

Return Migration to Sierra Leone

Monitoring the Embeddedness of Returnees

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Abstract

This study examines the embeddedness of Sierra Leonean returnees, who return involuntary from Western countries. Presently little is known about involuntary return to Sierra Leone. By examining this important issue, I clarify how involuntary returnees re-build their lives in their country of origin.

The economic, social networks and psycho-social embeddedness of Sierra Leoneans is studied, together with the categorized influencing factors of individual characteristics, the migration cycle and (return) assistance. I used two major research strategies: (1) quantitative analysis of data for which a questionnaire was executed and (2) qualitative analysis of in-depth interviews.

This report challenges the idea, that return migration is more than simply going home and, that re-building a sustainable life in Sierra Leone takes time and is problematic. Returnees struggle to find employment and therefore proper housing, education and medical care are financially challenging. Returnees also experience trauma, are stigmatized by the society and social network ties are weak. As a result of the poor embeddedness, returnees do not see any other possibilities than to migrate again.

For Sierra Leoneans, the events during the different stages of the migration cycle and individual characteristics, were the most influencing factors on embedding. The role of assistance was of much less influence, but then again, assistance from relatives and friends was limited and the assistance from organisations was concentrated on physical return, instead of re-embedding.

The research project is coordinated by Marieke van Houte, country reports are co-coordinated by Mireille de Koning.

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Map of Sierra Leone



Surface area: 71,740 km²
Capital: Freetown
Population: 5.5 million (2005)
Ethnic groups: Temne (30%), Mende (30%), Krio (2%), other (38%)
Religions: Muslim (60%), Christian (30%), other (10%)
Languages: English, Krio, Mende, Temne

Polity: Republic
Head of state: Ernest Bai Koroma
Major Political Parties: Sierra Leone Peoples Party (SLPP); All Peoples Congress (APC); People's Movement for Democratic Change (PMDC)

Source: United Nations, 2005; World Development Indicators database 2007

List of Abbreviations

AFRC	Armed Forced Ruling Council
APC	All People's Congress
CBS	Centraal bureau voor de statistiek (Central Bureau for Statistics)
CDF	Civil Defence Forces
ECOWAS/	
ECOMOG	The Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
IDP	Internal Displaced Person(s)
IND	Immigratie- en Naturalisatie Dienst
IOM	International Organization for Migration
NGO	Non-Gouvernementele Organisatie
NPRC	National Provisional Ruling Council
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SCSL	Special Court Sierra Leone
SLA	Sierra Leone People's Party
TRC	Truth and reconciliation Commission (Sierra Leone)
UMA	Unaccompanied Minor Asylum seeker
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UK	United Kingdom

1 Introduction¹

In Europe, Sierra Leone became known for its civil war, which lasted from 1991 until 2002. The impact and results of this war were tremendous. During the war horrible crimes were committed, and many people died or suffered. Over a million Sierra Leoneans became internally displaced and approximately 350.000 fled to foreign countries. Figures estimated that of this amount, 15.000 Sierra Leoneans fled to western countries. Although the war officially ended in 2002, extremely poor economic, social and political conditions are still present in Sierra Leone, which has as a result that Sierra Leoneans still try to migrate to western countries.

Since 2002 all Internally Displaced People (IDP) and most regional refugees returned to all districts in Sierra Leone (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre, 2004). Due to the return policy in western countries, many Sierra Leonean nationals, former refugees, rejected asylum seekers and irregular immigrants, also had to return or were deported to their country of origin.

Going back to Sierra Leone is not simply going home for people who lived up to ten years in a western country. The country, the home society and the migrant changed during these years, and returnees, who go back to Sierra Leone, have to start up a new life again. How will these Sierra Leonean returnees start up their life and become re-embedded in a post-conflict society, which socio-economic conditions are very poor? Which personal and contextual factors are influencing the returnees' ability to re-embed? What is the role of return assistance in the re-embeddedness process?

This study is part of a larger research that was conducted by the Radboud University Nijmegen in cooperation with the University of Amsterdam and was commissioned and financed by Bureau Maatwerk bij Terugkeer (The Mediation Agency for Return, a branch of the developmental organization Cordaid). In an attempt to support the migrants who face the increasingly restrictive asylum policies of Western European states that are focused on return, initiatives like the Mediation Agency, assist returning migrants to try to overcome the obstacles they face upon return. By doing so, they aim to contribute to sustainable return that might even lead to development in the home country. The question remains however, if and under which circumstances, the return of involuntary returning migrants can be sustainable.

The question raised by the Mediation Agency for Return was, whether return assistance given to former refugees, rejected asylum seeker and irregular migrants was/is effective and how this assistance could be improved. Approaching this question from a broader perspective, the following research question was developed: *Which factors influence the process of re-embeddedness of involuntary returning ex-refugees, rejected asylum seekers and irregular migrants and what is the role of assistance herein?*

Where a forced migrant is obliged to return to his/her country of origin, and does so without being forcefully expelled, this is generally referred to by policy makers and NGOs as 'voluntary return' However, it can be argued that return can never be voluntary when there is no plausible (legal) alternative. In this study, return out of reasons, other than a personal desire to do so, is conceived of as involuntary. In practice, this usually means that any returnee, not possessing a permanent permit, is regarded as having returned involuntary.

¹ This study is part of a six-country monitoring study conducted by the University of Amsterdam and Radboud University Nijmegen, coordinated by Marieke van Houte and Mireille de Koning. I would like to acknowledge all Sierra Leonean returnees, the people from Christian Brothers, ABC Development and IOM Freetown, and Fizo, Mamoed and Adimka, who helped me during this research. I also like to acknowledge the help received from Luuk van Kempen (CIDIN) and Theo van der Weegen (Research-Technical Support Group (RTOG) for the SPSS analysis, and Marieke van Houte for conducting several interviews in Sierra Leone in order to gain insight into the broader country context in which return takes place.

To conceive of return as a process, and in order not to be normative about the way a returnee should behave upon return, sustainable re(turn) migration was labelled as a process of mixed embeddedness, rather than reintegration. Embeddedness entails a multidimensional concept which refers to an individual finding his/her own position in society and feeling a sense of belonging to, and participating in, that society. Embeddedness consists of three *dimensions*:

Economic embeddedness is about building a sustainable livelihood; *Social networks* embeddedness is important to make use of its material and emotional benefits of social contacts; *Psychosocial* embeddedness is important to construct one's identity and feeling at home and safe, as well as psychological wellbeing. With a research where embeddedness is examined, it is important to keep in mind that embeddedness takes place within a country's specific political, economical and social-institutional context. This context can be seen as an opportunity structure for returnees, which can contribute to the extent in which a returnee can re-embed in the country.

In this report the embeddedness process of Sierra Leonean returnees and factors of influence on this process are being discussed in the analytic chapters. After this introduction, this report starts with a general context of Sierra Leone, concerning the history, migration profile and the current economic, political and social conditions. Then the methodological chapter is given. After these first two chapters the empirical material will be presented, and in the final chapter, conclusions and recommendations will be presented.

2 Sierra Leone

In this chapter a general overview of the context of Sierra Leone will be discussed. In the first paragraph will contain a migration profile of Sierra Leone. In the last paragraph the current socio-economic, political and cultural situation will be explained.

2.1 Migration profile of Sierra Leone

2.1.1 Civil war in Sierra Leone

In Sierra Leone's recent history, the war has caused Sierra Leoneans to emigrate. Many years of bad governance, corruption and denial of human rights led to the start of the conflict that lasted for more than ten years. (TRC 3A 2004, 15- 25).

The civil war in Sierra Leone started on March 23, 1991 when the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) invaded the eastern (Kailahun District) and southern (Pujehun District) parts of Sierra Leone. A year later the scope of the combat was expanded into every area of Sierra Leone, and many different parties were fighting. In May 1997, Freetown was attacked for the first time, but soon the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOWAS/ ECOMOG) led an intervention. However, the guerrilla warfare continued and on January 6, 1999 the rebel forces entered Freetown with 'Operation No Living Thing' and a massacre took place among the civilians. It was only on January 18, 2002 that president Kabbah officially declared the end of the civil war (TRC 3A 2004, 88-108; Miller, Ladouceur & Dugal 2006, 6-10).

Diamonds played an immense role in the financing of the war. All armed groups were fighting, irrespective of ethnicity or religion, to get control of these profitable diamonds (TRC 3A 2004, 35-39). During the war horrible crimes were committed whereby several human rights were violated. All of the armed forces were guilty to crimes such as perpetrated abduction, forced recruitment, sexual slavery and forced human labour. Especially women and children suffered a lot; children and youths were abducted, drugged and forced to be fighting machines in the war; women were forced to be sex slaves and/or forced into domestic labour (TRC 3A 2004, 470). To sentence the people who were guilty of war crimes during the civil war a Special Court (SCSL) was installed in 2002. At the same time a Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established, which main task was to record the experiences of the war (Ibid., 35-39).

2.1.2 Recent migration flows from Sierra Leone

Due to the war, over a million Sierra Leoneans became internally displaced and approximately 350,000 people fled to foreign countries. Most of them went to neighbouring countries such as Guinea, Liberia, and regional countries such as The Gambia, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Mali and Nigeria. A relatively small number of Sierra Leonean refugees fled to Europe and North America. It is not known how many Sierra Leoneans exactly went overseas, there only are estimations, which are varying from 5,000 up to 15,000. According to UNHCR, the UK, Germany, France and the Netherlands had the most asylum applications from Sierra Leone in Europe (IOM Freetown, interview 27 august 2007; UNHCR 1998 & 2007; GOSL-EC 2005b annex 8 migration profile, 15).

In table 2.1 the asylum application of Sierra Leoneans in the Netherlands is shown. Remarkable is that there are more men than women who applied for asylum and that these applicants were mainly Unaccompanied Minor Asylum seekers (UMA's). Most of the asylum applications in the Netherlands were submitted between 2000 and 2002. After 2002, when the

conflict was officially ended, there remains an influx of asylum seekers in the Netherlands. This is due to more and more economic migrants that are coming to western countries. They flee from the post-conflict economic crisis that the country is in.

Table 2.1 Sierra Leonean asylum applications in the Netherlands

Year	Total	Male	Female	Year	Total	Male	Female
1995	71	70	1	2000	733	593	140
1996	147	120	27	2001	1,521	1,229	292
1997	152	117	35	2002	1,920	1,553	367
1998	201	167	34	2003	585	435	150
1999	400	326	74	2004	99	75	24

Source: statline-Central Bureau of Statistics (the Netherlands)

Years of political and economic refugee outflows have created a ‘culture of migration’. This means that migration still happens on a large scale, at which people from Sierra Leone migrate to European or other Western countries. In Sierra Leone, the perception is that Europe is the land of milk and honey. They imagine that the living conditions are excellent and it is very easy to work and to make money. This image makes people long for a life in Europe, like Lansana:

In Africa we have hardship, it is not easy to have no money. We see our friends and brother who go there [Europe]. We see what they did for themselves and their families also. They build a house for their parents, send money and vehicles. This inspires me to go overseas, to do as my companions did. (Lansana², 28, 16 October 2007)

Because there is a lack of official channels, which regulate this kind of economic migration, people are migrating illegally. This means that people sell their belongings and ask friends and family members for sponsor money, because they will need approximately 4,000 US\$ to pay for their way to Europe. Migrating to Europe, however, is not without obstacles, due to the restrictive immigration policies of Western nations.

