact number of women participating in urban agriculture programs because the statistics I found in CARE Liberia report were not specifically about all women in urban agriculture programs. They were talking more about the population in the areas where CARE Liberia operates. Unfortunately I had already left Liberia and recognized that the statistics I had in the report were not the right ones. The overall objective of the project is to contribute *“to poverty reduction and sustainable development amongst the most vulnerable urban communities in Liberia”* (CARE, 2009). The specific objective is to have *“sustainable food security achieved through improvement in urban agriculture and nutrition of the most vulnerable peri-urban producers mainly women and youth in six eastern townships of Greater Monrovia and Gbarnga town (CARE, 2009). Women in CARE’s urban agriculture program grow crops for instance cabbage, Okra, yam, cassava and beans. These women in urban agriculture programs get support from CARE Liberia in terms of seeds, seedlings for the crops mentioned above, fertilizers, pesticides to support the growth of women’s urban agriculture. Women in urban agriculture programs are able to join the Loan and Savings scheme where each member contributes .The members contribute to a social fund which helps any of the members during distress for instance in case death occurs in one of the members household. The share from these contributions by each member is used to meet some of the household basic needs whether education, health needs, consumption and saving in micro-finance institutions. The field officers and village agents help the beneficiaries of loan and saving scheme not to set too high or too low interest rates.*

CARE Liberia has focused on the following methodology in order to make urban agriculture a success⁷; CARE has a policy of building sustainable urban agriculture through enabling strong institutional environment. In addition the actions of CARE Liberia are focusing on development through making the projects more owned by the beneficiaries. CARE Liberia is also focusing on building linkages with other stakeholders like organizations, government to share and exchange information. This is intended also to bring more cooperation with other stakeholders. Some of the stakeholders are mentioned in table 1, 2 and 3. Gender is another aspect that was put into consideration by CARE Liberia. Women are the main source in building food security in the household yet on many occasions they do not have a voice in society in decision making⁸. Another aspect that has been considered

⁷ Information acquired from discussions with CARE employees in Urban agriculture programs ,CARE Liberia report of 2009 and the Grant application form of 2009

⁸ Information acquired from discussions with CARE employees in Urban agriculture programs ,CARE Liberia report of 2009 and the Grant application form of 2009

is building social capital and participation. The action of building social capital follows a participatory approach of building strong institutions with the inclusion of other stakeholders like the civil society, private sector in the implementation of the plans of CARE Liberia in strengthening urban agriculture. In addition the involvement of the beneficiaries of urban agriculture programs this would build networks for them⁹. CARE Liberia is focusing on fostering communication and advocacy to enhance urban agriculture. The other aspect is building the skills of local partners for instance through trainings in order to equip the local staff with the knowledge to perform their duties towards urban agriculture development. CARE Liberia's action plan is also to focus on strong coordination with its stakeholders with a purpose of achieving better results based on the objectives of urban agriculture programs of CARE¹⁰.

Other aspects important in the policy of CARE Liberia include: Raising awareness through the local authorities to promote urban agriculture in their communities. In addition CARE Liberia focuses on capacity building to the beneficiaries of urban agriculture programs. In this process of carrying out urban agriculture programs CARE Liberia has a number of officials who are in charge of different activities in the running of the day today activities of the project. However, CARE Liberia also works in conjunction with other organizations for instance Africa 2000 Network and RUAF.

RUAF is an international research centre involved in research about urban agriculture and food security. It gives advice on urban agriculture and food security, technical support to national governments, producers, non-governmental organizations¹¹. For Africa 2000 Network it is a local non-governmental organization in Liberia that is involved in developmental activities in Liberia including supporting the development of urban agriculture and food security.

As stated before that I had only 1 month on the field I do not have all the information concerning the organizational structure and the statistical numbers of all stakeholders. For instance, I do not have the organizational structure of Field Assistants, Food security facilitators and beneficiaries (participants).

⁹ Information acquired from discussions with CARE employees in Urban agriculture programs ,CARE Liberia report of 2009 and the Grant application form of 2009

¹⁰ Information acquired from discussions with CARE employees in Urban agriculture programs ,CARE Liberia report of 2009 and the Grant application form of 2009

¹¹www.RUAF.org

Table 1: Organizational structure and team from CARE to implement urban agriculture programs

Function	Responsibilities
Country Director	-Liaising with high level stakeholders such as senior government officials ,donor representatives, international organizations, to ensure coordination and visibility of the project -Negotiate long commitment from national government
Assistant Country Director	-Liaising with Africa 2000 Network (A2N) director, subcontractors and associates, Ministry of Agriculture officers -Direct supervision of the project manager -Approval of all outgoing project reports
Project Manager	-Overall responsibility for project implementation, coordination, and reporting -Liaising with townships and district authorities
Monitoring and evaluation officer	-Data collection of all project activities -Field monitoring -Assist CARE project manager and A2N manager to prepare reports
Officers	-Overall responsibility for their component (Corresponding to one result)
Field Assistants	-Field supervision

Source: CARE Liberia's Budget line report (2009:36)

Table 2 and 3 represents the organizations that work in partnership with CARE Liberia

Table 2: Africa 2000 Network

Africa 2000 Network staff	
Function	Responsibilities
Director	-Liaising with CARE -Submission of technical and financial reports -Authorization of expenses
Technical advisor	-Technical backstopping and training of project technicians on bio-gardening and sustainable agriculture -Approval of expenses and technical reports

Source: CARE Liberia's Budget line report (2009:36)

Table 3: RUAF (Resource Centers on urban agriculture and food security) staff

Function	Responsibilities
Technical expert	-Liaising with CARE and Welthungerhilfe -Submission of technical and financial reports -Training
Programme Assistant	-Preparing materials for training, knowledge materials and data collection

Source: CARE Liberia's Budget line report (2009:36)

Chapter 3: Literature review

This chapter presents the main concepts that have been used in this research. I chose concepts that I considered appropriate to make sense out of the data I collected from the field. The major concepts used include: food security, peace building, urban agriculture, access to and control over resources, social cohesion and social capital, livelihood. Each concept will be explained to give the line of thinking used in the analysis of data.

3.1. Livelihood

Livelihood is a broad term which encompasses many kinds of livelihoods. "A descriptive analysis portrays a complex web of activities and interactions that emphasizes the diversity of ways people make a living" (Scoones, 2009). In addition Scoones says that it cuts across many livelihoods for instance "agriculture, wage employment, farm labor, small scale-enterprise and so on (Scoones 2009). "The debates about livelihoods, employment and poverty emerged around the 1995 world summit for social development in Copenhagen¹², but a livelihoods angle remained at the margins of the main stream with debates framed in terms of employment".

There are many definitions of livelihood but for the purpose of this research I took the definition of livelihood as means of gaining a living, including livelihood capabilities, tangible assets and intangible assets (Chambers and Conway, 1992). It comprises the capabilities, assets (stores, resources, claims and access) and activities required for a means of living. A livelihood is sustainable if people can cope with and recover from stress and shocks, maintain or enhance the capabilities and assets, that lead to sustainable livelihood opportunities for the next generation and which enhances the net benefits to other livelihoods at the local and global levels and in the long term (Krantz, 2001). A livelihood consists of all resources that can support the living conditions of an individual, family or entire society. Thus, livelihood is embedded in the whole social system and requires a specific approach to understand it. This has been dubbed 'sustainable livelihood approach' which is a way specific way to understand livelihood of poor people. This approach draws on the main factors that affect poor people's livelihoods.¹³ Livelihood is closely related to poverty and therefore an important concept as regards development interventions and the sustainable livelihood approach is very useful in planning development interventions and of course in the evaluations of these interventions. As from

¹² Robert Chambers(2008) in Scoones (2009)

¹³ <http://www.ifad.org/sla/index.htm>, accessed on the 3rd April 2012

its characteristics, the main task of this approach is understanding the complexity of poverty and of course guiding actions to overcome poverty (idem).

It is clear that addressing livelihood especially understanding it is not easy. In this study however, I did not want to delve into these web of relations that make livelihood. Rather, I focused on the simple understanding of livelihood, that is to say means of living. As my study aimed at the role of urban agriculture in peace building process, it is clear that livelihood is in one way or another related to the objectives of this study. As studies have showed that poverty is one of the causes of the Liberian conflict, addressing poverty seems to be a good option to addressing root causes of the conflict. Therefore, urban agriculture is a good option to peace building. Livelihood is closely related to poverty and therefore an important concept as regards peace building. It is clear that one of the main objectives of urban agriculture programs is poverty reduction and ultimately improve livelihood. In this study, I refer to livelihood as ways of gaining a living and I consider all urban agriculture activities and programs as well as all of efforts to address poverty as part of livelihood.

The livelihoods identified among the respondents include: urban agriculture, temporary informal jobs for instance working with people involved in the construction of houses and buildings, working as maids, selling soft drinks and other items like cigarettes, pan cakes, vegetables, and digging for other people in their gardens to earn a living. The concept of livelihood is used to identify urban agriculture as a livelihood among my respondents. As seen by authors like Scoones (2009), urban agriculture is important in improving food security status and it provides employment. Poverty having been one of the causes of the war in Liberia, urban agriculture as a livelihood can foster the living conditions of vulnerable women and men. In addition it is a source of food security. The focus for this research among other things is to identify how women's urban agriculture as a livelihood can reduce poverty.

3.2. Food security

Food security is an important concept in development and peace building processes. The most used definition of food security was proposed by the World Food Summit in 1996 defines food security as a "*a situation that exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food that meets their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life*¹⁴". In this definition, three main pillars are highlighted: availability, access and utilization:

- Food availability: sufficient quantities of food available on a consistent basis.

¹⁴ <http://www.who.int/trade/glossary/story028/en/>, accessed on 5th April 2012

- Food access: having sufficient resources to obtain appropriate foods for a nutritious diet.
- Food use: appropriate use based on knowledge of basic nutrition and care, as well as adequate water and sanitation (Barrett, 2010).

This concept has a long history and therefore, there are several discussions about it. Almost all discussions focus on the same issue: improving food security. This concept is also much debated and much confused and it is still of supreme importance to many millions of people worldwide (Von Braun, 1992). In its basic sense, food security is understood as access by all people at all times to the food required for a healthy life (idem). Understood as such, there are two important dimensions in this definition. The first is about access and the second is the time dimension. From a relatively different perspective, Ruel proposed that dimensions of food security relates to adequacy of food availability and stability of both food availability and access (Ruel et al., 1998). In this perspective, the main elements taken into account when discussing food security are quantity of food (covering nutritional needs), its quality (providing essential nutrients) and its safety (free of toxic and also acceptability of food items available (Ruel et al., 1998, Oshaug, 1994). On the other hand also, environmental stability as well as economic and social stability are very important elements of food access. However, having access to food does not totally mean that there is food security.

Although interest in the concept of food security may appear to be very recent, the history of the concept itself is long and there has been discussion about food and several projects have been developed to address food insecurity in different parts of the world. Threats to food security exist in different parts of the world. Currently, it is estimated that one billion people do not have access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food (CIDA, 2012) while approximately 2 billion people suffer chronic food insecurity. The majority of people who are food insecure are small scale farmers who live in countryside, women and children (idem).

Concerning the way food security concept has evolved: several changes have been reported in its use especially in the scientific and policy domains. From the world food conference of 1974, three main shifts have been observed. The first shift is from a global perspective to the household and individual perspective. After the world food summit in 1974, national food sufficiency was the main concern of institutions set up by this conference like the world food council and the FAO committee on food security. The shift from a macro to a micro level was done in the 1980s and was mainly reflected in policy initiatives. Of course discussion went on about the main unit of analysis whether an individual or a household. However, it is clear that any definition of food security at the micro level involve the linkage between the individual, the household and even the community (Maxwell, 1996).

This is especially valid for community where community identity is very strong. The second shift was then from a food first perspective to a livelihood perspective. While food has been considered as a primary need, this perspective is not always true in some places. For instance some people might be hungry not because they lack food but because they want to preserve and save livelihoods for the future. Therefore "people may be quite prepared to put up with considerable degrees of hunger, in order to preserve seed for planting, cultivate their own fields or avoid having to sell an animal" (Waal, 1991). However, this does not apply to all households in a community and three sort of households can be observed: enduring households (they maintain food security on a continuous basis), resilient households (which suffer shocks but recover quickly) and fragile households (they become increasingly insecure in response to shocks) (Oshaug, 1994). On the one hand, this example even questions the access dimension of food security as accessing food does not always mean having food security. On the other hand however, it stresses the importance of time dimensions. The last shift is from an objective to subjective perception. This refers more to the personal perception versus statistics which are objective measurement.