2.1.3 Return migration

In 2002 the war in Sierra Leone was officially over, and by that time the IDP’s who stayed in Internally Displaced Camps near Freetown were returned safely to all districts in Sierra Leone (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre 2004). Most regional refugees returned between 2002 and 2004. This voluntarily repatriation process was coordinated by the UNHCR and in total 271,991 people were voluntary repatriated, from which 179,374 with direct help from the UNHCR. The UNHCR, bilateral donors and NGOs also gave reintegration assistance to these returnees. Returnees received help with food, clothing and other material needs. In December 2004 the UNHCR repatriation of refugees, from neighbouring countries and assistance with the reintegration process officially came to an end (Algemeen Ambtsbericht Sierra Leone 2006, 59-60).

Sierra Leoneans, who applied for asylum in a western country, are in many cases obligated to return when their asylum procedure is finished. They can either return independently, or face forced return (deportation). The exact number of independent returnees and deportees from western countries is unknown. Many Sierra Leonean nationals in the Netherlands are obliged to return due to the abolition of the categorical protection of Sierra Leone. This categorical protection, which came into effect in 2001, means that as soon as the situation in the country of origin of the asylum seekers is stable again, people should return.

² This report uses pseudonyms to protect the respondents’ privacy

In other countries such as Belgium, Denmark and the UK all asylum requests are judged on an individual basis, and they consider return for rejected Sierra Leonean reasonable (Ibid., 61-62).

After return most western returnees stay and live in Freetown. In Freetown there are more economic opportunities and the big city also offers more anonymity to returnees, like Kanei, who was originally from the south but lives in Freetown now: 'The place where I was born, you will see it as a bush. There are no houses. So I decided to live in Freetown. This is the only place where I get connections, where I get assistance in terms of education and I also could work here' (Kanei, 26, 4 October 2007).

Returnees from western countries are not well perceived by the non-migrant population in Sierra Leone. These people have high expectations of someone who went to Europe, because they have the image that Europe is a place of milk and honey. The longer returnees stayed in Europe, the higher these expectations were. Most people therefore expect that, when someone comes back from a western country, they bring a lot of money. However, a rejected and returned asylum seeker in most cases has little or no money at all and therefore cannot live up to these high expectations. If they try to explain their problems, the non-migration population people do not understand or just do not believe the returnees. Returnees are seen by the society as 'foolish' that they came back, and therefore people 'provoke' them. Even worse, when people are deported, they are seen as criminals, because they do not see any other reason why someone would be brought back by policemen with handcuffs on, if he did not commit a crime.

2.1.4 Return-assistance in Sierra Leone

Sierra Leonean who return independent, can receive assistance from diverse organisations in the host country as well in Sierra Leone. In most host countries IOM is facilitating the physical return for Sierra Leoneans, who were denied asylum in western countries and returned voluntarily. Besides this, there are three organisations in Sierra Leone involved in re-integration assistance for returnees. IOM Freetown is facilitating the reintegration of the Sierra Leonean since 2003. IOM Freetown executes the order and policy of each different host country and therefore the kind of reintegration assistance and the budget differs for each returnee. For Switzerland a special program named Regional IOM employment assistance services (EAS) was developed, with which eight Sierra Leonean could return. This program stopped in 2006, because no Sierra Leoneans from Switzerland returned. The United Kingdom Department of Home Affairs also set up a program for denied asylum seekers, voluntary returnees could apply for a reintegration micro project of their choice. Approximately 25 Sierra Leonean received assistance with this UK program. IOM the Netherlands is facilitating voluntary return through airport assistance and facilitating housing for up to two weeks in a guest house. The budget for IOM the Netherlands has a maximum of €500 per returnee (IOM Freetown, interview 28 august 2007; GOSL-EC, 2005b annex 8 migration profile). Besides IOM, there are just a two NGOs in Sierra Leone, which are working with returnees from western countries, namely ABC development and Christian Brothers, which both have Dutch partners. The assistance that is offered by NGOs varies per returnee. There is (temporarily) provision of lodging, support on starting a business or finding employment, help on locating family members and cash money or a loan.

2.2 Socio-economic, cultural and political situation in Sierra Leone

Before the war, Sierra Leone was a country of bad governance, corruption and had a poor economy. Activities related to the war had worsened the situation and the economic and

social infrastructure of Sierra Leone suffered tremendous damage. Although the war of guns has come to an end and Sierra Leone is relatively stable, the war on poverty is still on. In this paragraph the current socio-economic, cultural and political situation in Sierra Leone will be discussed.

2.2.1 Socio-economic situation in Sierra Leone

According to the UNDP Human Development Index 2006, Sierra Leone is the penultimate poorest country of the world. Sierra Leone development indicators, which are shown in table, illustrate the poor economic situation. The causes for the poor economic situation are high levels of unemployment, high debt burden, poor growth performance and the lack of access to basic needs.

70% of the Sierra Leoneans live below the poverty line, most of which the most live in rural areas and in semi-urban areas. The unemployment rate in Sierra Leone is estimated at 80% (World Bank, 2006; World Bank, 2007: 11). Therefore it is very difficult to find employment, which gives a living wage; the government does not create enough employment and the private sector is too weak to create jobs. The bad state of roads and electricity are a barrier for new (foreign) investors and with that for the development of Sierra Leone. Besides that, there is a lot of corruption and (political) connections are necessary to find employment. Starting your own business is very difficult due to high costs and a lot of competition. Because it is not easy to get a job, many Sierra Leonean end up doing small jobs, such as carrying load, making and selling charcoal or selling small product along the side of the roads. Life in the rural areas is not easy as well, most people work in the agricultural sector, which mainly consists off subsistence agriculture. Or people work in the mining (diamond) sector, which is owned by non-Sierra Leonean nationals. In that manner, profit from the mining activities flows directly out of the country (I-PRSP 2001; SL-PRSP 2005; Human Development Report 2006; GoSL-EC 2005, 9-11).

As became clear, there are not many income generating activities in Sierra Leone. That is why Sierra Leone is highly relying on remittances. Migration is thus used as a household/family strategy, in which one family member, in most cases the oldest son, is migrating to Europe to work there and send back remittances.

Not only the economic indicators but, as is showed in table 2.2, also the social indicators are bad. Life expectancy is with an average of 40.6 years very low due to the poor health conditions. Merely 57% of the whole population has sustainable access to improved water sources, 34% has access to improved sanitation and 50% of the population is undernourished. Furthermore, lack of primary health care against diseases, such as malaria and tuberculoses, is causing much of the deaths in Sierra Leone (HDR, 2006; GoSL-EC 2005, 12). Although the Sierra Leonean government's objective is expanding and promoting basic education for al inhabitants, many people are illiterate. The gender inequality in education is clear, as figures show that merely 24.2% of the women are literate in contrast to 46.7 % of the men. There also is a huge gender difference in the number of students that have enrolled in primary, secondary and tertiary levels of education. Where 75% of the men enrolled into education, only 55% of the women have (HDR, 2006; GoSL-EC 2005, 14).

Table 2.2 Sierra Leonean asylum applications in the Netherlands

Human Development Index (2004)	0.335
GDP:	1.2 billion US\$ (2005)
GDP per capita (PPP US\$):	806 (2005)
Inflation, GDP deflator:	13.1% (2005)
Official development assistance received (net disbursements) (US\$ millions)	343.4 (2005)
Official development assistance received	28.8 (2005)

(net disbursements) (% of GDP)	
Foreign direct investment, net inflows (% of GDP)	4.9 (2005)
Life expectancy, total:	41.0 years (2004)
Life expectancy, female:	42.4 years (2004)
Life expectancy, male:	39.6 years (2004)
Adult literacy rate:	34.8% (2005)
Adult literacy rate, female:	24.2% (2005)
Adult literacy rate, male:	46.7% (2005)

Source: World Development Indicators database 2007, Human Development Index 2007/2008

Because of the lack of socio-economic improvement, Sierra Leone is receiving, much assistance from international donors. The donor dependency is 28.8%, in terms of the GDP. The UK has been the top bilateral donor, providing 76 million US\$, and the UK army trained the national army, the International Military Advisory Team (IMAT). The World Bank also is investing in Sierra Leone, especially supporting water and electricity projects. Besides these donors, hundreds of different local and international NGOs are present in Sierra Leone. Their main focus lays on educational and health projects, in which they address marginalized groups such as the disabled, women, children, and former combatants (Human Right Watch 2007, 5).

2.2.2 Political situation in Sierra Leone

The first general elections were held in 1962, right after the independency of 1961. Men and women both had the right to vote. During the civil war several military coups were committed, and various people and parties took over the power. After the civil war Sierra Leone has become a presidential democratic republic, and has a multi-party system. The largest parties are: Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) and All People's Congress (APC); furthermore there are several small parties like Peace and Liberation Party (PLP), Grand Alliance Party (GAP) and Revolutionary United Front Party (RUF). The government has both executive and legislative power, the house of representatives can only exercise the legislative power (SL-PRSP 2005, 1; GOSL-EC 2005, 4-5). In 2002 the United Nations led the first national elections after the civil war and Kabbah was re-elected. On August 11, 2007 new elections were held, which were the first independent elections. After a run-up between SLPP (the ruling party) and APC, opposition candidate Ernest Bai Koroma had 55% of the votes, which means that after 10 years APC is back in power. EU monitors concluded that the elections happened peaceful. Now all hope is that the new president will bring a huge change to Sierra Leone. Hope is especially focused on good governance and challenging corruption, because the corruption under the SLPP government was still widespread in public and private sectors. Other important points of the new government are the fight against unemployment and attracting foreign investors.

2.2.3 Socio-Cultural situation in Sierra Leone

The Sierra Leonean population is estimated around 5.5 million. The official language is English, but the *lingua franca* is Krio. 60% of the population is Muslim and 30% is Christian and Sierra Leone is known for its high tolerance towards religion. There are 18 different ethnical groups from which the Mende and Temne are the largest, each forming 30% of the population. The Mende are the dominating ethnical group in the south and the Temne in the north of Sierra Leone. Besides these main ethnical groups, there are smaller groups: Limba, Krio, Bullom, Fula, Gola, Kissi, Kono, Koranko, Krim, Kru, Loko, Mandingo, Sherbro, Susu, Vai and Yalunka. Ethnicity never was a strong factor in Sierra Leonean society and politics,

but, as the results of the recent elections show, people tend to vote along ethnical lines (Algemeen Ambtsbericht 2006, 5-6).

As stated before, women are known as victims of domestic- and sexual slavery during the war. Although these war related practises came to an end, violence against women still is common. Besides domestic violence, female trafficking and prostitution are major problems for marginalized women. Female genital mutilation also is commonly practiced, due to initiation rites of the Bundu's (female 'secret' societies) (Algemeen Ambtsbericht 2006, 44-49).

In Sierra Leone, many women are head of the household. In many cases, women assumed this role after the war, because their husbands were dead. In some instances women are the head of the household, because they are divorced or separated from their husbands.

Although the constitution of Sierra Leone provides for equal rights for men and women, in practice women are discriminated (UNHCR, 1998). Not only traditional law but also national law is discriminating towards women. Women for example, do not have the same right to inherit property. Nevertheless women are active in local NGOs as well as in politics. However, there are women who occupy high positions, but they are highly outnumbered by men. Furthermore gender inequality becomes clear by the fact that women have less access to education, employment, health care and social freedom in comparison with their male counterparts (Algemeen Ambtsbericht 2006, 44-49).

3 Methods

This report is based on a field study, which is conducted in Sierra Leone between August 24 and October 30, 2007. To collect as much information for this research as possible, different methods and techniques were used. This part of the report gives an explanation of the used methods, the research group and methodological shortcomings of this research.