Personally, among these three categories of household food security, enduring household is the most reliable in a sense that chances for conflicts to arise as a result of lack of food are too minimal in the household in comparison to resilient and fragile households. However, resilient households are more reliable than fragile households. In fragile households at anytime conflicts might arise due to lack of food for instance conflict over food between the household members are inevitable for instance theft of food is common among food insecure communities. In addition, the enduring and resilient households stand better chances of getting the surplus to sell on the market. This increases their incomes in the household hence reducing poverty. However, fragile households although they can also sell to the market their household food security can be worsened overtime. But in some fragile households it is possible that they can exchange what they produce for other food stuffs.

Food security concept, once operationalized into concrete activities, can boost incomes of poor and vulnerable people. This is made possible by selling products to the market. In addition it can reduce the need to purchase food which would increase women's savings. Although agriculture is not often understood as a business in most parts of developing countries, it can however be a beginning of a small scale entrepreneurship that can grow and ultimately improve economic situation. Women and men involved in urban agriculture can sell the surplus and even become entrepreneurs as a result of urban agriculture which can reduce poverty. Poverty is one of the main causes of several civil wars among them the Liberian war. In addition, once food is available the money that would have been spent on buying food can be put into savings. In this study, food security is understood as the main objective of urban agriculture and peace building is understood as one of the concept that

this study is analyzing. This means that I am interested at the relation between food security in general (specifically urban agriculture) and its role in peace building. Therefore, the food security may be understood as the ultimate objective of urban agriculture which is the core concept of this study.

In this research, this concept of food security is very central. I referred to two of its dimensions: access and time and also at the household and individual level. Access and time dimensions are surely the most suitable for a research on food security and peace building while other dimensions are somehow more relevant for a policy and nutritional related study. As the target population lives in Monrovia, I found also more relevant to focus at the household and individual level.

3.3. The concept of Peace- building

Peace building is a very popular term used in conflict prevention and resolution as well in international development. As the term may itself suggest, peace building is mainly about finding a solution to a conflict and then establishing peace. Although this term is used in some governmental programs; international NGO's and the UN are the ones that use and popularized the concept of peace building. One of the most considered definition consider peace building as a means of preventing the outbreak, reoccurrence or continuation of armed conflict (Porter, 2003). This means that Porter is talking about may be "*actions to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid a relapse in to conflict*" (Boutros-Ghali and Nations, 1992). All these activities undertaken for peace building aim at mediation, negotiation, arbitration and conciliation (Galtung, 1976). All these activities are meant to hold the escalation of a conflict and to bring about a more peaceful environment.

Peace building is a multi-dimensional enterprise with several pillars. While different actors define these pillars differently; there is a consensus that peace building has political, social, economic, security and legal dimensions, each of which requires attention (Tschirgi and Program, 2004).

It is important to note that the concept of peace building is interlinked to economics and livelihoods. Indeed, while peace building operations aim at stabilizing countries that have experienced civil wars, these international peace building operations have somehow established a particular way of how states should organize themselves. This way draws mainly on principles of liberal democracy and market oriented economics (Paris, 2002). This vision of peace building underpins the idea that economic situation is a very important

aspect as regards peace building. My current study also draws upon the role of economic situation on peace building.

While different peace building definitions and operations have their own vision of things, Kristin identified a number of principles which underpin peace building in theory or in practice (Kristin van der Leest, 2010). First, peace building is seen as locally owned. This is especially true as populations suffer from conflicts and solutions are well seen if they are based on local needs, resources and capacities that empower local populations. Second, peace building should be inclusive. It is recognized that violent conflicts are most the time rooted in discrimination, exclusion and marginalization particularly of minorities and women. This principle is not only about identifying vulnerable groups, but also enabling them to participate in peace building and other political, social, economic and development processes through capacity-building and empowerment initiatives. In the third position, peace building is a long term process and it is basically about a long term commitment that would allow the building of sustainable institutions that are able to address the root cause of the conflict. Peace building is also human rights and justice based as roots of conflicts are usually found in the violation of basic political, civic, economic, social and cultural rights. The fifth principle is about being comprehensive as peace building interventions strive toward coherency with other sectoral and disciplinary approaches (Kristin van der Leest, 2010)

Despite several efforts to peace building, Liberia still faces the outcomes of the 1989-2003 war (Walch, 2010). The government of Liberia is using the approach of establishing programs in a peace building manner. For instance bringing back people together “who were separated by war to work in groups to achieve a common goal that is food security”. Theoretically according to the government of Liberia, people working closely together they are in a better position to manage conflicts since there is “mutual support” (Walch, 2010). Urban agriculture is one of these peace building strategies in Liberia and poverty has been established to be among causes of Liberian conflict. Although the government agrees with the fact that linking food security to peace building processes is important, it is not practically put in place (Walch, 2010).

In the context of this study, peace building is mainly referred to as any activities undertaken either by a non-governmental organization, Government institutions or by the population with the aim of bringing and strengthening peace and to avoid relapsing into any kind of conflict. CARE Liberia urban agriculture program can therefore be referred to as a peace-building activity.

3.4. UA

The growing of crops on undeveloped land in cities in urban areas has been of paramount importance in fostering food security (Rogerson 1993). "In southern Africa economic reforms in the mid-1980's have led to the removal of subsidies on food commodities as well as retrenchment in public sector employment which has led to reduced food security status for many urban households"(Mudimu, 1997). In addition according to (Mudimu 1997) "vulnerable households have resorted to urban agriculture to grow food crops to sustain their livelihoods". (Mudimu 1997) continues to mention that "urban agriculture is a livelihood strategy utilized by women as a source of income, food, employment to improve family welfare." Urban agriculture has a great social connotation due to lack of formal employment in other sectors like government agencies, factories urban agriculture remains an important component of fostering livelihoods (Bon et al., 2009). This is more related to what is taking place in Monrovia-Liberia where some vulnerable households are engaged in urban agriculture to uplift their standard of living. These vulnerable women are more focused on improving food security in their households.

To give more understanding, I took the definition of urban agriculture as the practice of cultivating, processing and distributing food in, or around, a village, town or city (Bailkey and Nasr, 1999). Although the concept is mainly used about growing food items, it can also include animal husbandry, aquaculture, agro forestry and horticulture (Hampwaye, 2009). Other definitions evoke urban agriculture as food and fuel grown within the daily rhythm of the city or town and produced directly for the market and frequently processed and marketed by farmers (Smit and Nasr, 1992).

Despite the fact that urban areas are not well designed to carry out such activities, urban farmers may use different techniques to make good use of available spaces and soil. Therefore, urban agriculture is carried out on private, leased or rented land in peri-urban areas, in back yards, on roof tops, on vacant public lands such as vacant industrial or residential lots, roadsides, on semi-public land such as school grounds, in prisons, and other institutions, as well as in ponds, lakes, and rivers (Hovorka et al., 2009)

Studies on the role of urban agriculture showed that it can play an important impact on the environment by providing a way to reuse solid wastes and water (Ruel et al., 1998). It can also have an impact on food security especially in urban areas. Thus, Urban agriculture plays an important role at the household level, it can be a source of income, can provide direct access to a larger number of nutritionally rich food and more varied food, and can increase the stability of household food consumption against seasonality or other temporary shortages (Zezza and Tasciotti, 2010).

Since it has been proven that poverty has been among the causes of Liberian conflict, addressing food security issue is very important in the peace building process (ICAF, 2010). Urban agriculture is one of the solutions to this issue and it can stimulate food security in cities most especially among poor women and men (CARE, 2009). This can help them to have food and they can sell the surplus to the market. In addition this would support their families in getting money to take their children to school. In essence this can help in poverty reduction.

3.5. Access and control over resources for UA

In post conflict Liberia, access to resources for instance land has a conflict connotation due to land insecurity. "In Liberia the central role that land tenure issues had in the cause and maintenance of the conflict and the acutely problematic state of the issue currently is well recognized" (Unruh, 2009). Unruh (2009) says that "at present the land tenure situation in the country is severe ". In addition "fraudulent, ambiguous and multiple land transfers have created great deal of confusion regarding who has legal rights to what lands and how defensible these might be".

"A central issue in men's and women's differential circumstances and experiences of urban agriculture is that of access and control over resources" (Hovorka et al., 2009). This refers both to productive resources such as land, interpersonal networks and information. In addition it also includes "access to labor and benefits of production, which consists of income, food, and other products for home consumption, sales or exchange" (Hovorka et al., 2009).

It is of big importance to note that as access is different from property (Ribot and Peluso, 2003). Access is all about possible means by which a person is able to benefit from things (idem). Control however, has to do with the ability to determine how a resource may be used. Thus, control is much closer to property than is to access. In the context of this study, control may be understood as property ownership. Access and property are of course different. This means that people who have access to resources are able to benefit from them but may not be able to decide how resource may or may not be used. On the other hand, control over resources does not mean having access to it as those who have control over resources may not – in some circumstances – be able to benefit from them. This is true when those who have control live far away from the resources to benefit from them. Ribot identified eight ways in which people can have access to resources: access to technology (technology to extract oil for example), access to capital, access to markets (ability to sell products), access to labor to work the resource, access to knowledge (patent rights is a good example of access to knowledge), access to authority, access through social identity

(when people call themselves 'indigenous' or 'native', they want to insist that they are the ones who have access to 'local' resources) and in the last position is access via negotiation which is based on friendship, trust, reciprocity, patronage, dependence, and obligation form critical strands in access webs (Ribot and Peluso, 2003).

Access to resources is very critical in the context of this study. It is mainly used to refer to the way women access land that they use for urban agriculture activities. I also looked at the mechanism respondents used to access these resources. In addition, the focus was on how access and control of resources can be an impediment to peace building. In the case of this study I also want to find out whether access to land and information is distributed equally among the respondents. This will give an overview of the situation concerning land tenure security, access to information in relation to food security and peace building.

3.6. Social cohesion, social capital

"The classical economists identified land, labor and physical capital (assets that generate income) as three factors that generate economic growth"(Woolcock, 1998). According to Woolcock (1998), access to the most recent and most up to date ideas from other people will not easily reach those people who lack information if there are no connections with others. Woodlock continues to mention that "life is more rewarding and productive if different categories of people combine together their efforts, skills, resources in a spirit of trust, cooperation and commitment to common objectives".

Social capital as a concept is most of the time defined as based on relations among people and the usefulness of these networks. This concept has been defined in different ways and it is evident that one of the common points that these definitions share are that social capital is about revitalizing the community link¹⁵. For example, some defined it as a set of mental dispositions and attitudes favoring cooperative behavior within society (idem), while Foster defined it as ways in which people develop networks and trust among themselves(Foster, 2006). Social capital underlies another concept which also relates to community network: social cohesion. Social cohesion is a set of social processes that help instill in individuals sense of belonging to the same community and the feeling that they are recognized as members of that community. It refers to the extent of connectedness and solidarity among groups in society¹⁶. The relation between social capital and social cohesion is that a cohesive society is the one endowed with stocks of social capital (idem). Some of the signs of a cohesive society are that it is marked with abundance mutual support and instead of throwing the individual on his own resources leads him to share in

¹⁵ <http://www.socialcapital-foundation.org/TSCF/aboutus.htm>, accessed on March 26th 2012

¹⁶ http://www.courseweb.uottawa.ca/pop8910/Notes/Social_Capital.htm, accessed on March 26th 2012

the collective energy and supports his own when exhausted (Durkheim, 1981 (1st ed. 1897)). Some of the dimensions of social cohesion as identified by Jenson and famille(1998) are: belonging (as opposite to isolation), inclusion (as opposite to exclusion), participation (as opposite to non-involvement), recognition (as opposite to rejection) and legitimacy (as opposite to illegitimacy) (Jenson, 1998).