In Sierra Leone a total of 41 surveys were conducted, of which two were assisted by the Mediation Agency for Return, nineteen respondents were assisted by IOM, one by friends in the host country, and nineteen received no assistance at all. This last group are deportees who were deported back to Sierra Leone, for either living illegally or because of rejection in the asylum procedure. The respondents that were interviewed, left their country to either live or apply for asylum in a western country, such as the USA, Germany, Italy, Belgium, the UK and the Netherlands, and returned involuntarily to Sierra Leone again. Although there are many different kinds of return migrants, broad patterns in my research population can be found. Most of them are young adult males, low educated, from all kinds of different tribes and either Muslim or Christian. Further personal characteristics and personal backgrounds of the respondents can be found in the scheme in annex 3.

The research mostly took place in the capital city Freetown, but respondents also were found in semi-urban areas in the north and south of Sierra Leone. To get a broader perspective on the situation of Sierra Leone, and migration in particular, interviews with people of several organisations such as IOM, ABC development and Christian Brothers were also carried out.

Nine of the respondents, who were assisted by IOM or NGOs during their return, were found through that organisation. The other respondents were reached through *snowball sampling*. To get a good diffusion and an accurate view of the respondents, different access points were used. Besides snowball sampling a more formal way of gaining access to the research group was used by making a radio slot; unfortunately there was no response to this.

For this research, both quantitative and qualitative research methods were used. A questionnaire was used to collect structured data on the situation of embeddedness and the factors influencing embeddedness. This data was later analysed through regression analysis. Additionally, qualitative data was collected in semi-structured in-depth interviews with a life history character to expand on topics addressed in the questionnaire, or those relevant to the situation of the particular respondent. Besides this two group discussions were held, returnees were visited at their homes and informal conversations were held with family members of these returnees. Interviews were held in English or Dutch, so that the use of a translator was not needed. Most of the questionnaires were conducted in an office space, or at the respondent's house. To conduct the life histories a more informal place was chosen, like a restaurant or the beach. This way the setting was more informal and people were more at ease.

Besides the interviews and conversations, a secondary data collection was conducted. To collect some more background information about the returnees, the asylum files from the returnees, who brought their papers with, them were collected. In addition it was tried to collect general statistics on migration in Sierra Leone. Collecting statistical information and accurate data of migration in Sierra Leone en of Sierra Leoneans is very difficult, since the national institutions are still weak. The IOM in Freetown did not update statistics, they only made estimations. The migration statistics, that are used in this report come from the UNHCR and from Central Bureau for Statistics in the Netherlands.

Conducting a research brings many methodological challenges along, easy and difficult ones, like choosing a research location or relying on the selected respondents. Shortcomings of this research can mainly be found in the equal division in the case load and

the short research time. As seen in annex 3, there only are five female respondents, comparing to 36 male respondents. There also are more youngsters included than adults. This unequal distribution can be explained by using the migration pattern, because it is commonly known that mainly young men migrated to Western countries. Also most respondents were found in Freetown, the capital city of Sierra Leone although 6 people were interviewed outside of Freetown. This unequal division of rural versus urban can first of all be explained, by the fact that access to returnees in Freetown was far easier than to those staying up country. Second of all, a third of the Sierra Leonean population lives in Freetown. Most returnees tend to stay in the capital, because of different reasons such as safety, family and economic opportunities.

Another shortcoming is that children were not included in this research. Because of the short research time, it was not possible to talk to more organisations, visit all the families of the returnees or conduct more questionnaires. Besides the questionnaires that were carried out, I also met up with seven returnees, who were not mentally capable of conducting an interview, and two persons, who were not willing to do an interview, because they did not want to talk about their past.

Although there are these shortcomings, I feel that the data that I have collected gives a good idea of the situation of returnees in Sierra Leone. People were talking really openly and most were happy that they could share their story. It must be acknowledged that, although the purpose of the research was always explained, people still presented themselves in a certain way while carrying out the interviews, because they saw me as somebody who could assist them, either materialistic or by taking them back to their host countries. One time, after the explanation that the interview was anonymously, the respondent noted: 'But I think it is better if my name is on it, isn't it.' Sometimes people withheld the truth or there were inconsistencies in their stories. Inconsistencies, for example, were about people's age, their way of travelling to Europe or their reason for seeking asylum. This shows that some people still try to hold on to their refugee story that they constructed at prior interviews, with, for example the foreign police and the asylum authorities.

4 Embeddedness in Sierra Leone

In this chapter the dimensions of embeddedness and the factors, which are influencing the re-embeddedness of Sierra Leonean returnees, will be discussed. In the first paragraph the economic, social networks and psycho-social dimension of embeddedness and the future perspectives will be outlined. In the second paragraph the three categorized factors: individual characteristics, migration cycle and assistance, which influence the embeddedness, will be discussed. Both paragraphs will end with a semi-conclusion.

Each embeddedness dimension should be understood as a continuum on which a returnee has his or her unique place. For the purposes of this research, values were assigned to the variables of each embeddedness dimension in order to calculate a score. Per dimension, all values together form a score between zero and one hundred, which indicates the level of embeddedness on a particular dimension. These scores should be understood as relative rather than absolute, as an individual is always to a certain extent, but never entirely embedded. Moreover, as embeddedness is considered to be a process, the scores of the returnees on the different dimensions of embeddedness, are never static.

To visualize the general situation of embeddedness of returnees, the scores on each embeddedness dimension were divided in three sections: 0-40 indicates low embeddedness, 41-70 indicates middle embeddedness and 71-100 indicates high embeddedness. As each returnee can have a unique combination of scores on the different variables of each embeddedness dimension, it is only possible to generally indicate what these low, middle and high levels consist of. A low score on a particular embeddedness dimension roughly indicates a very insecure position, a middle score suggests that a returnee is starting to find his or her way, but is not embedded in a sustainable way yet, while a high score would indicate a movement towards sustainable embeddedness.

4.1 The dimensions of embeddedness

4.1.1 Economic embeddedness

It is no easy for me, I only have this business [informal selling cooled (tap)water and ice made from tap water]. It is not easy, doing this business. It is not making millions. Considering we don't have light in this country and that is what you need to do this thing. If you don't sell them for two days, it is problem because you cannot get the fuel money back. It is really exit for me. See this kid is not going to school because I could not pay the school fees. [...] So I am really stranded. I went to the hotel to look for jobs, but they say no they don't have any vacancy right now. I tried to get scholarship for him [her son]. I did not get it. [...] I have tried so many things [to make a living wage], but things are not working out. Food is not cheap, it is so expensive. Sometimes it is not easy having food for your family. (Claudia, 40, 18 September 2007)

In this paragraph, the economic embeddedness is discussed. Economic embeddedness is measured through different elements. These elements of economic embeddedness are: the ownership of, and access to, assets that include housing, land, savings, independent means of transportation and working materials. Other elements are: access to health care and education. Having an income, the independency of the income, the sufficiency of an income and the stability of an income are elements for economic embeddedness as well.

As illustrated by the quote from Claudia above, the economic situation of most returnees in Sierra Leone is problematic. As shown in table 4.1, nearly 10% of the returnees

are highly economically embedded. The majority is economically embedded in the middle or low level.

Table 4.1: Score on economic embeddedness

Economic embeddedness	Number	Percentage
Low (0-40)	11	26.83%
Middle (41-70)	26	63.42 %
High (71-100)	4	9.75 %
Total	41	100 %

Source: Remigration monitoring study Sierra Leone

Being less economically embedded as a returnee means that you do not own any assets, do not have a (stable) income or are unemployed. Access to proper housing, education and healthcare therefore are financially problematic. Returnees, who are low economically embedded, they struggle in their daily lives and try to survive day by day. Alluzo for example, was deported, does not have a job, does not have valuable assets and lives in a rented one single room: ‘How I am going to make life, just to get a meal today. Like me, when I am sleeping and then in the morning hours, I awake and I start thinking: “How am I making the way go until the other day?”’ (Alluzo,45, 20 September 2007). Returnees who are embedded on a middle level have a semi-stable income, but according to the returnees this is not sufficient. Both the low and middle embedded returnees are depending for housing and sometimes money (remittances) on relatives and friends. Returnees who are highly economically embedded have stable employment. They are in labour wage or are formally independent entrepreneur. With that, they can make a living wage. These returnees are more focused on their future, and can make plans on how to live their lives, like Abbigail, who is successfully economically embedded. She owns a taxi and a shop where drinks are being sold and she also has a job as a secretary in a bank. She owns her own car and lives in the western area of Freetown in an owned house with running water and electricity (with generator).

Due to the poor socio-economic situation, which also is outlined in the context chapter, it is very difficult for returnees to become embedded economically. Over 80% of the returnees have some income, the other 20% of the returnees is depending on relatives. 78% of the returnees who do have some income expresses that their income is not sufficient. Most returnees do petty trading or small jobs, just to gain any income at all. The returnees, who are highly economically embedded, are in wage labour or have a profitable business.

As in the whole country, many returnees rely on remittances from relatives and sometimes good friends for their income. In the case load, 31% of the returnees indicated to receive remittances, in most cases however, this is not on a regular basis. The returnees, who receive remittances, belong both to the low and middle embedded group. 63% of the returnees, who receive remittances, belongs to the low embedded group and the other 27% belongs to the middle embedded group of returnees. Remittances are sent by relatives, who were able to receive a permit in a western country, or from (local or Sierra Leonean) friends in the host country. In this way access to remittances is influenced by the returnees own migration experiences. Momodou, for example, incidentally receives a small amount of money. This is send by his Dutch friend Marieke, who was a volunteer in the asylum centre and helped Momodou with integration lessons. Besides money, a few returnees also receive goods like cars, audio and video equipment, mobile phones, cloths and toiletries. Some of these goods are for personal use, others are meant to sell to make some money. 50% of the returnees does not have valuable assets, however most of them own a mobile phone. The majority of the returnees do not have a bank account, let alone savings.

The housing conditions for returnees are poor as well and in most cases worse compared to what returnees had before they left Sierra Leone. After return, barely 5% of the

interviewed returnees own a house, compared to more than 36% before migration. Most returnees expressed that they could not go back to their old houses, simply because their house or family house was destroyed during the war. Therefore, most returnees have to live with friends or family in their houses or have to rent a house or room. The state of living in the houses is very poor; most people share their house or room with more people, some even live with up to six people in one single room. For returnees, having to rent a house, which they did not have to do before they left, means a huge impact on their economic position; they have extra daily expenses, which they did not have before.

Looking at the returnees' economic embeddedness, it can be concluded that the most important factor in becoming economically embedded, is to have a stable permanent job, which gives you a living wage. This enables returnees to be financial self-reliant, which gives them better access to education, food and healthcare and other assets such as a car, a house or savings.

4.1.2 Social networks embeddedness

I have a lot of friends, but it is good to get more. My family is here, but we are not staying together, but they are here. In the Netherlands I also have friends, [...] I know their names, but I don't have their phone numbers or addresses for now. (Kanei, 26, 4 October 2007)

In this paragraph attention is paid to the social networks embeddedness of returnees. This dimension is measured by different elements. These elements are: the sufficiency of social relations and the use of social relations in terms of material needs and emotional needs. In table 4.2 the embeddedness on the social networks dimension is shown. There are more people highly embedded than low embedded on this dimension. However, the majority of 49% have a middle level of embeddedness.

Table 4.2: Score on social networks embeddedness

Social networks embeddedness	Number	Percentage
Low (0-40)	8	19.51 %
Middle (41-70)	20	48.78 %
High (71 – 100)	13	31.71 %
Total	41	100 %

Source: Remigration monitoring study Sierra Leone

Returnees who are low embedded do not participate in association. Although every returnee expressed their social contacts are important, 75% of the low embedded returnees expressed that their social relations are not sufficient. Furthermore, the ties between the low embedded returnee and their social relations are weak. They cannot rely on them for material needs, and only 50% expressed that they can rely on their social contacts for emotional needs. In contrast to the low embedded returnees, 53% of the middle embedded and 85% of the highly embedded returnees participate in a association. These returnees also express that they have social contacts and that they are important, but: "It is always good to have more contacts or friends", was the a common response when people were asked about their social networks. They stressed that more friends can give you more opportunities, in a way they can become economically embedded. Returnees, who are highly socially embedded, mostly returned to their nuclear family, unlike returnees who are low embedded. That is why the ties of the social networks of the high embedded returnees are much stronger, they can rely on them for both material and emotional needs.

Whether returnees can go back to relatives and (old) friends differs per case. While many people lost some of their relatives and friends during the war, others do not know if their family is alive and where they are at the moment. There was a family reunification campaign on massive scale in Sierra Leone, carried out by the UNHCR, the Red Cross and other local NGOs, which has stopped in 2006. People, who did not find their family members by then, mostly are presuming that their relatives are deceased. For returnees it is very harsh, because they were not in Sierra Leone during this campaign and therefore could not trace their family members.

Although big extended families exist, the majority of the returnees are not in contact with their (extended) family. Returnees express that sometimes family and old friends have high expectations towards them, which they cannot fulfil. These expectations cause that many returnees avoid contact with those people. It is like Alluzo said: 'They expect you have money, but you don't have anything. If you are coming back with that type of problem [no money/being deported]. They don't know what happened to you, so you try to tell them, but they don't understand' (Alluzo, 45, 20 September 2007). The nuclear family and good friends are the ones who matter to returnees; they do not stigmatise and can provide housing and emotional support to the returnee. Almost 50% said that their social contacts can help with both material and emotional needs. But when contacts in the social networks of returnees do not have money or an important (political) position, returnees are on their own. This is the case for approximately 20% of all returnees.

In most cases, people return to old friends initially, but soon start making new friends. It is not difficult to make friends: returnees meet people in the neighbourhood, in the church or mosque and in political parties or other associations. Over 50% of the returnees participate in an association, which enables them to have social contacts. Abbigail, for example, is an active member of the church: 'I am a Christian. I joined different organisations in church. The women's fellowship, just to bring all the women together. We do some activities to raise funds for the church. Then I am also clerk leader in the church' (Abbigail, 44, 5 September 2007). Most returnees also have contacts with one or two fellow returnees from the same host country. They mostly met during their time in the host country, and after return they reunited. Some only have a friendship relation together, others come together to share experiences, talk about the Netherlands, and about their difficulties now.

Concluded it can be said that the nuclear family seems to be quite crucial for embedding. The nuclear family does not stigmatize as much as other friends or family, they can provide initial support and give the returnee a sense of belonging. Returnees who did not return to their families, mostly returned to (old) friends. Although the networks of these returnees are rather large, in most cases these friends cannot assist them.

4.1.3 Psycho-social embeddedness

It is difficult, living for five or six years in another country and then coming back to your home country without a penny is difficult. If you are not mentally strong you get frustrated. Some who came, are already frustrated. They are not mentally strong. For now I have survived, but if it will continue on the long run it will effect me too, because sometimes you are sleepless, you can't sleep at the night and not at the daytime. Thinking about the past, thinking about the family I left, thinking I can't see them now. (Momodou, 29, 26 September 2007)

In this paragraph the psycho-social embeddedness is outlined. The psycho-social dimension is divided in: The ability to construct one’s own identity; the feeling of homeness; the feeling of safety and the psychological wellbeing³.

On the psycho-social dimension, as shown in table 4.3, the majority of the returnees has a middle level of embeddedness. All returnees suffer more or less from trauma due to experiences in the past. All returnees, despite their level of embeddedness, also expressed that their home society has changed during their stay abroad. 90% of the returnees who have a low level of embeddedness expressed they do not feel understood and 70% expresses they do not feel welcomed. Overall the low embedded returnees do not feel at home in Sierra Leone, and on top of that, 90% does not feel safe to live their daily lives. In contrast, returnees who have a middle or high level of embeddedness all do feel at home, and all high embedded returnees do feel safe. Furthermore respectively 60% and 70% of the high embedded returnees and 50% of the middle embedded returnees do feel understood and welcomed.

Table 4.3: Score on psycho-social embeddedness

Psycho-social embeddedness	Number	Percentage
Low (0-40)	10	24.39 %
Middle (41-70)	21	51.22 %
High (71 – 100)	10	24.39 %
Total	41	100 %

Source: Remigration monitoring study Sierra Leone

Psychological condition: stress and trauma

The world knows that the war in Sierra Leone was atrocity. Every Sierra Leonean citizen has lost a loved one, and some lost their house and properties. Returnees also have their own unique experiences of the war: being involved in the war as a rebel, used as human labour or as sex slave by the fighting forces, being involved during a peace march, or just wanted to flee because of all the violence. Over 85% of the returnees expressed they have suffered or still suffer from traumatic experiences from the past. They have sleeping problems, nightmares and can not easily trust other people. Only 20% expressed they are managing with their past traumatic experiences in a way that they do not suffer anymore or suffer less after return.

Not just the war caused that 85% of the research population still suffer from trauma, but also the migration experience. Returnees expressed that fleeing to Europe and being in an asylum procedure was very stressful. Some returnees even became mentally or physically ill, because of the insecurity they were living in, and decided to go back, like Safea, who lived in the Netherlands for almost five years, before he returned. Safea was disappointed that he had to wait a long time, he could not work or go to school, and, at the end, his first application was rejected:

Can you imagine, that disappointment even forced me to say: “let me go back”. I was looking at that psychological it can lead you to harm yourself, to cause trouble and end up in the jail. [...] It was becoming too heavy to me psychologically [so I went to the IOM] I went to the men, and spoke things are getting difficult before I have to go home before I die. (Safea, 29, 9 Oktober 2007)

³ The psychological wellbeing factor is measured through trauma, but the research does not include proper measurements, whether somebody has a trauma or not. Therefore, traumas are best interpreted as ‘problems’ or ‘stress’.

Not only the asylum procedure, but also forced return and eventually deportation were traumatic experiences for returnees. Edugu and later his wife and child for example, were deported from the Netherlands:

I was so happy when I lived in Holland, but life here now is different, it is very difficult, even to buy a plate of rice. The people here only know the life of here, but we know another life now. And the other life there is very good, it is very different. To take another life is not easy. Sometime I say it is better to die. I say that sometimes and I am crying. (Edugu, 36, 28 August, 2007)

The same thing is true for more returnees, including Momodou. Although Momodou told he was not crazy yet, he outlined a doom scenario: 'Plans that you have made for the future have faded away. Then you come back and it drives you crazy and you get social discouraged, until it frustrates you. Then you are ashamed of yourself and you count yourself as a loser' (Momodou, 29, 23 September 2007). As returnees expressed, you have to be mentally strong to survive after return.

Identity, the feeling of belonging and safety

In Sierra Leone there is freedom and tolerance of religion and ethnicity, which makes returnees feel free to express themselves along the lines of their ethnicity and religion. Almost 50% stressed that they often do not talk about their personal interest, and especially not about politics. During the time of the research, elections were held and political tensions were high. One returnee was part of the campaign team of the SLPP in the Kambia district. He came to Freetown after the election results were announced, because of the harassments he faced for his political affiliation.

A slight majority also does not feel free to express themselves about their position as returned migrant. Shame and embarrassment play a great role in this. To return empty-handed is shameful for returnees, and therefore they are stigmatised by the society. Returnees, and especially deportees, are seen as criminals. Sierra Leonean people see that a lot of Sierra Leoneans get a permit to stay in the Western countries, and they do not see any other reason why someone would be brought back, if he did not commit a crime. 56% of the returnees said that people in society have hard feelings about their return and 30% of the returnees expressed that they feel that people in society are not friendly towards them, like Claudia, whose family and friends were not very enthusiastic when they knew she came back with barely anything:

They didn't like it at all that we were coming [...] African mentality is different, like now I am back from Europe, people look at me that I have everything, which I don't. And you cannot go to them if you need something. If you ask them, they will laugh at you. [...] You can explain, they can listen to you but they would not. (Claudia, 40, 27 September 2007)

75% of the returnees do feel at home in Sierra Leone, but more interesting is to see that this mainly is because it is their place of birth, rather than they feel comfortable or that they have a sense of community. Notable is, that the majority of returnees also feel at home because of friends and family, like Kosseh:

Yeah, one thing I am happy [...] I got my family, no matter what happens, they are there. I came back to Sierra Leone, they were there. Now that I am moving on, things are getting better, they are there and I know that they will be there. So I feel belonged, I feel appreciated. (Kosseh, 32, 29 September 2007)

In general, returnees do not see Sierra Leone as a safe place. The majority expressed they do not feel safe (from harm) to live their daily lives and 55% of the returnees feel that their society is not a safe place to raise children. Approximately 30% of the returnees expressed, they fear to become a victim of mob justice or voodoo. Especially those who were involved during the war, had a close relative working as a high ranked military in the junta, or feel ashamed of returning. There are no recent events of mob justice noted and voodoo is not openly practised, but the crimes committed during the war are still in people's minds. People know, and point out in public to each other, the former (wicked) rebels who committed detestable crimes. The fear for mob justice and voodoo causes that returnees did not want to go back to the place they lived before the war. Therefore most returnees choose to stay in another place, especially Freetown. For returnees, Freetown offers more safety because of the anonymity and (more) police control. Safea for example, fears to go back to his old place of residence:

I can't go to Kono now. The problem with Kono is, things are normal, police are controlling things, but you never know what is happening in the night. Kono is more like a village, the area Yengema is more like a village. You can come and attack me, and do what ever you want to do without nobody knowing. I am really not thinking about moving to Kono. (Safea, 29, 9 Oktober 2007)

4.1.4 Future perspectives

The majority of the returnees is not playing an active role in their own future, but tend to blame others for the overall situation and for their problems. They place solutions for their own problems outside themselves; national politics have to change, international investors have to come, and (non-governmental) organisations have to help them in order to survive or build a future. The returnees are not thinking about the future, but more about surviving day by day, which makes that they wake up every morning asking themselves how they can get food for the day. Claudia for example, says:

I don't know how to plan the future, because we don't have even something for today. You can only plan for future when you see that you are having something, you can say ok this money I can save for tomorrow, because if we are here now, everybody likes to have a good life. If I had anything if I had a good life, I would plan to build my own house. I would have my own small car, and save some money for my children for their university. How can I plan this? Even to eat is a problem. (Claudia, 40, 18 September 2007)

Only 8% of the returnees expressed that they really want to stay in Sierra Leone. Out of the 92% that want to leave, not everyone wants to leave Sierra Leone permanently. 12 percent of the returnees expressed very clear, that they only want to go to study or work temporarily. Returnees also expressed that they do not have to migrate if there is a job or a future otherwise for them in Sierra Leone. In general, migrating, for most returnees (and other Sierra Leoneans as well), is more wishful thinking then a concrete plan. When the question was asked: "How are you going abroad, or do you have concrete plans for migrating?" in most cases the standard response was "I am waiting for my chance". This means they have to wait until they have enough money and the right (transnational) contact, who can assist them, like Tommy, who expressed he wanted to migrate on a temporarily basis:

I have plans to go, if I have chance I want to go. I want to go and work and come back home. I am just planning that. I don't have the way of doing it, but I am thinking about that. I want to go out, because it is difficult here. I live here for two years now, and no [...] no nothing. (Tommy, 27, 8 October 2007)

Three people really want to try to migrate illegally, others are waiting to be eligible for a resettlement program, which in Sierra Leone is run by countries such as Australia and Canada. There also are those who try to have a flutter with the green card lottery.