While social capital is an abstract concept, the interest that researchers have had on it allowed to them to assert that, though abstract, it can produce visible results. That's why measurements efforts have been deployed and it was found out that social capital can be measured by the assets obtained through networks (Lin et al., 2001). These assets are very diverse and all of them depend on situation. Some examples have mentioned however that social institutions (such as kinship, conjugal ties and customary norms), friendship between neighbors and work colleagues are some of them and that they can be very useful in the context of agrarian societies because they can be means of accessing land through inheritance, borrowing, leasing and squatting (Flynn-Dapaah, 2002).

In this study, I referred to social capital as part of resources such as networks, cooperation among women involved in urban agriculture programs that they use to help each other and which affect their everyday life. These can include a wide range of resources including land and information which will be focused on in this research. It is clear that some of the main issues that affect poor and vulnerable women are poverty and lack of access to resources. Some of the ways in which these women can help each other include: sharing of food in different households, mutual support in times of different challenges like burial arrangements, exchange of crops in case one has crops which the neighbor does not have they can exchange. Another example is when a neighbor does not have fuel to give light in the house they can borrow or ask a neighbor to share what she has. This becomes a kind of reciprocity so that in future the one who receives can also give assistance to her/his friend.

Chapter 4: Methods

4.1. Introduction

The research that I carried out was exploratory and I used qualitative methods of primary data collection. I choose to use qualitative methods because they were very suitable for the research questions which are also qualitative. The most basic way of characterizing qualitative studies is to describe their aims as seeking answers to questions about the 'what,' 'how' or 'why' of a phenomenon (Green and Thorogood, 2009). I also choose to use qualitative methods in "*a natural setting, making sense or interpreting the phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them*" (Denzin and Lincoln, 2000). The data collection of secondary data involved consulting existing documents on urban agriculture, urban agriculture as a livelihood, women and peace building in Liberia focusing on Greater Monrovia as a case study. Documentary sources refers to the whole range of written sources that might be available relating to the topic, and by extension other arte-facts that can be treated as documents such as photographs (Green and Thorogood, 2009)

Furthermore the following methods were to be used in carrying out this research; interviews, purposive sampling, focus group discussions, participant and non participant observations. These methods are explained further in the sub -sections of chapter 4.

4.2. Interviews

Interview as a conversation between two people has been used to collect information about a given topic from an interviewer. As a scientific method, it is used when the research is aiming at describing and finding meanings of the central themes in the life of world subjects and in a such context its main task is understanding what interviewees say and their experiences (Kvale, 1996). Interviewing is a paramount source of information on a particular subject which would have been difficult to get (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007).

In this study, I formulated open interview questions which I subdivided in a log frame and later made a protocol. Open interview questions were to be used in order to give the respondents a chance to give a variety of answers. In depth interviews were used to get more information from the interviewees. Initially, I planned to interview women and men involved and those not involved in urban agriculture programs. My target was to interview 48 people but the majority would be women. I chose 48 respondents since the research was exploratory and I was going to spend only one month on the field. I made a choice of interviewing more women because my research was mainly to focus on women's urban

agriculture but men were included to see whether they are included in urban agriculture programs. I decided to use narrative interview so that women involved in urban agriculture could give their stories concerning my research topic. For semi-structured interviews as a researcher I set the agenda in terms of the topics to be covered but the interviewee's response would determine the kinds of information produced (Green and Thorogood, 2009). Data collected with interviews was combined with participant observation so that data from both participant observation and interviews could illuminate each other (Hammersley and Atkinson, 2007). However, it has not been easy to carry out interviews especially due to language barrier. Although English is used by the majority of the population, it was difficult to understand each other especially with those who have never been to school. To overcome this I was to continue probing and repeating my questions several times so that they could understand better my questions. The topics and questions I used are indicated in Annex 1 of this thesis report.

4.3. Sample

In general most qualitative research has the aim of purposive (sometimes called purposeful) sampling; that is explicitly selecting interviewees who are likely to generate appropriate and useful data (Green and Thorogood, 2009). Therefore, I also adopted the purposive sample because *"it allows for flexibility and changing sampling strategies throughout the research process"* (Ohman, 2005). However in the process of research I did not change the sampling strategies. Purposive sampling was used by selecting a representative population of women and men in urban agriculture programs, women and men doing urban agriculture but not in programs, women and men not doing urban agriculture. The sample was *"theoretically representative of the study population but not representative in a statistical point of view"* (Ohman, 2005).

4.4. Focus group discussions

A focus group discussion is a tool that is used to get diverging or different views and people's perceptions on a certain topic (KRUEGER, 1988). However, people might have the same views on certain elements of the topic. Therefore, focus discussion brings people together to share their understanding of a situation in their society or environment.

In this research, focus group discussions were used to find different views from respondents on the interaction between women's urban agriculture and peace building processes in Greater Monrovia. The objective of using focus group discussions was to get a broad range of ideas and views from my respondents. In these two focus group discussions open questions were used in order to get diverging views. However, people might have the

same views on certain elements of the topic. In these focus group discussions I aimed at using groups made of 6 to 14 people to facilitate me in getting information. The two focus groups were carried out in Congo town. This is because Congo town is close to where I was staying unlike other townships where CARE Liberia operates which are a bit far. Due to transport challenges we could not spend too much time on the field in these townships which were a bit far from Congo town where the head offices of CARE Liberia are situated. The first focus group consisted of 14 women and the second one had 3 women and 3 men. In the second focus group I combined both females and males to find out whether women could still be free to express their ideas. I choose specific individuals using purposive sampling. In addition I consulted the community leader who helped me to get access to the respondents. The topics discussed are indicated in annex 1 of this thesis.

I choose a small number of respondents because if focus groups are too big it might become hard to control the group. The limitation that I was expecting was controlling big groups of respondents who had diverging views. To avoid these challenges I made a plan of dividing them into small groups so that I could manage them easily. This is advised for a researcher to make sure that the respondents in a focus group are reasonably homogeneous in terms of class and gender to allow them to speak freely

4.5. Participant observation and non-participant observation

Participant observation is an informal way of getting an image of what is taking place within a community (Bishop and Hilhorst, 2010). Participant and non-participant observation was used as an informal way to acquire information from poor women about the role urban agriculture can play in food security, building social cohesion, and social capital. It was important to use participant and non-participant observation because my visit on the field was not for a long period of time. Therefore, the information from participant observation and non-participant observation would support the information that I got from interviews. Participant observation and non-participant observation were used to get more understanding of my respondent's culture, beliefs. In addition, it was used by getting involved in the activities of my respondents for instance in workshops and in their gardens as I made observations of their social interactions. In addition we had informal conversations concerning their food security status. Through the informal conversations trust and friendship developed between me and the respondents which brought openness in giving me the information that I needed.

Since I was not expecting myself to spend a long period of time on the field I would not be a complete participant observer. This would be a hindrance to me in getting enough information through participant and non-participant observation. I was more of an

observer as participant and participant as observer since I was not an inhabitant or native of this area of study at the same time I could not get involved in all their activities fully (Green and Thorogood, 2009). In addition there is where I would be a complete observer but could not get involved in the field of study for instance visiting fields of urban agriculture but without participating with farmers (non-participant observation). The only limitation I was worried about was breaking the cultural beliefs and norms of my respondents. To avoid this I wanted to ask politely before engaging myself in their activities.

Some of the observations that I made include: In Congo Town I observed that women who are not in the programs of CARE Liberia were much unhappy about CARE Liberia in comparison to respondents in other townships. This is because CARE Liberia offices are situated in Congo town yet they have never received information about CARE urban agriculture programs. In addition, I could see indeed that the women I interviewed in Congo town they were living in poor conditions but had never got any information from CARE Liberia about urban agriculture programs. One women leader said *"how can you go to assist people in another family before helping your own family."* She was referring to CARE Liberia which is helping women in other areas yet CARE Liberia has not provided information to poor women living close to CARE Liberia offices. According to all women I talked to in Congo town they were angrier based on their gestures and reactions in comparison to women in other townships.

Another observation was soil erosion in areas like Paynesville and Barnesville. In these areas some households have no fertile land for instance the soil is getting depleted. In addition to this when heavy rains fall their crops are destroyed leading to poor harvests.

Another observation is that women are really eloquent in society they can express themselves. For instance I saw a woman who always wanted to dominate the discussions about the questions I asked them. In addition, I observed that women are mainly the bread winners for the family in most households. For instance, all women respondents told me that they are the main providers of food in their households. In the households I observed that the social interactions based on kinship are strong. For instance it depends on how they interact in the household that the head of the household can give an inheritance to another member of the family. The head of the household gives the inheritance to someone in the family he/she decides depending on their relations towards each other. One woman told me that *"Someone can decide to give land to a relative whom she feels that has been good towards her"*. This observation about social relations was observed in all the townships. Another observation is that the roads are in poor condition for instance in townships far away from the city centre of Monrovia. In all the townships in the households for the

respondents I visited I observed that there is poor sanitation for instance in Barnesville some houses do not even have windows. Another observation was in the area of Congo town where I observed that there is poor waste management. In some areas like in one part of Congo town there was a lot of garbage of all kind thrown in gardens, some places had no toilets and some people defecated in these gardens. This affects the crops that are grown.

4.6. Data analysis

To analyze the data collected from the field I planned to use a thematic content analysis. I wanted to analyze the content of the data by focusing mainly on common elements or themes. This is a useful approach for answering questions about the salient issues for particular groups of respondents or identifying typical responses (Green and Thorogood, 2009). Thematic analysis is the basis for more sophisticated qualitative analysis, in which the researcher moves beyond simply categorizing and coding the data to thinking about how the codes relate to each other and asking more complex questions (Green and Thorogood, 2009). In my research I categorized and coded the data and later I made an analysis of the data collected from the field. I wanted to give meaning to the aspects that were related to my topic. Where the people are to be given a voice in order to foster their participation and decision making an analysis is minimal so that their stories can explain what is taking place on the field. It was my intention to focus on participation and decision making deeply but due to time limitation I could not make it.

To analyze data, I made a list of code names by looking into the data collected from the field then identify the key themes in relation to my topic. In addition I separated the respondent's views and later I made a comparison of their views. Later I made a comparison of the data collected from the field from different respondents. In addition I also transcribed all the respondent's views.

4.7. Ethical considerations

In any research there are a number of stakeholders and in some cases conflict of interest might arise among the stakeholders (Green and Thorogood, 2009). There is a need to take into consideration the ethical dilemmas that might arise as a result of the research a person is carrying out in a particular field of study. Considering my research I had set my plan to respect the ethics of research which are mentioned in the next paragraph. I was fortunate that I did not encounter any ethical challenge during my research. This is because I did my best to respect the ethics of research mentioned in the paragraphs below.

To get information I planned to respect the ethics of research for instance disclosing the full purpose of my study to the informants. I wanted to disclose that my research is to give an understanding of the interaction between women's urban agriculture and peace building processes. In addition to find out the obstacles and constraints that hinders women's participation in urban agriculture. I tried my best to be very reflexive about my stance in the interviews, as being too critical would have problematized the methods of getting information and disrespected informant's protection from malfeasance. This would be a very important point for the dissemination of my results. I would contribute to the field of women and peace building with recommendations for improvement, rather than coming up with a research which strongly questions the credibility of the informants' methods. I planned to make an informed consent, in order to gain trust and respecting my informants. In this case I would inform them about the research that I was carrying out. As to the informants' right to opt-out at any time of the interview or abstain from answering certain (too personal) questions, I would respect their views. However, I was to probe patiently when respondents would seem completely unwilling to talk about those issues important for the outcomes of my research. In addition I wanted to respect the women's views concerning gender relations and I was to be confidential concerning the information they would give me. In addition to this I would always put into consideration the impact of my research on the people I was investigating. I wanted to do this by first inquiring from CARE staff so that I could avoid direct questions that might open their past wounds for instance I asked some of them whether the issue of ethnicity was sensitive which I found out not to be. I was also to respect the principal of do no harm and do good. In addition I wanted to respect their beliefs and culture. To respect the ethics of research I planned not to criticize them in any way instead to be an active listener without opposing their views and actions. As a way of getting information and building relationships I planned to develop friendship with the respondents, partners like CARE officials and the local community.

Chapter 5: Research Findings

This chapter describes the presentation of findings from the data collected during the fieldwork. Also the demographics of the people interviewed, excerpts from the interviews and the main discussion points as guided by the research questions and objectives of the study are presented in this chapter. In addition I included several case studies of interviews in annex 5 to give more understanding of the views from respondents. However, some information in annex 5 that was not relevant to my research was not analyzed. Based on the questionnaire in annex 1, I did not present all the data. Because of the time constraint I had on the field some questions that were not directly relevant to my research I did not focus on them so much.