Although initially almost nobody wants to stay, 42% of the returnees feel that they want to become re-embedded in Sierra Leone. This is because these people, although they want to leave, realise that they do not have any other possibility than to stay. Returnees, who say they want to become embedded in Sierra Leone, are the ones who are highly embedded in two or all three dimensions. These people have a large social network, are not too much affected by trauma and in most cases have a (stable) income. But more than 30% of the returnees still do not see any future for themselves in the country of their origin and can only think of migrating again. They see migration as the solution for their problems, which are, in most cases, economically related. Kanei stated: ‘Yes [I want to leave], the condition of living is very poor, accommodation is difficult, cost of living is very high, and there are no jobs’ (Kanei, 26, 4 October 2007). These returnees are the ones who are far less embedded, and the wish for re-migration is a strong indicator for non-embeddedness.

4.1.5 Conclusion: The dimensions of embeddedness

As outlined in the previous paragraphs, for most returnees it is very difficult to re-embed in Sierra Leone. Returning to Sierra Leone, means for most returnees that they have to get used to a “new” home society. This is very difficult for returnees who spend several years in a western country and who came back involuntarily. It is hard for them to become psycho-socially embedded, especially when they still experience trauma or stress due to the war and experiences in the host country. Further more, returnees have to deal with high expectations of family and friends and are affected by stigma. At the same time, when returnees try to become economically and psycho-socially embedded, they also have to (re-)activate social networks. When returnees do not have a (strong) social network after return, they are totally on their own, because there are no collective facilities. The returnees, who are poorly re-embedded do not see any other possibilities then to re-migrate to a western country, while the ones who are highly embedded, expressed that they rather want to stay and become fully re-embedded in Sierra Leone.

In this report the different dimensions of embeddedness are discussed separately, but in the social reality they interact and reinforce each other tremendously. When a returnee is economically embedded and has a stable job, which gives a living wage, he also is highly embedded on the psycho-social and social networks dimension. When a returnee has sufficient income, he is independent and can re-build his life. This makes that a returnee has a future perspective and can better manage the trauma and stress caused by the past. Being economically embedded also reinforces the level of embeddedness of social networks, because family and friends are more likely to accept returnees who are economically embedded. The interaction and reinforcement of social networks is really strong. The vulnerability of the returnee is defined by the quality and strength of their social network. In all cases a returnee relies for emotional and material support on his social contacts. These contacts can make a returnee feel more at home but can also mediate for a job.

4.2 Factors influencing embeddedness

As shown in the previous paragraph, the extent to which Sierra Leonean returnees re-embed varies. Besides the context which creates obstacles and opportunities to re-embed, different factors also influence the ability and level of embeddedness of returnees. These factors, which

will be discussed in this chapter, can be categorised in three groups: individual characteristics, migration cycle and assistance. All the different factors are analysed both quantitatively, through regression, and qualitatively.

4.2.1 Individual characteristics

In the migration patterns of Sierra Leone of the past decade, it is clear that it were mostly men who went to a western country. Although men and women have different migration experiences, sexe does not appear to influence the level of re-embedding. Similar conclusions can be drawn for ethnicity and religion. Although there are many different tribal groups in Sierra Leone, ethnicity is not an issue for re-embedding and neither is religion. As described in the context chapter, there is enormous religious tolerance, and ethnicity never was a strong factor in Sierra Leonean society as well. Whereas the returnee's sexe, religion and ethnical background cannot explain any differences in their ability to re-embed age, marital status and the education level can. The story of Saiku, in box 4.4 illustrates this.

Box 4.4 The story of Saiku

Saiku is 38 years old. He used to live in Ybente, a small rural village. He studied agricultural science at the University of Sierra Leone (USL). After his study he married and worked at his own farm. During the war, when the village of Saiku was attacked, he lost contact with his family. Saiku fled to the neighbouring country Guinea, where he paid a human trafficker to bring him to Europe. With a fake passport and travelling by boat Saiku arrived in Rotterdam in the Netherlands in 2002.

In the Netherlands, Saiku applied for asylum. Although he worked for several months and he made several friends he describes this period as: 'it was boring situation in Holland, the whole day sit down and nothing to do'. In 2005 restored contact with friends in Sierra Leone, soon after that his first application was denied. This is when Saiku made the decision to go back to his family as soon as possible. 'I found my family, I had to come back otherwise my brain would explode'. IOM paid for a flight ticket and gave Saiku €700 in an envelope on the airplane steps.

Nowadays Saiku lives together with his wife, his two children and an adopted son in a rented house in Freetown. Although he expresses he suffers from trauma and stress due to the past experience, he also says that since he returned to his family, things are much better. Saiku has a job at a garage and goes to his own twenty acres palm tree farm in the weekends. He likes to stay in Sierra Leone as long as he has his family; 'I like here more then anywhere in world, if there is no war'.

Source: Remigration monitoring study Sierra Leone

Age seems to be determent for the level of re-embeddedness; older returnees are better re-embedded. Age is interconnected to another important factor for re-embeddedness, namely: personal development in terms of skills and education. Many young returnees were not able to finish their primary or secondary school, because of the war and most of these people were not allowed to go to school when they were in a western country. They also did not gain work experience and do not have the social connections that can help them find employment. Therefore it is very hard for youngsters to find employment, and for now they do not have much future prospective in Sierra Leone. Older returnees on the other hand, have better (access to) stable employment. They had the opportunity to get either a degree or working experience before the war started. Because there are little employment opportunities, only people with a degree have a chance on a job in labour wage. The quantitative data analyses, as showed in table 4.5 that returnees between the age of 31 and 47 are significantly better economically embedded than returnees between the age of 18 and 30. Furthermore, it shows

that older returnees are better embedded psycho-socially than the younger returnees. Besides that, findings through statistical analysis show that higher educated returnees were significantly better embedded socially. Older and educated returnees can adjust easier to the Sierra Leonean environment where they lived for a long time. Younger returnees experience problems with identifying with Sierra Leonean life and are lower socially and psycho-socially re-embedded. They spend most of their conscious life in Europe and then came back to their home country where conditions are harsh, where they do not have much social contacts and, most importantly, which they do not really know.

Besides level of education and age, the marital status of returnees also affects the level of re-embeddedness. Nineteen people are single, from which two are female. Nine men are engaged or in a relationship and fourteen returnees are married, from which three are female. Being married makes a big difference in the level of embeddedness of returnees. Married returnees have their own family for which they are responsible. This nuclear family creates a sense of belonging and security and, as a result, married returnees feel more accepted. The ties between the nuclear family and the returnee also are strong and for emotional and/or material needs they can rely on their spouse or close family. This contrasts with single returnees, who are more on their own and in situations of distress can only rely on friends. The quantitative data, as shown in table 4.5, supports the fact that married returnees are much better re-embedded. It also shows that returnees who are married are significantly more socially embedded than those who are single or engaged.

Table 4.5 Regression analyses of individual characteristics

	Economic embeddedness		Social Networks embeddedness		Psycho-social embeddedness	
	Constant	B	Constant	B	Constant	B
Age						
18-30 (<i>constant</i>)	41.958		58.598		48.921	
31-47		12.953		1.549		10.374*
48-65		*		-		-
>66		-		-		-
Marital status						
Single (<i>Constant</i>)	43.880		53.750		47.466	
Engaged		0.361		-2.361		5.362
Married		10.138*		18.780**		12.436*
Pre-education	42.793	1.936	49.802	4.118**	45.828	2,954

- not enough respondents included; * sign. $p < 0,100$; ** sign. $p < 0,05$

Source: Remigration monitoring study Sierra Leone

4.2.2 Migration cycle

The migration cycle is conceptualized into three phases: the phase prior to the migration and the reason to migrate in Sierra Leone, the host country phase and the phase of the actual return migration. The events and experiences during all three stages have shown an immense influence on the ability to re-embed and the level of re-embeddedness in Sierra Leone.

Reasons to migrate

In the past two decades, Sierra Leone was a state which was unable to provide protection and was unable to meet the basic needs of its citizens. For this reason, more than 350,000 Sierra Leoneans fled the country. Over 50% of the returnees fled because of general or personal unsafety, but 25% of the returnees, who fled during the conflict period, had mixed motivations to go to Europe, and took the conflict as a chance to build up a better life. These people, who fled during the war, were either helped by non Sierra Leoneans to flee the

country or paid their way with diamonds. In general these returnees returned after the war was finished. They stayed for several years in a western country, where the state took care of them. When these returnees come back to Sierra Leone, they experience difficulties adjusting to the Sierra Leonean culture, but also to the socio-economical and political situation.

15% migrated purely out of economic reasons. These economic migrants see migration to Europe as a game of chance, you either win or lose. They sold all their belongings and used their (family) money to go abroad. When these returnees returned to Sierra Leone empty handed, they lost almost everything, and experienced social and economic degradation in life. For them there was no economical and social basis to return to. Their family was more likely to be really disappointed and even neglect the returnee if he comes back with nothing. Without an economic basis and family or social contacts it is very difficult to re-embed. This is supported by the quantitative data, as shown in table 4.6, returnees who left Sierra Leone for safety reasons tend to be significantly better economically and socially re-embedded than economic migrants.

Events in the host country

The majority of the returnees were held passive during their stay in the host country, and thereby were denied access to economical activities and sometimes to public or social life as well. In first instance the majority lived in many different (closed) asylum centres, but after few years more people were allowed to live independent. Before return 46% still lived in an asylum centre and about 50% lived either independent or (illegal) with friends or family. Returnees who applied for asylum were given social benefits during their stay, and asylum seekers in the Netherlands were living in an asylum centre. The majority of the returnees were not actually employed in their host country and did not have access to education. People, who did have work, were either illegally employed at a farm or a factory or worked part time on a job, which was provided by the asylum centre. Only eight (20%) returnees did have the chance to go to school or to attend a vocational course in their host country. Returnees expressed that their lives stood still during their time in the host country; they could not develop new skills but only developed more stress instead. The passiveness frustrated the majority of returnees and some developed physical and psychological problems because of it. Kosseh and others tried to avoid the passiveness and sickness by trying to re-migrate to a second country:

I was not happy in Holland. Especially for my first three years, I couldn't go to school, I couldn't do nothing. How can I live my life, I mean I can't go to school. So I said "come on maybe I should go to UK, I have friend there I have people, I have relatives there". So I tried, but it didn't work out, I was caught. (Kosseh, 32, 29 September 2007)

Upon return the passivity, which is created by the current asylum policies in western countries, had a negative effect on the ability to re-embed. Returnees are waiting for assistance, from either NGOs or friends, who can help them re-build their lives. Asylum seekers also could not develop skills, which they can use for their re-embeddedness process. Avoiding the passivity in the host country, by letting people work or follow education can be of great importance upon return, because they are more active in rebuilding their lives. Although working and gaining skills can prevent passivity, the contextual restraints also are affecting embeddedness: the ones who did acquire new skills or certificates, do not gain much profit out of it. The wrong skills were learned in the host countries. Skills which were developed by working in a factory, for example, are not much of a use in Sierra Leone, where there are no factories at all. In addition, simple (western) certificates are not accepted, only (western) university degrees. Besides that returnees have a disadvantage for the fact that they have been in a western country for several years, they do not have any contacts who can help

them getting a job. Furthermore employers do not trust someone who went to Europe, so they do not prefer a returnee for a job.

Table 4.6 Regression analyses of migration cycle

	Economic Embeddedness		Social Networks Embeddedness		Psycho-social embeddedness			
	Constant	B	Constant	B	Constant	B		
First reason	49.317		62.583		50.027			
<i>General unsafety due to conflict (constant)</i>		-3.419				-10.083*		-1.042
<i>Personal unsafety due to conflict</i>		-				-		-
<i>Discrimination</i>		-				-12.676*		6.201
<i>Economic</i>		13.169*						
<i>Other</i>	-			-		-		
Remittances abroad	45.547	6.983	55.778	14.412**	51.139	6.524		
Contact abroad	43.809	6.170	55.711	6.720	47.046	9.982*		
Status return	55.952		71.786		66.507			
<i>In asylum procedure (constant)</i>		-				-		-
<i>Temporarily protection</i>		-5.558				-15.384*		-19.508**
<i>Rejected in procedure</i>		-				-13.202		-12.885
<i>Illegal</i>		22.394*						
<i>Other</i>	-			-		-		
Reason return	13.363		60.882		51.280			
<i>Voluntary but no stay opportunities (constant)</i>		-				-		-
<i>Fully voluntary</i>		-				-		-
<i>Pressured by authorities</i>		-4.275				-2.387		3.974
<i>Forcible returned</i>		-				-		-
<i>Other reasons</i>								
Years back	44.144	1.148	53.002	2.328*	41.534	3.979**		

- not enough respondents included; * sign. $p < 0,100$; ** sign. $p < 0,05$

Source: Remigration monitoring study Sierra Leone

In contrast to the negative effect of passiveness, staying in contact with or sending remittances to people in Sierra Leone proved to have a positive effect on the re-embeddedness. Although it was difficult for many returnees to remain in contact with family and friends due to the war, almost 60% of the returnees (finally) were able to be in contact with some of their friends or relatives in Sierra Leone. Only eleven people, 26% of the caseload, actually did send remittances to Sierra Leone. Claudia, for example, decided to send money for her younger sister. Claudia lived with her sister, who already had residential status in the Netherlands; she did not work and only received social benefits. After almost three years of living in the Netherlands, contact with her sister in Sierra Leone was restored.

I was thinking since they give us money every week' [social benefits, AMD], and I was staying in my sisters place, I can make some sacrifice to send some money for them [sister and her baby]. So every week when they gave us money I save some of it, and at the end of the month I gave it to my sister, so she could send it. So at the end of the month my sister could send something like hundred euro. (Claudia, 40, 27 September 2007)

The fact that the majority of the returnees did not send (sustainable amounts of) remittances in the first place, means that the return migration did not have much effect on this flow of remittances money to Sierra Leone. Being in contact with your family and sending remittances is important for re-embedding in Sierra Leone. Regression analysis, in table 4.6, shows that people, who were in contact with friends or family during their stay abroad are better re-embedded on all three dimensions than those who did not. Notable as well is that returnees, who send remittances are significantly higher embedded in the social networks dimension than those who did not. Almost nobody can re-embed on their own, and social contacts (family) are essential for returnees because they can provide assistance upon arrival in Sierra Leone.

Return migration to Sierra Leone

After arrival in the host country, many people had the blind expectation of receiving a status. 85% of the returnees expected to receive a permanent permit to stay. They only realised that it did not turn out this way when the asylum procedure was hopeless or already finished. After the asylum procedure was finished, 25% of the returnees lived illegally in the host country or tried to migrate to another country. Mohammed, for example, lived illegally for four months in the Netherlands and he tried, with help of friends and a human trafficker, to migrate illegally to the United States of America.

I was in the procedure, and I was rejected. VWN⁴ told me, that you have to leave the camp, and I did exactly that. I went to a friend's place, but I never told them what was going on, because otherwise they would say that was illegal. I stayed in the house for four months, then I got caught. [...] I had no choice, I had to leave you know. It was the only thing I could do, so I raised some money. [...] I wanted to leave, I wanted a good life. I had no choice, they asked me to leave Holland. I was just doing everything I could to get out of Holland. I didn't really want to come back, life is too hard, you know. (Mohammed, 22, 29 August 2007)

Finally Mohammed got caught, was brought to the detention boat in Rotterdam and deported to Sierra Leone. Mohammed was one of 48% of the returnees that did not want to return at all. They were either deported or pressured by the authorities to return. Other returnees did not have any other opportunity to get a status and therefore returned on a more voluntary basis, in most cases with assistance. The status and reason for return are of great importance for the ability to re-embed in Sierra Leone. To what extent a returnee has agency in return, largely determines the level of re-embeddedness. Returnees, who returned on a more voluntary basis, are much higher re-embedded than returnees, who did not want to return to Sierra Leone in the first place. This is supported by the quantitative data analyses, as shown in table 4.6. The local organisations and NGOs in Sierra Leone have experienced, that the reasons of return are of tremendous influence on the ability to re-embed. Mohammed from ABC Development for example, expressed that a returnee who is pressured or forced to return, still maintains the mentality that Europe is the place where they should be. As a result

⁴ Vluchtelingen Werk Nederland: Refugee Council in The Netherlands

they do not feel belonged and their main focus is on migrating again and therefore there is a huge problem their reintegration.

Besides the degree of voluntariness for return, the number of years that a returnee is back in Sierra Leone also affects the level of re-embeddedness. When a returnee is back for some years, he passed the start-up phase of re-embeddedness and can settle himself. In most cases these returnees can more easily get reconciled with their return, in contrast to those who recently returned. They are called JC-ers (Just Comers) by the local community, They do not blend into the community, are not settled and want to re-migrate as soon as possible. As shown in table 4.6, the quantitative data supports that returnees who are back longer, are significantly better re-embedded on the social networks and psycho-social dimension, but becoming economically re-embedded is difficult for every returnee, no matter how many years they are back.

4.2.3 Assistance

The majority of the returnees received assistance from friends and family. Approximately half of the returnees in this research was assisted, either by the IOM or by the Mediation Agency in the Netherlands. The kind of assistance, to which extent, from who and in which stage the assistance was given varies enormously among the returnees.

Pre-return assistance

When asylum seekers came to a host country, there were several parties, which provided information about the asylum procedure and the chances of receiving a permit. Most returnees received their assistance concerning their asylum from lawyers, host government related institutions, NGOs or organizations that deal with asylum seekers.

Regression analysis shows (see table 4.7), that there is a significant negative effect of pre-return assistance from NGOs on the economic and psycho-social embeddedness of returnees after return. However, this relation does not seem to be a direct relation. Qualitative data shows that the fact that returnees, who received pre-return assistance from NGOs, are less embedded economically and psycho-socially, which appears to be influenced by their disappointment and anger, caused by forced return. They only focused on receiving a permit to stay in Europe and when they were back in their home countries, they lacked the motivation to build up their lives there. This indicates, that when returnees do not have the motivation to return to Sierra Leone, assistance does not work.

Some returnees can apply for assistance if they return to Sierra Leone. But the access to assistance from an organization or NGO is a deterrent by the legal status at point of return and the reasons for return. Only returnees who return voluntarily or independently are taken into consideration for assistance. Besides that, only returnees who requested assistance in the host country before their return, can make a claim to the assistance from a NGO or organisation after return. Until now, they cannot provide any kind of assistance to returnees in retroaction.

For Sierra Leonean returnees, attending training or education as preparation for return is very rare. Receiving mental and practical assistance from organizations before return is not common either. The current assistance provided by organisations in preparation of return, also has shown to have no influence on embeddedness. The two returnees who received some sort of mental preparation from organisations before return, expressed that the information given was not realistic. However, the majority of the returnees stressed that they need this kind of assistance which prepares them to come back. More important for the returnees though, is assistance which gives them skills that they can use after return.

This is regrettable, because this kind of preparation could contribute to a better and more sustainable return. Practical and mental preparation especially is important, because people whose only focus was on receiving their permit, could not understand why they were rejected in their procedure. They were not prepared at all to return and after return they are not well embedded.

Conspicuously is that for all returnees physical return was arranged. Nobody paid for their return to Sierra Leone. For 21 returnees a ticket was provided by the government (in case of deportation), in one case by a friends and the other nineteen returnees received a ticket from IOM. Four returnees were helped by IOM with arranging their *laissez-passer* or their passport. Others received assistance from friends. Assistance from IOM was appreciated by the returnees. However, it did not contribute to re-embeddedness, but only facilitated the physical return.

Assistance during return is looked upon by returnees as obligation from the host government, especially because most returnees rather wanted to stay in the host country. Returnees who were assisted during their return are better re-embedded, than those who were not assisted, especially on the psycho-social dimension. This is not so much because of the given assistance, but rather because of the fact that people who were not assisted, were deported. They did not return voluntarily and did not had any agency in their return. As explained in the previous paragraph, the returnees who returned on a more voluntary basis have the ability to become and are better re-embedded than those who returned pressured or forced.

Table 4.7 Regression analyses of assistance

	Economic Embeddedness		Social Networks Embeddedness		Psycho-social embeddedness	
	Constant	B	Constant	B	Constant	B
Assistance before return total	49.833	-2.673	53.646	6.647	57.526	-5.138
Pre-return asylum assistance by NGO	48.345	-3.157	58.549	3.743	55.748	-9.767
Assistance during return total	42.738	5.647	57.738	2.299	45.313	9.136
Assistance after return by NGO	43.854	6.963	57.708	3.780	53.888	-1.950
Assistance after return by friends and relatives	59.389	-10.506	65.00	-6.274	54.449	-1.827
Business assistance by relatives, friends and NGOs	42.595	15.186 **	58.170	5.511	52.389	4.861

- not enough respondents included; * sign. $p < 0,100$; ** sign. $p < 0,05$

Source: Remigration monitoring study Sierra Leone

Post-return assistance

Regarding assistance, the needs of the returnees varies substantially. However, it emerged that the needs of the returnees were mainly focused on economically based post-return assistance.

They stress that especially organisations can provide this kind of assistance, because friends and family are not able to do this, although almost every returnee received assistance, in more or lesser extent, from friends or relatives. Upon return they can only provide immediate housing, business advice and (practical) information towards returnees. Returnees are grateful towards these friends for this given assistance and it can help the returnee to survive the first week(s) after return. But assistance from friends is in no case sufficient to re-embed. In addition, receiving assistance from an NGO or organisation has shown to have a positive influence on re-embeddedness. First of all, returnees who did not receive assistance from friends or relatives are better embedded, because exactly these returnees are assisted by an organisation. Quantitative data analyses, in table 4.6, also shows that returnees who received assistance after return, from either a NGO or IOM, are better economically and socially re-embedded than those who did not receive this assistance.