5.1. Demographics of respondents

The total numbers of respondents were 48, and out of these 8 were males and the remaining 40 were females. The number of females outweighed that of males, because of the focus of the study. All the respondents fell within the age range of 23 and 70. The degree of their educational attainments shows that, 22 of the respondents had at least primary education, 5 never had any form of formal education. A total of 20 of them had at least high school education and only one is a university graduate. Those who were much older were less educated in comparison to the young. This could be because as years pass by education is gaining momentum in comparison to the past years. The interviewees cut across seven ethnic groups, with the highest number of interviews from the Kpelle ethnic group. The number of respondents based on their ethnicity are Loma(13), Gbandi(11), Kpelle(14), Gola(1), Kru(3), Bassa(4), Grebo(1), Bella(1). On ethnicity lines, no information was sought on whether ethnicity is a barrier that might be hindering a particular tribe from participating in the urban agriculture programs. With respect to religion, there was no information obtained whether urban agriculture programs are inaccessible to some due to their religious beliefs. Among the respondents, the majority of the respondents were Christians. Christianity and traditional religion are the most dominant religions in Liberia. However, traditional religion is much more dominant in villages than in towns. The change from traditional religion to Christianity by the majority in the city could be due to migration from villages to the city. Traditional religion taking about 40% of the country's population, Christianity about 40% and Muslims with a 20 % of the total population¹⁷. However, these statistics about religion I am not sure whether they are reliable.

¹⁷ www.nationsencyclopedia.com

For purposes of this thesis, class is based on land ownership. Inequality was also obviously based on land ownership, which gives some people better advantage over the others. However, those with their own land were not part of my target group. Therefore there was no distortion of my results based on class in terms of ownership of land. The distribution of respondents interviewed falls into the following categories: 14 respondents are practicing urban agriculture but not in any way associated with the programs of CARE Liberia. 18 respondents practice urban agriculture and are part of the programs of CARE Liberia. The remaining 16 do not practice urban agriculture and are not part of the CARE Liberia programs.

Table 4: Methods used in data collection.

Table 4 is also meant to show the number of respondents I interviewed and the methods I used to get information from the respondents. It can be observed that in some townships I interviewed more respondents than other townships. This is because of the transportation challenge that was on the field. CARE Liberia had one car which was being used by the whole organization. We had to make sure the car is able to help other colleagues who needed to carry out other duties of CARE. This made me to spend little time in townships that were far away from the city centre. Another point is that wherever I went to meet the respondents it depended on which township CARE officials frequently visited.

Area	Focus group discussions		Interviews		Participant observation	Non-Participant observations
	Female	Male	Female	Male		
Paynesville township – 5 respondents doing urban agriculture and in CARE Liberia programs; – 2 respondents were not doing urban agriculture	0	0	6	1	None	Several
Johnsonville township – 1 respondent not in programs but doing urban agriculture; – 5 respondents not doing urban agriculture and not in programs of CARE Liberia	0	0	5	1	None	Several
Fiamah community – 1 respondent doing urban agriculture but not in Urban agriculture programs of CARE Liberia	0	0	1	0	Several(observing their fields, social interactions, environment)	Several

Congo Township – 8 were not in programs but doing urban agriculture – 7 were in programs; – 9 were not doing urban agriculture	17	3	3	1	Several	Several
Barnesville township – 1 respondent in urban agriculture programs	0	0	1	0	None	
Gardnerville Township – All 5 respondents in programs	0	0	4	1	None	Several
Lakpazee community – All 4 respondents not in programs but doing urban agriculture	0	0	3	1	Several	Several

5.2. Participation, women's control and access to resources in UAP

This section describes the information obtained from respondents with respect to differences based on gender distribution, type of households, and age of respondents participating in the CARE Liberia urban agriculture programs in relation to women's control and access to resources for Women in urban agriculture programs. The main resources focused on include: access to information, land and inputs.

5.2.1. Participants in UAP by age, gender, household, food security and poverty level

The age of respondents interviewed and with access to information about urban agriculture programs, participating in the CARE programs was between 23 and 48 years of age. The age, gender and households were considered to find out the differences existing in accessing resources. Out of 48 respondents, 42 dropped out of school before finishing at least the level of High school, 5 never had a chance to get formal education and only 1 reached the university level. Concerning their standard of living, they earn averagely less than 1 dollar per day. This puts them in the category of people under the poverty line. In addition they eat at least on average 2 meals per day. On the aspect of household, there are some poor households that are not included into the programs. The access to information concerning urban agriculture programs is inclusive because the programs are targeted at both women and men. But for the purpose of this research, the focus of the interviews was mainly on women and a few men. A total of 18 respondents were in urban agriculture programs out of the 48 interviewed. The distribution of these 18 respondents with access to information and participating in the programs are 15 were women and 3 were men. In the households which got information only 2 were headed by widowed women and the rest were headed by men.

5.2.2. Information sources for participation in UAP

The aspect of access to information by women and men in urban agriculture programs was considered to find out the flow of information about urban agriculture programs. Subsequently this gave me a picture whether those not in programs are able to get information.

Out of the 18 respondents in urban agriculture programs, 9 attested that they got information concerning urban agriculture programs of CARE from their community leaders, 7 of them confirmed me that they got information from their friends and the remaining 2 got information from CARE Liberia officers. Apparently women and men in

urban agriculture programs told me that they get information concerning urban agriculture programs in three ways: through community meetings with their leaders, from their friends who were already members of urban agriculture programs and others from CARE employees. However, one woman in the program did say: *"I was told by our community leader about CARE. He told me that they support poor people with seeds and medicine for the crops"*. Another woman told me that *"I first heard about CARE from my friend, we met in town I was from visiting my auntie. She told me how CARE helps people with seeds if you want to make a garden"*. Another woman in the program did say *"my friend told me that CARE gives people medicine for crops" (medicine meaning pesticides). "I did not have the medicine and my crops now are much better than before I started using the medicine ". There is another woman who did say " I found people in a meeting close to my home and asked one man what was happening. He told me that they give seeds, medicine, fertilizers to farmers who have gardens. I waited after the meeting I talked to a woman who works for CARE Liberia. She told me to talk to a woman who was the chairman of the group and she registered me"*.

It is clear that these networks mentioned above have been fundamental in information diffusion about urban agriculture programs. For some women and men not getting information is an indication that information does not reach all people.

5.3. Expectations and activities of CARE programs

The expectations of women and men interviewees were put into consideration to find out the value they give to urban agriculture. This would help to know their needs from urban agriculture and to see if they go in line with CARE Liberia's objectives. In addition the activities that take place within urban agriculture programs were considered to get a picture of what women gain from these activities.

The interviews conducted revealed that women expected to get more food to feed their families by engaging in urban agriculture. In addition they expected to improve their income, because they are of the opinion that improving their income via agricultural productions will give them some sense of food security. As a result of getting into the urban agriculture programs they expected to obtain trainings on how to improve urban agriculture, for instance how to produce more. A lady said that *"I needed to learn modern methods of making gardening to get more food for my children"*. According to the respondents this would result in to improved farming methods. Despite the fact that they have other areas of needs, but food security is what is ultimate for them as their expectations.

Concerning the activities, women respondents in urban agriculture programs narrated that they normally have weekly meetings in which they discuss different problems concerning

agriculture. A few men were included to find out whether they are included into the programs. In these meetings normally they are also joined by some CARE staff and in case inputs from CARE are available, they are distributed among those who are in the programs and those who have not attended on that particular day of the meeting can receive them later. In these meetings they express their views concerning urban agriculture problems and how they can solve them. For example they discuss how they can prevent pests from destroying their crops by the use of pesticides. A lady told me that “we are free to talk in the meetings”. When I asked who dominates in the meetings she said “The leader at times can talk more than all of us but if we want to ask questions we do”. In addition she did say “We are not forced to do what the leaders of the group or CARE wants us to do we can make decisions”.

The other cooperative practice the respondents said that tools are distributed in pairs each tool being used by at least two members. A lady did say “we share the tools but it affects our work you must wait until your colleague has finished using the tool”.

The respondents confirmed they get advice from CARE staff about joining the loan and saving scheme. The cooperative practices that women in urban agriculture programs are involved in include; the loan and savings scheme where they are trained by CARE Liberia to save money. In addition through the loan and saving scheme they told me that they have a social fund. In this social fund they can help each other in case one of the members has a particular problem. For instance if one loses a loved one they can assist her during the burial. A lady did say “If a member dies or loses a relative I go for burial arrangement and if I have money I can contribute”. When asked how much she contributes she said “I can give 40 Liberian dollars or less depending on the money I have in my pocket”.

They narrated that they expect themselves to come out of poverty, for instance they will be able to take their children to school. In addition they expect to increase their incomes and this will help them to get capital to do other businesses. As a result of increased incomes they expect to be able to have money to visit the hospital in case they are sick. Also if their incomes increase as a result of urban agriculture, they want to buy land for themselves so that they are more secure and they can grow crops on a larger scale.

5.4. Problems of land lease in UA

All women and men in urban agriculture programs said that they do not have land in the city but they own land in the villages. For their urban agriculture activities, all of them rent land or squat. At times they rent land after getting information from friends or neighbors about land being rented. Networks are also important in helping them to know where land is available for rent or squatting. For squatting some women and men in urban agriculture

they squat on land owned by the government. However, this land for squatting is not always available.

The land for renting is mainly from people in communities who own land. Most of these people the respondents consider them to be rich and others are in the middle class. But at times they find themselves renting from people who disguise themselves to be the rightful owners. They told me that even the land they rent or squat on is not secure anytime they can be chased from there hence losing all their crops they planted.

Respondents showed concerns about people who pretend to be land owners yet they are not the rightful owners. It is a concern to women and men in urban agriculture because they feel insecure in investing their little money on renting land which might be taken away from them even before the harvest. One woman said that *"someone can give you land but after a certain period of time you see someone else claiming to be the rightful owner and once the land is given out to the owner at times you can lose everything that you planted."*

In addition they all told me that land conflicts are many in their area. One woman said that *"I have heard about 10 people dying due to land conflicts"*. All the respondents I spoke too agreed that land conflicts are very common and rampant in Monrovia. They consider land conflicts as a problem which the government must resolve otherwise it is continuing to cause chaos in their communities. Another lady did say *"land conflicts are enormous in our community and when they take your land if you do not have money to go to the court the person who has money will pay the bribe and take it away from you"*. When I asked her whether it had ever happened to her she told that *"it has never but it happens here in our community"*.

Due to lack of money to buy their own land in Monrovia at times they find themselves squatting or renting any land they come across. Some of these plots, the soil has been depleted which causes a lot of soil erosion. When it is a rainy season the top soil and crops are washed away. In areas which are swampy during the rainy seasons crops are destroyed and they make a lot of losses. In addition, this land for squatting and renting in most cases the surroundings are not catered for very well. For instance the bush is not cleared. This harbors more pests and other parasites that destroy crops.

In spite of renting and squatting, though I do not have the exact number but a few of them grow crops in tins and polythene bags. The tins or polythene bags are filled with soil and they keep watering the crops, applying fertilizers and pesticides for those who are able to buy them. Personally I think this technique of using tins and polythene bags is not widely used because women do not think they can make good harvests out of it. In addition it seems they have not got good sensitization and training on how the method of using tins and polythene bags can be an important method for urban agriculture.

Most informants said they have land in their rural villages. In spite of land disputes in rural areas, their land is more secure there. However, they do not return to rural villages because there are no social services there.

5.5. Importance of CARE Liberia UAP to the members of the program

This sub-section shows how urban agriculture has supported women in programs to improve their livelihood and to be more food secure.

a) More food but still not enough

According to all the interviewed respondents in urban agriculture programs, urban agriculture programs have helped them to get food though it is not enough. One woman said that *"before joining urban agriculture I could eat once in a day but nowadays most of the time I eat twice a day"*. Another woman said that *"I can sell some crops to the market and get school fees for my children"*. However, they complained that they still do not have enough food. One woman said that *"at times we can eat once in a day"*. She added that *"before joining urban agriculture program the situation was worse."* She said that *"the program gave me fertilizers and medicine (meaning pesticides) to put in my garden. I got more food than in past years"*.

b) Selling the surplus to the market gives income

The respondents also at times sell the surplus from their gardens to the market. A woman said that *"when the harvest is good I can sell crops to the market. This helps me to pay school fees for my child"*. In addition she said that *"I am able to buy salt, a dress for Christmas and clothes for my children"*.

(c) Provides work as labor sometimes

All the respondents interviewed in urban agriculture programs told me that urban agriculture programs give them work as labor. There are women who work on other people's gardens for a pay for instance they carry out activities like weeding and they are paid. It is not always that they get such work as labor, but at times they are able to get it from their colleagues. This work is not provided by CARE Liberia but women in programs they give it to other women whether in urban agriculture programs or not. However, they told me that they are poor it rarely happens that they hire someone to work on their gardens.

(d) Capacity Building, Supports from Agricultural Interventions, Training and Networking

The respondents told me that the tools, seeds and pesticides they get from CARE Liberia were very helpful as one woman said: *"these have been helpful to us in making gardens"*. However, one lady did say that *"but at times the seeds and pesticides do not come on time. When they come late I buy for myself and if I do not have the money I wait until CARE gives us"*. The respondents also said that the trainings from CARE helped them to learn new things. For instance they learn how to use fertilizers and pesticides. One woman said that *"before I never knew how to use fertilizers but now I can use them"*. In addition those in saving and loan scheme said that through the loan and saving scheme there is a social fund in which they can help a member who has got a problem in his/her family for instance if someone losses his beloved one. They told me that when a member has lost someone they go and assist their member in the burial processes. In addition they said that they make new friends and they are able to assist each other in solving certain problems for instance one woman said that *"I can borrow some money from my friends in emergency cases"*. In addition they told that they have meetings and through these meetings they gain new friends and they can cooperate in solving problems. *One lady said that "I can call my friend if I want to repair my kitchen to give me a hand"*.

(e) Loan and savings scheme

The loan and saving are managed and owned by the members. The members get their trainings from field officers from CARE Liberia. Groups normally have meetings at least once a week where each member saves 1-5 of the shares. Members share the cumulative savings and the interest from savings. These shares are used by the members to meet their household basic needs for instance paying for children's education. ¹⁸The loans are taken and re paid every 4 weeks but all loans should be within a maximum of 12 weeks during the first cycle. All the transactions are performed in front of members. To avoid transactions outside the meetings, cash boxes and passbooks are locked in a cash box secured by 3 locks held by 3 association members who are not part of the management committee.¹⁹ Though theft of boxes is rare, the purpose of the cash box is not to prevent theft but to prevent transactions outside scheduled association meetings. Loan fund and social fund (fund meant to help each member in case of a problem) are noted and memorized by each member. The association has a five member management committee elected for one year. Associations develop a constitution that contains the social fund, share purchase and loan policies of the association. Each member has one vote in electing the

¹⁸ Information is from CARE Liberia

¹⁹ Information is from CARE Liberia

management committee and developing the constitution. At the end of the cycle (one year) all the loans are shared. The loan fund (which includes interest on loans and any profits realized) is divided by the total number of savings shares purchased by members during the cycle to calculate per share value. Each member then receives his or her share according to the cumulative shares purchased throughout the cycle.²⁰

Some women in the programs use the savings to buy inputs for instance seeds in case there is a delay in getting seeds from CARE Liberia. A woman told me that she expects in future, if she accumulates savings, she will start a small business which will reinforce her livelihoods. In addition, she told me that she makes friends from outside who are not doing urban agriculture but in the loan and savings scheme. Therefore, the loan and savings scheme includes also women who are not in urban agriculture programs. The loan and savings scheme serves to widen the network among women.

5.6. Access to and control of resources by women doing UA but not in programs

This section describes information obtained from women respondents with respect to the type of households, vulnerable groups, age of respondents outside of the CARE Liberia urban agriculture programs in relation to women's control and access to resources for urban agriculture. The main resources that I focused on include; access to information, land and inputs.

The age range of women doing urban agriculture but not in programs is between 23 and 70 years. All the 14 respondents in this category were involved in urban agriculture but not in programs claimed to be at least under the categories of female headed households, the landless, disabled persons, families with persons living with HIV/AIDS, very large families, families depending on one source of income, families with children admitted to therapeutic centers for more than two years as stated in the official documents²¹. From the information I got from interviews only one household out of the 14 households was headed by a woman. The woman claimed that she is faced with enormous challenges like raising her children since she does not have anyone to help her. Two other women told me that they had been sick for quite some time. They told me they are poor and have been sick but they have never received help from CARE Liberia. One woman said that *"if CARE is to help people who are suffering I should be among the first ones."* This contradicts what the vulnerability criteria of CARE Liberia in selecting the beneficiaries entail. For instance she said that due to long sickness she cannot do any other work except gardening.

²⁰ I got all the information in this section concerning the loan and saving from CARE Liberia.

²¹ Proposal document of CARE Liberia to the EU 2009

In comparison with women in urban agriculture programs, they also claimed to be in the categories mentioned above. Lack of information about the CARE programs was identified as the major reason why a lot of people do not access the programs. All women doing urban agriculture but not in CARE's urban agriculture programs told me that they did not get information concerning urban agriculture programs. The women in Congo town where CARE Liberia operates told that CARE Liberia is selective that is to say they give information to people they know and care about. In other townships where the research was conducted, the respondents put the blame on CARE Liberia and their local leaders for not diffusing the information. One woman said that "CARE gives information to their friends. These women interested in joining CARE Liberia urban agriculture but without information believe that there is no transparency in giving out services to the whole society. They think that services are for people who have connections to CARE Liberia staff. They have a lot of bias about CARE Liberia and all other non-governmental organizations that they have their own agenda of doing business and executing their own interests of making money. In addition, these women consider the networks with CARE Liberia more possible if you have a friend or someone who works with CARE Liberia. However, for CARE Liberia official that I talked to she had a different view. She said that they give information about CARE Liberia urban agriculture programs to local leaders and the information is passed on to the community; but some people are not interested in joining urban agriculture. However, I found out that the information from CARE Liberia officers contradicts what women interested to join urban agriculture programs said.

5.7. Problems faced by women doing UA but not in programs

All the 14 respondents claimed that they depend on one source of income which is urban agriculture. One lady did say *"I get money from my gardens only I have no other job. Before the war I worked in a factory but since then I have never got any job."* Another lady told me *"It is not easy to get a job in Liberia may be if you have someone to push you. We need organizations and the government to help us to get jobs. Urban agriculture alone is not enough may be if we had our own land"*. In addition they all told me that they did not have land in Monrovia. A lady said that *"I do not have land in the city; but if I could get help to go back to the interior I would go. My house was destroyed during the war I do not have money to build another one, we have no hospitals, no schools in the interior"*.

They told me that lack of access to information is a major hindrance to their participation in urban agriculture programs. In addition most of them told me that they do not normally attend community meetings. *One woman told me that "I have been here for many years; but you are the first one who has told me about CARE Liberia. I do not know anything about*

them". They claimed that they do not attend meetings because they feel that meetings are not helpful in solving their problems and these meetings also take place once in a while.

The characteristics of urban agriculture for these women not in programs are that they do not normally use fertilizers, pesticides, they buy seeds to plant for themselves. According to my observations their living conditions are poor. For instance, the sanitation in their households is not in good condition. Unfortunately, the poverty levels between those in urban agriculture programs and women not in urban agriculture programs were not identified due to the short time I spent on the field (1 month).

a) Access to land by women doing urban agriculture but not in programs

Like those in urban agriculture programs they share the same view that lack of capacity to get security of tenure in the city is a major problem they are facing. One woman told me that *"here you can buy land from someone and at the end you find that he is not the right owner. They remove you from the land and even if you planted your crops you lose them"*. Another woman did say that *"If CARE could give me land I would be happy and I can even do more on my garden if I had my own land. On this land I am always worried that the owner might decide to use it."*

b) Access to information by women doing urban agriculture but not in programs

Women and men not in programs but in areas where CARE Liberia operates complained that they do not get information concerning urban agriculture programs. One woman said that *"I have been here selling drinks to workers of CARE but they have never told me anything about those programs"*. Another woman who was a women's leader in the community (Congo Town) said that *"I am a community leader but I have never got information about CARE Liberia"*. However, when asked CARE Liberia officers who pass on the information, they claimed that they give information to the leaders but the farmers are not interested in joining the urban agriculture programs. The focus group of women not in urban agriculture programs think that information does not reach them because CARE Liberia informs those they care about for instance their friends and relatives. This is creating a lot of bias and hatred towards CARE Liberia. This was supported more by one community leader who said that she has never received information about CARE Liberia yet she is a leader in the community.

This contradicted what the CARE Liberia official told me that they pass on information to local leaders. After talking to several women who live close to CARE Liberia offices it gave me an impression that information diffusion in this area has not been effective. One woman

with five children who was staying in a ramshackle house told me. *"I know someone from CARE but he has never told me anything about the support CARE gives to people with gardens".* When I asked how she felt about not getting information she said *"I feel bad about those people who are selfish and do not want us to get rich".* The sanitation of her house was in a poor state, the children looked unhealthy and poorly fed. The woman told me that *"I am interested in gardening but I have no medicine when I grow crops they get destroyed. Our life here is faced with enormous problems no food, no money to go to the hospital, no jobs, no money to take my children to school".*

c) Lack of inputs as a hindrance to better production

Women doing urban agriculture but not in programs told me that due to lack of fertilizers and good tools to carry out urban agriculture their production is too low. In addition they told me that these tools are expensive for them. They told me that at times they can buy for themselves. One woman showed me her garden and how pests had destroyed her crops. In contrast women in urban agriculture programs are able to get inputs from CARE Liberia. For instance they get fertilizers, seeds and pesticides.

d) Lack of trainings as a cause of poor yields

According to the respondents who are doing urban agriculture but not in urban agriculture programs they told me that lack of trainings about better practices of urban agriculture which affects their production. If they could get trainings they would learn new ways of farming to improve their production.

5.8. Summary discussion of being in /out of the programs.

As a result of not joining urban agriculture programs these women told me that they are not able to get access to support in terms of tools, fertilizers and seeds. This is different from women in urban agriculture programs who get inputs like fertilizers, seeds and tools for free. Also women not in urban agriculture programs but doing urban agriculture spend the little they have on buying inputs. In addition women not in urban agriculture programs do not attend meetings about urban agriculture.

Women doing urban agriculture but not in programs told me that if they were getting support from CARE it would help them to produce more. And this would help them to get more food. In addition they told me that if they have more food they can sell to the market.

5.9. Access to resources by women not doing UA and not in programs

The age range of these respondents was between 23 and 70 years of age. Out of the 14 women respondents in this age range and not doing urban agriculture, 3 were widows, 2 were single mothers and the remaining 9 had their husbands. Single mothers and widows said that they face more challenges in their households compared to those women with their husbands. Compared to those in programs, this category of women not in programs and not doing urban agriculture had more widows and single mothers.

These women in this age range told me they do not have their own land in the city. This hinders them from practicing urban agriculture. However, they all told that they have land in the interior (villages). In addition they do not get involved in urban agriculture programs due to lack of information. Others claimed that they do not get involved in urban agriculture because they find it less profitable and it is risky since they do not even have land in the city. According to the respondents not in urban agriculture programs and not doing urban agriculture, all of them told me that they do not have their own land in the city. In comparison with women in programs, the majority of women not doing urban agriculture do not join because they do not get information about urban agriculture programs of CARE Liberia.

5.10. Comparison of women in /out of programs

It helps women in urban agriculture programs to get access to many meetings which help them to develop networks and cooperation for instance they help each other in sharing the information concerning better practices of urban agriculture like using mulches to stop soil erosion. This is because women in programs are able to get trainings offered by CARE Liberia unlike those not in urban agriculture programs. This is contrary to those who are not in programs because for them they have no access to such trainings.

The respondents not in urban agriculture programs and not doing urban agriculture told me that not being in urban agriculture programs is a loss because if they had land then their food status would be improved. Even those who think that urban agriculture is risky and non-profitable they told that if they had their own land in the city then they would get involved in urban agriculture. In addition they regard urban agriculture as important in reducing poverty for those who have their own land. In addition women in urban agriculture programs and those who do urban agriculture but not in programs they all agree that urban agriculture is important in improving food status.