Most returnees stress that they want assistance to find employment, however, nobody received this kind of assistance. In addition, one third of the returnees received business assistance from an NGO or from friends, in the form of information, material grant or conditional cash money. In Sierra Leone it is important to have good business skills in order to run a business and become economically embedded, because there is a lot of competition. Some of the returnees, who received business assistance, did succeed very well and even expanded their business. Others, who invested (a part of) their business money in a small business, were not able to gain much profit. They lacked good business skills and their businesses suffered losses or even failed. Although the success of their businesses varies, quantitative data shows that the returnees who received business assistance from an organization or from friends are significantly better economically embedded. They are also better re-embedded on the social networks and psycho-social dimension, than those who did not receive this kind of assistance.

Returnees, who came on a voluntary basis to Sierra Leone, all received a considerable unconditional amount of money from IOM. The returnees from the Netherlands who received assistance from IOM, all received an amount which varied from €400 to €2300. The ones, who were deported, were occasionally given a small amount of money at the prison by the host government. Upon return these returnees were the most vulnerable. They came back with nothing and could only rely on the small assistance from friends and family. The story of Sorious illustrates in which way the current assistance by organisations and NGOs is given.

Box 4.8: A story of Sorious

Sorious applied for asylum in the Netherlands in March 2001. After a stressful and passive period, in which Sorious was not allowed to work and was rejected in his procedure, he became mentally sick. In order to get himself healed, he decided to leave the Netherlands in September 2004. When Sorious made the decision to leave, he contacted his contact person. Through his contact person, he contacted The Mediation Agency for Return and ABC development was told what they could provide for him. ‘They said they were going to find me a house and they also said they were going to find me something to do. Whether I wanted to go back to school or maybe that I needed a job. They said they made these provisions for people who want to return to their country, so it gives me confidence. It made me confident that when I return home I will not be living alone or to get discouraged. Because this people are going to do something for me’.

Besides assistance, that was offered by The Mediation Agency and ABC development, Sorious also received assistance from IOM. They provided him with an airplane ticket and he received €2300 on the day he left. When he arrived in Freetown he almost straight away went to Kabal, to meet with a traditional doctor. After a few months his health was much better and he returned to Freetown. He went to ABC with the assumption to receive help to find a house, work or education. Towards the end of 2005, Sorious received a small amount of money to start up his life. But he was disappointed, because the money was not sufficient: ‘I had to pay for my house, and the cost of a house in Freetown is very expensive, and I took some money for my food, I

have to eat. I also started to making business in used cloths.’ For now Sorious stopped his business, because according to him it was not profitable. He started a new business in selling fuel, but rather wants to work in a steady job. ‘I don’t want to do business, I want to do a job. Any kind of job, to support my life, just to keep myself busy [...] They told me, they are going to provide me with a job if I come back home. I expect that they keep their promise from before, I want a job and education.’

Source: Remigration monitoring study Sierra Leone

Not all returnees, who received assistance from an organisation, are satisfied with it, just like Sorious. Some returnees were disappointed and felt tricked into returning, because after return they had the expectation of reintegration assistance, which could not be fulfilled. Returnees complained that organisations made a lot of promises, concerning job security, schooling or training, housing facilitation and medical assistance, which were not realised upon return. It is difficult to determine, whether these complaints derive from inaccurate information provided by organisations in the host country, or that returnees misinterpreted this information themselves.

Information and experiences from IOM Freetown points in the direction, that the way returnees are provided information by assistance organisations in host countries, is very important in the expectations of returnees. IOM Freetown works with returnees from different host countries, that initially were assisted by IOM in these host countries. It appeared that returnees from England have the most accurate expectations, because they received both verbal and written information about the assistance. Returnees from other countries, such as the Netherlands, were made verbal promises. After return the Dutch returnees had high expectations regarding reintegration assistance from IOM Freetown. They expected that IOM Freetown could assisted them with education/training, employment and sometimes medical care. According to IOM Freetown, they could not give this kind of reintegration assistance to the Dutch returnees because the budget, that is made available by the Netherlands, is limited (IOM Freetown, interview 28 August 2007). Qualitative analyses make clear, that these unrealistic expectations, created by host government organisation, not only complicate the work of the local organisations in Sierra Leone but also affect embeddedness. Returnees from the UK, who had realistic expectations, are better re-embedded.

These experiences from both the returnees and organisations and NGOs in Sierra Leone, indicates first of all that the information about assistance is not transparent towards returnees. As a result, returnees have high expectations of the assistance, which cannot be fulfilled. Secondly it indicates, that the communication between the organisations in the host countries and in Sierra Leone needs to be improved with regard to the available and the execution of the assistance.

Returnees also complained, that the assistance they were given, was not sufficient. The ones who received money or a loan in the form of business assistance, said they could only start up their business, but could not run it and therefore went broke. Other returnees expressed, that the cash money which was given on the airport or immediately upon return, was to little to start up their life. Experiences from organisations and NGOs are, that the amount of money is not the only problem. Although the budget for the microcredit programs executed by NGOs in Sierra Leone in cooperation with Western partners, is according to them too small. The efficiency by which the money is spend is also problematic. In addition, returnees indeed experienced that the money was soon finished, but some expressed that they regretted the way they have spend their money, like Safea, who received money from IOM and regrets that he spend the money to live up to his families expectations: ‘I tried to see how I best can give something to my family friend. How I could help to make them feel more comfortable.[...] The money was finished very soon, I spend it on decorating the family

house and on food [...] Now I cannot upkeep myself, I am still depending on a family friend' (Safea, 29, 9 October 2007).

Organisations and NGOs in Sierra Leone are acknowledging the problem with the unconditional amount of cash money. ABC Development expressed, that returnees do not know how to spend their money efficiently, especially because they come to Sierra Leone, and have to deal with several setbacks. For example, they have to deal with the high expectations of family members, and therefore spend their money on luxuries (for relatives). As soon as their money is finished, relatives tend to distance themselves from the returnee, because they are a burden to the family assets (ABC Development, interview 24 august 2007). When a returnee is given money in a later stage or in several parts, they have passed their start-up phase and know better where their priorities lay. It is only then, that they can spend or invest the money in a way it is more sustainable, for example in a business.

Concluding it can be said, that assistance has the potential to be a influential factor to sustainable embeddedness. However, the current assistance facilitates return migration, rather than it is contributing to the re-embeddedness of returnees. First of all, pre-return assistance mainly is focused on physical return. There is no or little assistance that can help with mental preparation or can provide returnees with skills. The current post return assistance can also be viewed as assistance to accomplish return migration, rather than embeddedness. Information given by host government organisations, proofed to be inaccurate. As a result, returnees felt disappointed and tricked into returning. This complicated the work of the local organisations in Sierra Leone and did not contribute positively to the embeddedness of the returnees. Furthermore, organisations did not take into account that it would may be more sustainable to provide (monetary) assistance at a later stage.

4.2.4 Conclusion: Factors influencing embeddedness

In social reality there are many and complex factors which influence re-embeddedness. In this research these factors were categorized into factors related to the individual characteristics of the returnee, events during the migration cycle and pre- and post-return assistance. The factors within these categories are closely interconnected, for example age and the education level. But the categorised factors are also strongly interlinked. The individual characteristics are interlinked with the experiences during the migration cycle; for example a youngster who comes to a host country as an UMA has different experience than an older person. Assistance also is interconnected to the events in the migration cycle. Assistance first of all is part of the migration cycle and is only provided to those who were not forcibly returned and applied for it on forehand.

In table 4.9 the most important factors that are influencing the different dimensions of embeddedness are summarised. In terms of individual characteristics age, marital status and the education level are influencing the economic, social networks and psycho-social dimension of embeddedness. In this way a returnee who is above 31 years, is married and has a high educational level is better re-embedded.

Table 4.9: Most important factors influencing embeddedness⁵

Embeddedness	Primary factors	Secondary factors
Economic	Reasons for return Passiveness in host country Education level Contact/remittances while abroad	Age Reasons to leave Business and non-material labour assistance
Social networks	Reasons for return Contact/remittances while abroad	Marital status Years back
Psycho-social	Reasons for return Passiveness in host country Contact/remittances while abroad Years back	Age Trauma & Stress

Source: Remigration monitoring study Sierra Leone

It can be concluded that the events during the different stages of the migration cycle are the most important influencing factors on re-embeddedness. First of all, the stress and trauma due war and migration experiences influences the extent of psychosocial re-embeddedness. Besides that, both the reason to leave as to return affects re-embeddedness. A returnee, who left Sierra Leone out of economic reasons, is less re-embedded than a returnee, who purely left out of safety reasons. Returnees who are forced to leave the host country are much less embedded. Another important factor in the migration cycle, which has a positive influence on the re-embeddedness, is being in contact with and sending remittances to friends and relatives in Sierra Leone. A huge negative influence on re-embeddedness is the pacifying and patronizing asylum policies in the host country. During the insecure and stressful asylum procedures returnees became passive; they were not able to participate economically and socially in the host society. Upon return they did not have skills and are still passive and as a result they do not have the ability to become re-embedded in Sierra Leone.

In the process of return migration and embeddedness, assistance is complementary to the other categorized factors. None the less, assistance is important and has potential to be a contributing factor to sustainable embeddedness. Assistance from friends and family provide the returnees immediate needs, such as housing after return. But this assistance from relatives and friends is small and therefore the influence is limited. This is in contrast to the business assistance from NGOs or organisations, which can play a positive influencing role for the returnees. However, most of the current assistance that is given by organisations is focused on the return of asylum seekers, and not so much on the embeddedness of these returnees. All returnees were assisted in their physical return, which does not have any major impact on embeddedness. The cash money, which is given by a host government through IOM, when an asylum seeker leaves the country, and the information that is given by host government organisations about the post return assistance, is more an incentive to accomplish return migration than a contribution to re-embeddedness. As a result, returnees were disappointed and felt deceived and the assistance did not contribute positively to the embeddedness of the returnees.

⁵ The primary factors indicate the factors that affect embeddedness to a large extent, the secondary factors indicate the factors that affect embeddedness to a lesser extent but are still relevant.

5 Conclusions and recommendations

In the past chapters, the re-embeddedness of Sierra Leonean return migrants and the influencing factors in this were outlined. To do so, the following question was formulated: *Which factors influence the process of re-embeddedness of involuntary returning ex-refugees, rejected asylum seekers and irregular migrants and what is the role of assistance herein?* In this last chapter, the conclusion of this research will be presented in the first paragraph. Furthermore, recommendations regarding the assistance for Sierra Leonean returnees will be given.

5.1 Conclusions

After having lived in a western country for several years, coming back in a country where a migrant was born and raised is not as easy as it may seem. When Sierra Leoneans left their country, they left everything behind: possessions, houses, friends and family. When returnees come back to Sierra Leone, they mostly come without money, education or skills. The fact that they return empty handed to one of the poorest countries in the world, means extra pressure on resources and services. This makes them an extra burden for society.

In Sierra Leone it became clear that re-embedding takes time. The start-up phase of re-embedding is a learning process for returnees whereby they have to get used to a 'new' and different home country. The majority of the returnees (still) are poorly re-embedded. Only two returnees were able to become highly embedded on all three dimensions. The other returnees who were highly embedded on one dimension, always scored in the middle on the other two dimensions. This makes clear, that the different dimensions of re-embeddedness are interconnected and reinforce each other. Returnees, who are embedded on the social networks dimension, are more likely to become embedded in the other dimensions as well. A strong and reliable social network gives (initial) support to the returnee. The nuclear family has quite a crucial role herein. The nuclear family does not stigmatize as much as other friends or family, and gives most returnees a sense of belonging. Therefore they can help a returnee to become psycho-socially embedded. Social contacts can also provide housing, food and can help a returnee with finding employment.