5.11. Summary of findings

This sub-section gives a brief summary of findings. To avoid a lot of repetition, all findings are not mentioned in this sub-section. Other findings can be found in the sub-sections of chapter 5.

According to women in urban agriculture programs, CARE Liberia integrates poor and vulnerable women into its programs. However, there are vulnerable and poor women in the geographical area where CARE Liberia operates but they did not get information about the programs. From the group interviews in Congo town it showed that many women who are poor and vulnerable do not get information to join urban agriculture programs. In addition this is creating a lot of bias and hatred towards CARE Liberia. This resentment towards CARE Liberia is going beyond women in urban agriculture programs who have not passed on the information to their neighbors. In the long run, this bias, hatred and resentment will be an obstacle to a peaceful co-existence.

Through the informal conversations also, it gave me an impression that majority of people not in urban agriculture programs have a bad impression towards non-governmental organizations including CARE Liberia. They consider them to be business minded; and they do not deliver what they promise. In addition, some people in the society take them to be having other hidden agendas like political manipulation of the society. This is also a problem since majority of women who have not been supported by non-governmental organizations have no trust in non-governmental organizations. This affects the execution of the work of non-governmental organizations. In addition it is creating hatred towards these non-governmental organizations and people who work for them.

All the respondents told that women' urban agriculture is an important tool in stimulating food status. However, all the respondents told that the biggest challenge they have to carry out urban agriculture is lack of land security in Monrovia. Land insecurity is a major challenge to peace building in Monrovia today and the whole of Liberia. There are enormous conflicts that have been taking place due to land insecurity. Though their challenge is lack of land security, some of the respondents access land through renting and squatting. Others use other options like planting crops in polythene bags and tins.

Women in urban agriculture programs told that though there is lack of land security, their food status has been slightly improved. Women in urban agriculture programs told that they normally have meetings every week in which they cooperate in solving problems that affect their lives. In addition they are given free inputs like seeds, fertilizers which are of paramount importance in stimulating urban agriculture. Some of the problems women in urban agriculture are faced with are indicated in annex 2. All respondents told that urban

agriculture can be helpful in poverty reduction .They also told that they make new friends from outside their communities/neighborhoods. According to the respondents these networks formed are not formed based on ethnicity. In addition women in urban agriculture programs have more access to information resources from CARE Liberia in comparison to women not in programs. However, women not in CARE's urban agriculture programs, the women doing urban agriculture but not in programs complained that they are neglected in society.

Chapter 6: Analysis of the research findings

In the previous section, a general overview of the information obtained from field work was presented. Subsequently, this section presents an analysis of the information obtained based on the concepts adopted to operationalize the research, as expounded in the literature review section.

Urban agriculture practice is a means of livelihood for women in Greater Monrovia. It provides a means of livelihood for the people, and this in return enhances food security and makes people gainfully employed. It is assumed that increased livelihoods will reduce conflicts. Both women and men are participating in the urban agriculture programs of CARE Liberia. This shows that women and men can participate in urban agriculture programs since both women and men are included in urban agriculture programs. In this paragraph men are mentioned because a few men were included in the survey to identify whether urban agriculture programs include both women and men. However, in the rest of this chapter and conclusion I will only refer to women as they are the focus of this research.

The analysis of the findings is presented in the sections below:

6.1. Role of UA in Food security and Peace Building

The practice of urban agriculture serves as a way of building networks for empowering the women in Greater Monrovia to address food insecurity and poverty. The evidence of building social capital is portrayed by the networks that have been created among the members of urban agriculture programs. In these networks, women from different ethnicities are able to support each other. Invariably, the process of acquiring social capital serves as ways in which people develop networks and trust among themselves (Foster, 2006) and it brings about social cohesion. The coming together of this group of people has been an avenue to make new friends and they even borrow money from one another. Nevertheless, some are of the opinion that, peace can only be guaranteed if the current efforts of urban agriculture providing means of livelihood are sustainable. Ethnicity having been one of the causes of the Liberian war and conflict from 1989-2003, urban agriculture is one of the ways to bring different ethnicities together and work in a socially cohesive manner. Once there is cooperation, the negative differences based on ethnicity will be minimized. The existence of different ethnicities in urban agriculture programs gave me an impression that all ethnic groups are included. In addition, all the respondents mentioned that ethnicity is not a problem in urban agriculture programs, even outside the urban agriculture programs in Monrovia.

It is analyzed that through urban agriculture programs the beneficiaries are able to make contacts with new people and they help each other in times of need. This builds cooperation in solving problems. As a result of this cooperation it helps in building social cohesion. Through such networks women can help each other in dealing with poverty problems. Once poverty is curbed it is one of the ways of peace building in Greater Monrovia.

6.2. UA and Access to resources

Women who get information about urban agriculture programs are those who have connections with those who already know about urban agriculture programs. Amongst these are their friends in urban agriculture programs, community leaders and CARE Liberia employees. In addition it is analyzed that information about CARE Liberia does not reach all people in the communities where CARE Liberia operates. (Hovorka et al., 2009). It was also noted that lack of information is a challenge to urban agriculture.

Hovorka (et al.2009) mentions that the lack of access to knowledge and information are a big challenge among women in urban agriculture. This assertion by Hovorka (et al.2009) can be related to what CARE Liberia is doing to train urban agriculture programs on how to use the inputs they get from CARE Liberia.

The majority of respondents not in urban agriculture programs are not happy about CARE's failure to give them information because they are vulnerable and they have food insecurity. It is hypothesized that the lack of information diffusion to all vulnerable and poor women in society will bring inequalities leading to theft and conflicts which is also a hindrance to peace building. This can be supported by the fact that respondents told me that theft of food crops is common in their society.

According to Hovorka (et al. 2009) the lack of inputs is a big challenge women in urban agriculture face. This assertion can be related to the work of CARE Liberia in trying to provide inputs for instance fertilizers and seeds in supporting women doing urban agriculture.

According to Hovorka (et al.2009) the lack of capacity to access land is a major challenge to poor women doing urban agriculture. This also applies to women in urban agriculture programs. It is analyzed that if CARE Liberia would focus more on how it can support women and men in urban agriculture to go back to the interior where they have their own land, this would help to increase food security more than in the city where women and men in urban agriculture have no land security.

6.3. Importance of CARE Liberia UAP in Food Security

The importance of the CARE Liberia urban agriculture programs to women is multifaceted, among other things it reduces food insecurity of women. Due to time limitation I was not able to identify the exact quantity and quality of food produced. However, based on the views from all the respondents the food they have in their households is not enough. For instance, they do not get always at least 3 meals per day. Some of them I talked to who are not in programs, they told that they can even have one meal a day. This also provides entrepreneurial avenues for women to earn income which can help them to buy other food stuffs which they do not have in their households. The increase in food security and incomes to improve urban agriculture livelihood reduces their vulnerability to easily being manipulated as instruments of war.

One of the main aspects of embarking on urban agriculture, CARE Liberia wanted to stimulate food security (CARE, 2009). From the findings, from women respondents in urban agriculture programs, they confirmed that their food status is being improved by urban agriculture. They affirmed that despite living the urban areas, they have the opportunity to grow their foods and can afford to eat and making a living out of it. In addition the literature also supports the view that urban agriculture stimulates food security (CARE, 2009). It can be deduced that CARE Liberia support for women urban agriculture enhances food security, as women participating confirmed this and affirmed the difference between when they were not in the program and now. However, due to lack of land security in Monrovia, in the long run if the issue of land insecurity is not dealt with urban agriculture might not be sustainable. It is analyzed that urban agriculture programs might become an obstacle for those who wanted to go back to their villages. This is because when women involved in urban agriculture programs are able to get a livelihood through urban agriculture, it will reduce their efforts to go back to their rural villages.

In comparison of women in urban agriculture programs of CARE Liberia with those who are doing urban agriculture but not in programs, it is analyzed that those in programs due to the inputs, trainings they get they are able to produce more than those who are doing urban agriculture but not in programs.

If there is food security, it is hypothesized that women can be able to sell the surplus to the market. From the findings that urban agriculture helps women to get some income to educate children. It is hypothesized that children's education will be one of the ways to reduce poverty. Poverty having been one of the causes of the conflict in Liberia urban agriculture can be used as one of the mechanisms for peace building.

However, the view of women in urban agriculture programs is that their food security is improved. Though I did not find the exact situation like Plateau (2004) found out that common people have no bargaining power, it is possible that women in urban agriculture programs appreciate the programs because they have no bargaining strength. The former sentence can be compared to what some researchers like (Plateau, 2004) has researched on "monitoring community elite capture in community driven development". According to Plateau (2004) in his research he found out that "in the context where the ability to deal with external sources of funding is concentrated in a small elite group, the bargaining strength of common people is inevitably limited hence their ready acceptance of highly asymmetric patterns of distribution of program benefits". Plateau (2004) continues to mention that "if the intervention of the elite results in an improvement in the predicament of the poor, however small that improvement, the latter tend to be thankful to their leaders." Basing on these assertions by Plateau I totally agree with him. There is need to do more research about my topic to find out whether indeed women in urban agriculture programs have the bargaining power in urban agriculture programs. In addition, there is a need to do a thorough research to find out if the food security facilitators, local leaders, CARE officials used by CARE Liberia if indeed they are transparent in selecting, training participants in urban agriculture programs. In addition the levels of decision making, participation should be focused on to find out if these women in programs make decisions by themselves.

6.4. Access and control of resources by women outside of CARE programs

(a) Access to land

Access to resources is a serious impediment to urban agriculture development. Though in Monrovia some land is vacant but it is either owned by certain individuals who are considered to be rich or the government. But in general, vacant land was much observed in the villages far away from the city centre. Some land is bushy and too dense and it is not used at all. However, I was not able to get information why that land was vacant.

Although my research did not reach all the beneficiaries of CARE Liberia urban agriculture programs it is important to note that the majority of the women in these programs had their spouse as indicated in the findings. In these communities where I did the research there were poor and widowed women I came across but they were not in the programs yet they had the interest to join urban agriculture programs. It is analyzed that many women who full fill the criteria to join urban agriculture programs do not get information to access urban agriculture programs.

(b) Conditions to join the urban agriculture programs

For the women respondents in the area where CARE Liberia operates it is analyzed that some women who fall under the criteria which CARE Liberia use to select the beneficiaries are left out. This might bring inequalities and conflicts in the communities. As a result of these conflicts peace building will be affected for instance once there are conflicts, inequalities it will worsen the poverty levels.

(c) Analysis of access to information by women doing urban agriculture but not in programs

According to women respondents doing urban agriculture but not in programs they told me that they are not happy about not being selected into urban agriculture programs. They told me that they are not given information about urban agriculture programs. In addition they told me that it will develop hatred with those who are in urban agriculture programs. One woman told me that *"I hate them. They are my neighbors but they have never told me about CARE Liberia"*. It is analyzed that people who do not get information about urban agriculture yet they are interested in joining this will lead to conflicts and violence.

The other analysis is that some community leaders do not make a good follow up of what is taking place in their communities because CARE Liberia offices were just close to where one woman community leader was staying but she knew nothing about CARE Liberia. This hinders the flow of information from leaders to women.

(d) Problems faced by women practicing urban agriculture but not in CARE programs

It is analyzed that women doing urban agriculture but not in programs have less access to resources compared to those in urban agriculture programs. This will create a widening gap between the poor and the rich. The effect would be increased poverty and inequalities. The (ICAF, 2010) states that poverty was among the major causes of Liberian conflict. It is hypothesized that due to these inequalities and poverty, there is a risk of causing other conflicts in future.

Like all other respondents, land insecurity is a major obstacle to urban agriculture. It is analyzed that since all respondents are willing to go back to the interior it would be better to support women willing to go back to their villages. In addition due to competition for land, conflicts are rampant and it is becoming an obstacle to peace building.

According to respondents doing urban agriculture but not in urban agriculture programs lack of inputs is another big challenge to better production. It is analyzed that women in urban agriculture programs can produce more since for them at least they are given to inputs. However, there is likelihood that this will bring inequalities. These inequalities will worsen the poverty level. According to ICAF report, poverty was among the causes of conflict in Liberia (ICAF, 2010). Therefore, these inequalities might lead to conflicts which are an obstacle to peace building.

According to women doing urban agriculture but not in urban agriculture programs. The lack of training is a big problem to urban agriculture. This coincides with the work of Hovorka (et al. 2009). It is analyzed that those in urban agriculture programs are exposed to trainings. This also might create inequalities. As a result of inequalities, poverty might worsen leading to conflicts.

6.5. The impact of being outside the UAP

It is analyzed that women doing urban agriculture but not in urban agriculture programs face more challenges in accessing inputs compared to those in programs. This will create more inequalities. As a result of inequalities, poverty is worsened. Poverty having been one of the major causes of Liberian conflict it will affect peace building.

a) Support from CARE can help them to get more food

In comparison with those who are doing urban agriculture but not in programs, though there is no clear difference in their food security status based on production but from their views it is analyzed that those in programs due to the inputs, trainings they get they are able to produce more than those who are doing urban agriculture but not in programs. Women who do not get access to urban agriculture programs miss access to support in terms of inputs like fertilizers and seeds. In addition they do not get access to trainings from CARE Liberia which would help them to develop their urban agriculture practices. This affects their production which worsens food shortages. In addition it is hypothesized that it would lead to food insecurity. Once these women do not have food, it would affect the health of their families. This affects children's education. It is hypothesized that once children do not get education it will result into increased number of street children. This will also lead to these children indulging themselves in rebel activities. However, I did not get information concerning the rate of children of participants in urban agriculture programs schooling in relation to non-participants children schooling. In addition due to lack of training on better practices there is a danger that the environment is at a risk for instance in some places they cut the trees indiscriminately.

6.6. Access to land by women not doing UA and not in programs

It is analyzed that some women not doing urban agriculture do not engage themselves in urban agriculture because they do not have their own land. I concur with their view since all the respondents told me that even land for renting is not secure. This makes it hard for them to rent on other peoples land.

6.7. Comparison of women within and outside the UA

It is analyzed that formal meetings lead to network building. Although women not in programs have access to kinship networks, women in urban agriculture programs are able to access networks in both ways that is to say through kinship networks and formal meetings. It is analyzed that this will help women to acquire new knowledge from other people. However, it does not mean that all women and men who do not get involved into urban agriculture cannot make new networks. From the views of respondents in urban agriculture programs they told that they learn from their friends for instance they get new knowledge about better agriculture practices from their colleagues who are food security facilitators.

It is also analyzed that urban agriculture can be used as an alternative livelihood rather than being jobless. However, due to land insecurity which is rampant in Greater Monrovia it becomes hard for many to take part in urban agriculture. I concur with the respondents that urban agriculture can help in reducing poverty. However, due to land insecurity urban agriculture cannot be sustainable.

Chapter 7: Conclusion

7.1 Conclusions

Availability and dissemination of information are crucial factors that determine the ease of joining CARE Liberia urban agriculture programs. Women respondents who were able to join the urban agriculture programs got information from their friends, relatives CARE Liberia officers, community leaders. However, some poor women do not get the information about urban agriculture programs which hinders them from joining the urban agriculture programs of CARE Liberia. This was noted in all the townships where CARE Liberia operates and some of them confirmed that they were interested to join the urban agriculture programs but they did not get information. After a focus group discussion in Congo town some women wanted me to take them to CARE Liberia offices so that they could be included into urban agriculture programs. Since they were eager to be taken to the offices of CARE Liberia it proved to me that they had the interest to join but had no information.

For women in urban agriculture programs of CARE Liberia they are able to get support in form of inputs. For instance, they get cutters, seedlings, pesticides and fertilizers. These inputs help them to carry out urban agriculture and their food security is stimulated unlike women who are not in the programs. This was evident when I was doing field work and CARE Liberia officials took inputs for instance seeds to women in a community of Paynesville. Women in urban agriculture programs confirmed to me that the inputs they get have been of importance in improving yields in their gardens.

Urban agriculture programs also have helped in building social cohesion through cooperation in groups. This process of bringing people together to cooperate and work together, irrespective of the religious affiliations and ethnic origin can be one of the ways for reconciliation and peace building. This research showed that in the area of study, ethnicity is not affecting peace building. For instance in urban agriculture programs women of different ethnic groups are cooperating peacefully. In addition it helps in building networks among women involved in urban agriculture. Through these networks women can get access to other resources, such as information about the market. Urban agriculture programs are important because, in bringing women together, they can participate and develop their capacities by also learning from one another in finding solutions to food security problems. The respondents themselves confirmed that meeting new people is helpful in accessing resources like information and knowledge. During meetings women are able to learn to bring up problem solving mechanisms in a more cooperative way. Based on the views of women in urban agriculture programs it was evident that women are

cooperating to solve some of the problems they face in their communities. Although their capacity is limited they have embarked on working in groups to improve their living conditions through urban agriculture.

In urban agriculture program meetings, I observed that women can speak freely though some are more eloquent than others. Their freedom of expression is not infringed on by CARE Liberia officials. In addition I observed that they are free to ask questions they want to know about.

As was earlier noted in the findings I concur with the idea that urban agriculture programs are important in peace building. However, one cannot neglect the fact that urban agriculture programs are being viewed by women not in programs as a source of social exclusion. This is creating disharmony and mistrust towards local leaders, CARE Liberia officials and their friends in urban agriculture programs who do not pass on information to their neighbors. This is evident because some women not in programs were open to tell me that they hate CARE Liberia and their neighbors who are in the programs since they do not pass on information to other poor and vulnerable women. This will become an obstacle to peace building in these communities with other women who are included in the programs. In addition, the hatred and bias towards CARE Liberia will hinder the progress of its projects in these areas. In addition, it is hypothesized that the continuous exclusion of some poor women from urban agriculture programs will increase inequalities among the poor which will lead to theft and conflicts.

Urban agriculture programs help in poverty reduction strategies. In this research, it is confirmed that urban agriculture programs provides employment to some poor women. Once people are occupied this can help in peace building. This is supported by the fact that in the conversations I had with some women they told me that provision of employment can be one of the ways to avoid the past wars in Liberia. This implies that since poverty was among the major causes of Liberian conflict, urban agriculture is helping in peace building. However, due to land insecurity in Greater Monrovia it becomes an obstacle to sustainable urban agriculture. An important area of consideration for CARE Liberia to continue their peace building initiatives and giving the people sustainable livelihoods will be to focus on supporting women who are willing to go back to their villages where they have land rather than focusing on developing urban agriculture only. This was confirmed by the fact that all respondents prefer going back to their villages where they have land security.

The beneficiaries of urban agriculture programs are vulnerable poor women and men. Though the beneficiaries of CARE Liberia are vulnerable and poor there are other people in the community who fall in the same categories or worse conditions but they do not get the

chance to join urban agriculture programs. Though a few women not in programs do other informal jobs like building, selling soft drinks they are interested in urban agriculture. If urban agriculture is optimized it can be one of the ways to enhance the wellbeing of people, guarantee sustainable livelihoods and food security for the people.

7.2. Recommendations to CARE Liberia and respondents

- CARE Liberia should always follow up and monitor if women not in urban agriculture programs get information concerning urban agriculture programs. In this research it was found that some people are interested in urban agriculture programs but they do not get information. In order to reach more people, CARE Liberia might first involve all community leaders to make information diffusion easier. This is because some community leaders do not know about CARE Liberia and its programs.
- CARE Liberia should also work on expanding their relationship with the government in order to address the issue of access and control of resources which limits the capacity of the people in participating effectively in urban agriculture.
- It will also be important if CARE Liberia can also work in the area of a possible return of some of the vulnerable women to the villages where they can have access to land resources.
- Women in urban agriculture programs should be encouraged to always pass on information to other people in the communities that can benefit from the CARE programs.
- Women without land in the city can be encouraged to go back to their villages since land insecurity in the city is too rampant yet they are willing to go back.
- Further study should be carried out on how urban agriculture programs can be a source of social exclusion in Monrovia.
- Further study should also focus on how effective is community participation in accessing resources from non-governmental organizations/ A case study of Greater Monrovia.
- CARE Liberia should do a lot more to strengthen the capacities of the beneficiaries of urban agriculture programs to be more participative and to be more in charge of decision making. This is deemed important in helping to avoid the dependency syndrome on CARE Liberia. Women if they continue to wait for CARE Liberia to provide all the inputs without playing a role it will put them in a position of being more of dependants rather than independent.

ANNEXE 1: Questions I asked the respondents

A. Individual status

1. If I may ask what is your name?

.....
.....

2. Sex

Female Male

3. What is your age?

10-20 20-30 30-40 40-50 50-60 60-70 70-80 80-90 90-100

.....
.....

4. What is your ethnic group?

.....
.....

5. What is your education level?

None Nursery Primary High school University

6. Can you tell me who is part of your household?

.....
.....

7. Who is the head of the household?

Father Mother Grand mother Grand father Child Other

8. What is your current occupation?

.....
.....

9. Did you do something else before?

.....
.....

1) Questions for everybody

a- Where do you get food?

b- Any other source of food?

c-What challenges do you face in getting food?

d-Any conflicts concerning food?

e-How do you deal with them?

f-How do other people in other ethnicities deal with them?

g-What can be done to overcome them?

h-Could you tell me more about food?

-Do you have communal festivals or activities? Such as.....

- i) Do you go there?
- ii) What is it that you (do not) like to go there? (if it is a no)
- iii) What do you do there?(If yes)
- iv) Who do you meet and mingle with when you are there?
- v) Are you invited by people to join them
- vi) Who are they; are they related to you (family, kin, ethnicity, church)
- vii) What about local leaders?
- viii) Other ethnic groups?

COOPERATION

- ix) Do you cooperate with other people?
- x) Can you give some examples in which you cooperate with others?
- xi) With whom do you cooperate
- xii) Who are they; are they related to you (family, kin, neighbors, ethnicity, church)
- xiii) What about other ethnicities?
- xiv) How different is this from doing it all on your own?
- xv) How does it support you?
- xvi) Are there any problems you face? or conflicts.....
- xvii) Can you give me an example?
- xviii) How do you try to deal with that?
- xix) How do you see other people deal with that?
- xx) Is there anything you think could help you out there?
- xxi) Can you give me an example?

ACCESS TO INFORMATION

- xxii) Do you have access to information
- xxiii) How are other women in another ethnicity involved?
- xxiv) How are men involved?
- xxv) How are men in another ethnicity involved?
- xxvi) Have you observed any conflict over information resources?
- xxvii) Any other challenges?
- xxviii) What can be done better for you to get access to information?

HOUSEHOLD

- 1) Who does what in the household?
- 2) Who does the marketing in your household?

- 3) Have you witnessed misunderstandings in dividing work in the household?
- 4) How do you solve such misunderstandings?
- 5) How do other households \ neighbors deal with such misunderstandings?
- 6) How does it work in another ethnicity?
- 7) What can be done better?

8) Questions for people who do urban Agriculture and are in program

LAND

- (1) Please tell me a bit more about the land you can use of?
- (2) Is it your land?
- (3) How did you gain the use of this land?
- (4) Can you be sure you can use the land for a longer period?
- (5) Please explain a bit more?
- (6) Do you think anyone can take your land?
- (7) Are parts of the land in hands of your family?
- (8) What are the rules for getting use of land that is in the hands of your family;
- (9) Who decides in your family who can use what land?
- (10) Are there any persons you rely on help you securing your use of the land you cultivate now
- (11) Did you or will you inherit land?
- (12) Could you tell me more?
- (13) Is it the same in another ethnic group?
- (14) Do you know about any conflicts concerning the control over land for urban agriculture?

SEEDS

- (15) Where do you get seeds?

FERTILIZERS

- (16) What about fertilizer?

PROGRAM

- (17) How many were you feeding before joining the program?
- (18) What is the program about?
- (19) How are you profiting from the program?

- (20) Does the program reach out to people it is intended for?
- (21) Do you think that the program is fair?
- (22) Can you give me an example....

- (23) Any conflicts in urban agriculture programs?
- (24) What do you think the program can do better to support you?

PRACTICES

- (25) Do all ethnicities share the same agricultural practices?

ANIMALS

- (26) Do you rear some animals? Which? How many?
 - ii) Where do you keep them?
 - iii) Feed them?
 - iv) Health care for them?
 - v) What problems do you face with rearing the animals?
 - vi) Is it the same among other ethnicities?
 - vii) How do you deal with them?

MEETING PLACES

- 28. When do you meet others involved in urban agriculture? + communal activities or festivals
 - viii) Please tell me more about it.....
 - ix) Who do you meet there mostly?
 - x) Do you see the same people on other occasions?
 - xi) Who do you meet there mostly?
 - xii) Who speaks most on such venues?(speaker, instructors, sales (wo)men, decision making gatherings, try to attend several ones if possible
 - xiii) Can you go somewhere if you have complaints or ideas for improvement?
 - xiv) Is it the same among all women in urban agriculture?
 - xv) Did you ever go there (where you can take your complaints)? Please tell me more about..
- 29. Did joining the urban agriculture program help you to bring about change otherwise than what you mentioned before?
- 30. Why do you think some people do not join the program?

9) Questions for people who do urban Agriculture not in program

LAND

- 1. Please tell me about land you can use of
- 2. How did you gain the use of this land?

3. Do you think anyone can take your land?
4. Do you think you can use this land for a longer period?
5. Do you think anyone can take your land?
6. Are parts of the land in hands of your family?
7. What are the rules for getting use of land that is in the hands of your family?
8. Who decides in your family who can use what land?
9. Are there any persons you rely on help you securing your use of the land you cultivate now?
10. Did you or will you inherit land?
11. Could you tell me more?
12. Is the same in another ethnic group?
13. Do you know about any conflicts concerning the control over land for urban agriculture?

SEEDS

14. Where do you get seeds?
15. What about other inputs?(fertilizers, credit, pesticides, credit)
16. What obstacles do you face?
17. Do you see others with the same obstacles?
18. How do you deal with them?
19. How do other people deal with them?

ANIMALS

20. Do you rear some animals? Which? How many?

- i) Keep them?
- ii) Feed them?
- iii) Health care for them?
- iv) What problems do you face with rearing the animals?
- v) Is it the same among other ethnicities?
- vi) How do you deal with them?

21. Are there any other problems?

Please give me an example?

- i) Do your friends meet the same problems? Who are these friends?
- ii) How do they deal with such problems?
- iii) And how do you deal with them yourself?
- iv) Is there any other problem you want to mention?
- v) Do you see others who do not have the same problems?
- vi) How are their problems different?
- vii) How do they solve them?

- viii) Do you see others who do not have any of the mentioned problems?
 - ix) What might be the reason for that?
 - x) Can you think of any support that can help resolve this?
 - xi) How do you think you can stimulate that?
22. Has urban agriculture made more improvements to your household compared to your past occupation (s)?
23. Why are you not in the program?
24. Do you have any question or suggestion about what we have discussed?

4) Questions for people who do not do urban agriculture

- a) Why do you not do urban agriculture?
- b) Are you in other programs?
- c) Would you like to join urban agriculture?
- d) Do you think it is helpful?
- e) What challenges make you worried about urban agriculture?
- f) Any suggestion or comment on urban agriculture

Annex 2: Problems faced by women urban agriculturalists

Women practicing urban agriculture like men who are also involved in urban agriculture face enormous problems which culminate poor yields and unsustainable agriculture livelihood. The following are the major problems they face;

- (a) Land tenure problems
- (b) Pests
- (c) Lack of market for their products
- (d) Competition with large scale farmers and importers
- (e) Soaring prices on the market
- (f) Lack of inputs
- (g) Theft
- (h) Lack of government support and policies that do not favor urban agriculturalists
- (i) Lack of access to information about agricultural programs
- (j) Soil depletion in some areas due to the fact that crops are grown in the same place for several years
- (k) Lack of other sources of income \livelihood
- (l) Lack of access to credit institutions and other credit facilities
- (m) Lack of good agricultural methods in preventing soil erosion most especially in swampy areas
- (n) Lack of preservatives
- (o) Lack of electricity
- (p) People who are renting land are worried because they do not feel secure with their crops
- (q) Transportation problems most especially to those who are not in the programs
- (r) lack the capacity to go to hospitals and to take children to school
- (s) Housing problems
- (t) People who are left out of the program it might bring hatred with those who are in the program. Some people have jealous when they are left out.
- (u) Un employment
- (v) Food prices are too high
- (w)Un regulated market

Annex 3: Photos I took on the field



Above: A man not in any urban agriculture program protecting his field of rice from being encroached by birds (Lakpazee community)



Above: After a workshop with some of the members of a saving and loan scheme supported by CARE Liberia (Congo town)



Above: A woman not in any urban agriculture program (Fiamah community)



Above: A woman in CARE Liberia urban agricultural program

Annex 4: Map of Liberia and its neighboring countries



22

²² Map got from www.mapsofworld.com/Liberia/Political map

References

- BAILKEY, M. & NASR, J. 1999. From brownfields to greenfields: Producing food in North American cities. *Community Food Security News*. Fall, 2000, 6.
- BARRETT, C. B. 2010. Measuring food insecurity. *Science*, 327, 825-828.
- BISHOP, C. & HILHORST, D. 2010. Policy in Practice: Effects on Food Security of Safety Net and Resettlement Policy Implementation in Sekota Woreda, Amhara Region of Ethiopia. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, 48, 181-202.
- BON, H., PARROT, L. & MOUSTIER, P. 2009. Sustainable Urban Agriculture in Developing Countries: A review. *Sustainable Agriculture*, 6, 619-633.
- BOUTROS-GHALI, B. & NATIONS, U. 1992. An agenda for peace. New York, UN.
- CARE 2009. Urban/Peri-urban Agriculture Project: Annual Report: CARE.
- CHAMBERS, R. & CONWAY, G. 1992. Sustainable rural livelihoods: practical concepts for the 21st century. *IDS Discussion Paper 296*. Brighton: Institute of Development Studies.
- CIDA. 2012. *Increasing Food Security, CIDA's Food Security Strategy* [Online]. Canadian International Development Agency. Available: <http://www.acdi-cida.gc.ca/index.htm> [Accessed 6 April 2012].
- DENZIN, N. K. & LINCOLN, Y. S. 2000. *Handbook of qualitative research*, Thousand Oaks, Sage.
- DURKHEIM, E. 1981 (1st ed. 1897). *Le suicide. Étude sociologique*, Paris, Puf.
- FLYNN-DAPAAH, K. 2002. *Land negotiations and tenure relationships: accessing land for urban and peri-urban agriculture in sub-Saharan Africa*, Ottawa, IDRC.
- FOEKEN, D. W. J. & MBOGANIE-MWANGI, A. 1998. *Farming in the City of Nairobi*, Leiden, Afrika-Studiecentrum.
- FOSTER, S. R. 2006. City as an Ecological Space: Social Capital and Urban Land Use, *The Notre Dame L. Rev.*, 82, 527.
- GALTUNG, J. 1976. *Peace, War, and Defence—Essays in Peace Research*, Copenhagen, Christian Ejlertsen.
- GREEN, J. & THOROGOOD, N. 2009. *Qualitative methods for health research*, London, Sage Publications Ltd.
- HAMMERSLEY, M. & ATKINSON, P. 2007. *Ethnography: Principles in practice*, London, Taylor & Francis.
- HAMPWAYE, G. N., E. AND INGOMBE, L. 2009. *The role of urban agriculture in addressing household poverty and food security: the case of Zambia*, Unpublished.
- HOVORKA, A., DE ZEEUW, H. & NJENGA, M. 2009. *Women Feeding Cities: Mainstreaming gender in urban agriculture and food security*, London, Practical Action Pub.
- ICAF 2010. Liberia Interagency Conflict Assessment Framework. *Unpublished Report*. George Mason University.
- JENSON, J. 1998. *Mapping Social Cohesion: The State of Canadian Research*, Ottawa, Family Network, CPRN.
- KRANTZ, L. 2001. The Sustainable Livelihood Approach to Poverty Reduction: An Introduction. Stockholm: Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency.
- KRISTIN VAN DER LEEST, D. K., LAURIE MÉCRÉANT 2010. A Guidance for Integrating Peacebuilding into Development. *IFP Capacity Building and Training cluster*. Unpublished.

- KRUEGER, R. A. 1988. *Focus Groups: a Practical Guide for Applied Research*, Newbury Park, Sage.
- KVALE, S. 1996. *InterViews. An introduction to qualitative research writing*, Thousand Oaks, Sage Publications.
- LIN, N., COOK, K. S. & BURT, R. S. 2001. *Social capital: theory and research*, New York, Aldine de Gruyter.
- MAXWELL, S. 1996. Food security: a post-modern perspective. *Food policy*, 21, 155-170.
- MUDIMU, G. D. 1997. Urban agricultural activities and women's strategies in sustaining family livelihoods in Harare, Zimbabwe. *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography*, 17, 179-194.
- NIBL 2008. *Water for Agriculture and Energy in Africa: the Challenges of Climate Change*, Sirte, Unpublished.
- NUGENT, R. 2000. The impact of urban agriculture on the household and local economies. In: BAKKER, N., DUBBELING, M., GÜNDEL, S., SABEL-KOSCHELLA, U. & ZEEUW, H. D. (eds.) *Growing cities, growing food: Urban agriculture on the policy agenda*. Feldafing: Food and Agriculture Development Centre.
- OHMAN, A. 2005. Qualitative methodology for rehabilitation research. *Journal of rehabilitation medicine*, 37, 273-280.
- OSHAUG, A. 1994. Nutrition security in Norway? A situation analysis. *Scandinavian Journal of Nutrition*, Volume 38, 1-68.
- PARIS, R. 2002. International peacebuilding and the 'mission civilisatrice'. *Review of international studies*, 28, 637-656.
- PLATTEAU, J. P. 2004. Monitoring Elite Capture in Community-Driven Development. *Development and Change*, 35, 223-246.
- PORTER, E. 2003. Women, political decision-making, and peace-building. *Global Change, Peace & Security*, 15, 245-262.
- RIBOT, J. C. & PELUSO, N. L. 2003. A Theory of Access. *Rural sociology*, 68, 153-181.
- RUEL, M. T., GARRETT, J. L., MORRIS, S. S., MAXWELL, D., OSHAUG, A., ENGLE, P., MENON, P., SLACK, A. & HADDAD, L. 1998. Urban challenges to food and nutrition security: A review of food security, health, and caregiving in the cities. *FCND Discussion Paper No 51*. Washington: Citeseer.
- SCOONES, I. 2009. Livelihoods perspectives and rural development. *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, 36, 171-196.
- SMIT, J. & NASR, J. 1992. Urban agriculture for sustainable cities: using wastes and idle land and water bodies as resources. *Environment and Urbanization*, 4, 141-152.
- SWISS, S., JENNINGS, P. J., ARYEE, G. V., BROWN, G. H., JAPPAH-SAMUKAI, R. M., KAMARA, M. S., SCHAACK, R. D. H. & TURAY-KANNEH, R. S. 1998. Violence against women during the Liberian civil conflict. *JAMA: The Journal of the American Medical Association*, 279, 625-629.
- TOLLENS, E. 2003. Poverty and Livelihood Entitlement, How it Relates to Agriculture. *Working Paper No 81*. Department of Agricultural and Environmental Economics, Katholieke Universiteit Leuven.
- TSCHIRGI, N. & PROGRAM, I. P. A. S.-D. N. 2004. *Post-conflict peacebuilding revisited: achievements, limitations, challenges*, New York, International Peace Academy.
- UNRUH, J. D. 2009. Land rights in postwar Liberia: the volatile part of the peace process. *Land Use Policy*, 26, 425-433.

- VON BRAUN, J. 1992. *Improving food security of the poor: Concept, policy, and programs*, Washington, Intl Food Policy Research Inst.
- WAAL, A. 1991. *Emergency food security in Western Sudan: what is it for?*, London, Intermediated Technology Publications.
- WALCH, C. 2010. *Climate change, Disaster Risk Reduction and Peace-Building: Analysing the linkages and offering suggestions*, Monrovia, Unpublished.
- WOOLCOCK, M. 1998. Social capital and economic development: Toward a theoretical synthesis and policy framework. *Theory and society*, 27, 151-208.
- ZEZZA, A. & TASCIOTTI, L. 2010. Urban agriculture, poverty, and food security: Empirical evidence from a sample of developing countries. *Food policy*, 35, 265-273.