The different dimensions of re-embeddedness interact and reinforce each other, but they are influenced by many and complex factors as well. In terms of individual characteristics of returnees can be said that: having a high level of education or having learnt a trade, has shown to have a positive influence on re-embeddedness. It can also be noticed, that older returnees and returnees who are married or have returned to their spouse are better embedded than younger and single returnees.

The experiences that returnees had in their migration cycle have a huge impact on the extent to which returnees are embedded in Sierra Leone. Events such as trauma and stress experiences due to the war and the asylum procedure, are limiting factors to embeddedness, if a returnee still suffers from these events. The same thing counts for the pacifying and restricted asylum procedure; returnees do not have improved knowledge or skills which can help them to become embedded as a result of this procedure. Being in contact with and sending remittances to family during the returnees time in the host country is a positive contribution to becoming re-embedded on the social networks dimension. Family is more likely to welcome and give (initial) support to returnees who stayed in contact during their time abroad. This means a returnee can rely on his social network, which enables him to become overall re-embedded.

The most important contributing factor of the migration cycle in the re-embeddedness process is the reason and the agency a returnee has in his return. In this research it became clear that Sierra Leoneans who have no status, but still have the real desire to return, are much more likely to become embedded than those who rather would have stayed in the host country. These returnees did not have much agency in their return and did not have any other option than to return to Sierra Leone. These people did not want to come to Sierra Leone in the first place and do not want to become embedded. They want to re-migrate again as soon as the opportunity occurs. Currently, most returnees do not have much agency in their return; they do not really have a choice in returning, and were not able to develop skills in the host country, which could be used after return. This mainly is caused by the asylum policies in the host country, which are limiting and pacifying to the asylum seekers.

In the process of re-embeddedness, assistance is currently a small factor which contributes to the overall re-embeddedness of returnees. Assistance from NGOs and organisations could be an important and contributing factor to embeddedness, especially in combination with the returnees' own desire or choice to return. For now, the majority of the returnees do not really want to return, and the assistance from NGOs and organisations mainly is focused on physical return.

Returnees who were assisted by an organisation received a little amount of cash money as part of the post-return assistance, to help starting up a new life. Others received money to start up a business. This money only proved to be effective when returnees had the desire to return. When assistance proved to be effective, this was always in addition to personal characteristics and a strong social network. Returnees have to be focused on their future in Sierra Leone, whereby they need something to concentrate on, which enables them to build a future in their home country. When returnees see that the assistance they are receiving and the efforts they are making, are fruitful for their future, re-embeddedness will be easier. When they do not have such a thing, they will never become re-embedded and maybe try to re-migrate again.

5.2 Recommendations

It was concluded that return and embeddedness is a (learning) process, whereby personal characteristics and the migration cycle have a great impact on re-embeddedness. Therefore the need for assistance of returnees varies substantially and assistance must be individually tailored. Besides that, return assistance has proved to be most effective for those, who returned on a more voluntary basis. Currently, most returnees do not have much agency in their return; they do not really have a choice in returning, and were not able to develop skills in the host country, which could be used after return. This mainly is caused by the asylum policies in the host country, which are limiting and pacifying to the asylum seekers. In order to make assistance more effective, facilitators of return assistance must be more critical towards the asylum policies.

In order for NGOs or organisations to give assistance to returnees it must be clear that assistance is meant to help returnees to become embedded and not as incentive to accomplish return migration. Therefore, assistance must not only be focused on facilitating the physical return, as it is done currently. Assistance also has to be available for returnees in retroaction.

For assistance to be more contributing to successful and sustainable re-embeddedness it is inevitable to give comprehensive assistance to returnees in all phases of return. To give this kind of assistance, there first of all has to be some kind of assessment with the returnees. This assessment has to determine what kind of skills a returnee has and what he needs. In

general there are three things that are important for every returnee: a social network, realistic information about the situation in Sierra Leone and employment which gives a living wage.

As shown in this report, having a social network, on which returnees can rely when they return, makes it easier to re-embed. Therefore, in preparation and after return, the social networks of a returnee have to be restored and strengthened. One way that assistance can contribute to this, is family tracing. Also in preparation of return realistic expectations have to be created, so a returnee knows where he is coming back to. This information can, for example, come from the returnee's social network or from a network of returnees. A network of returnees in Sierra Leone can serve as a resource, that takes care of reliable and realistic information flows in preparation of return. After return this network can serve as a group in which returnees can come together and share information and experiences.

Most important to re-embeddedness in terms of assistance is post-return assistance with a focus on re-embeddedness, possibly to begin with airport assistance from the local (partner) organisation. Besides that, it is important that assistance has a long term effect, wherefore there has to be a focus on economically stimulating assistance. The current post-return assistance mainly is focused on a type of loan as business assistance. To improve this assistance it is important to take a realistic business plan and to monitor the business into consideration. It is good for a returnee, to make a plan(ning) in the host country, if he wants to start a business. But there has to be room for change and adjustment, concerning the business plan and assistance, because the situation after return can be different than expected. Business assistance has a positive influence on especially economic re-embeddedness and to a lesser extent also on social and psycho-social embeddedness. However, it is important to realise that not every returnee has business skills or wants to start a business and therefore other kinds of assistance which stimulate economical embeddedness have to be considered. The best way is to have a project in which the returnee can get employment where the needs of the returnee and community are addressed, for example, a teacher in a (new) education project, or a doctor or nurse in a (new) health project. In order to enable returnees to do this, it is extremely important to make sure a returnee has the right education or skills that are required for the job, which mostly is not the case. Returnees often did not finish their education in Sierra Leone and were not given the opportunity to continue their education in the host country. Considerable is, that when a returnee does not have the right skills, you have to take care of the (vocational) education for the returnee.

When assistance is given by an NGO or organisation it is important that the returnee knows the possibilities and limitations of the available assistance. The given assistance has to be transparent, in a way that it does not create unrealistic expectations like unlimited or unconditional assistance. Furthermore the returnee and the given assistance must be monitored. A proper relation between the partner NGOs and organisations in Sierra Leone and in host countries also is important. There have to be clear agreements, good communication and on a regular basis between partners in a way that assistance is transparent and fruitful.

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Appendixes

Appendix I: Individual characteristics and migration history of respondents

Name	Sex	Age	Marital status	Left	Host country	Year of Return	Assisted by
Alfred	m	24	Engaged/in a relationship	2002	The Netherlands	2006	none
Edugu	m	36	Married	1999	The Netherlands	2004	none
Sahr	m	37	Engaged/in a relationship	2000	The Netherlands	2005	none
Jusu	m	22	Single	2002	The Netherlands	2005	none
Mariama	f	24	Married	2002	The Netherlands	2006	none
Sheku	m	25	Engaged/in a relationship	2001	The Netherlands	2005	none
Sorious	m	24	Engaged/in a relationship	2001	The Netherlands	2004	Mediation Agency for Return & IOM
Nabie	m	43	Married	2001	United Kingdom	2002	IOM
Kanei	m	26	Single	2001	The Netherlands	2003	IOM
Abbigail	f	44	Married	2001	United Kingdom	2004	IOM
Edriam	f	53	Married	1999	The Netherlands	2005	IOM
Momodou	m	29	Single	2001	The Netherlands	2006	IOM
Ibrahim	m	28	Single	2005	The Netherlands	2006	IOM
Dawoh	m	26	Married	2000	The Netherlands	2001	none
Sulaiman	m	25	Engaged/in a relationship	1996	Germany	2001	none

Return migration to Sierra Leone

			P				
Babatunde	m	36	Married	1994	Italy	2004	none
Sheriff	m	27	Single	1995	Germany	2005	none
Mussa	m	27	Engaged/i n a relationshi p	1997	The Netherlands	1997	none
Ibrahim	m	26	Single	2003	The Netherlands	2005	none
Claudia	f	40	Single	2001	The Netherlands	2005	IOM
Mustafa	m	29	Single	2004	The Netherlands	2004	none
Aiah	m	36	Engaged/i n a relationshi p	2002	United Kingdom	2004	IOM
Alluzo	m	45	Single	1992	United States of America	1996	none
Idriss	m	33	Married	2001	The Netherlands	2006	none
Abubakarr	m	32	Single	1991	United States of America	2001	none
Sylvester	m	34	Single	2000	Portugal	2000	none
Victor	m	30	Married	2003	The Netherlands	2005	Mediation Agency for Return & IOM
Saiku	m	38	Married	2002	The Netherlands	2005	IOM
Babatunde	m	30	Married	2001	The Netherlands	2005	none
Mohammed	m	22	Single	2001	The Netherlands	2006	none
Sylvanus	m	40	Married	2001	The Netherlands	2004	IOM
Kosseh	m	32	Single	1999	The Netherlands	2004	IOM
Andrew	m	32	Single	2000	United Kingdom	2004	IOM
Ismael	m	30	Married	2003	The Netherlands	2006	IOM
Arif	m	24	Engaged/i n a relationshi p	1997	The Netherlands	2006	IOM
Rosemary	f	67	Engaged/i n a	2001	The Netherlands	2005	IOM

Return migration to Sierra Leone

			relationshi p				
Tommy	M	27	Single	2001	The Netherlands	2005	IOM
Sylvester	m	40	Single	2006	The Netherlands	2007	IOM
Safea	m	29	Single	2000	The Netherlands	2005	IOM
Emmanuel	m	23	Single	2002	The Netherlands	2007	IOM
Jusu	m	40	Married	2001	United Kingdom	2006	IOM

With six other returnees, an interview was not possible, because of serious psychological conditions. Instead, a short conversation was held. With four other respondents, a short conversation was held, because they either did not have enough time to conduct a full interview, or did not want to give a full interview.

Appendix II: Interviews with stakeholders

Organisation	Function
IOM	Chief of mission
IOM	MIDA Coordinator
ABC Development	Program Director
Christian Brothers	Program Director
UNDP	Peace & development department

Appendix III: Regression analyses

Factors	Economic embeddedness			Social Networks embeddedness			Psycho-social embeddedness		
	Constant	B (*sig)	Coefficient of determination	Constant	B (*sig)	Coefficient of determination	Constant	B (*sig)	Coefficient of determination
Assistance⁶									
Received assistance total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Assistance NGO total (X times)	45.506	0.748 (*0.557)	0.9%	60.155	-0.199 (*0.892)	0.0%	58.160	-2.058 (*0.108)	4.7%
Assistance NGO total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Assistance host government total (X times)	44.716	2.465 (*0.320)	2.5%	62.785	-2.861 (*0.317)	2.6%	51.897	0.904 (*0.762)	0.2%
Assistance host total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Assistance home government (X times)	45.791	16.709 (*0.088)	7.3%	58.930	7.320 (*0.523)	1.1%	52.258	6.465 (*0.587)	0.8%
Assistance home government total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Assistance institution (X times)	42.656	1.311 (*0.256)	3.3%	59.666	-0.066 (*0.996)	0.0%	58.501	1.544 (*0.263)	3.2%
Assistance institution total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Assistance family/friends (X times)	50.499	-0.994 (*0.506)	1.1%	58.614	0.333 (*0.847)	0.1%	46.646	2.015 (*0.258)	3.3%
Assistance family/friends total	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-

Return migration to Sierra Leone

total										
Financial assistance	-	-	-		-	-	-		-	-
Conditional financial assistance	-	-	-		-	-	-		-	-
Business assistance (relatives/friends and NGOs)	42.59 5	15.186 (*0.017)	14.1%		58.1 70	5.511 (*0.468)	1.4%		52.3 89	4.861 (*0.5 23)
Non-material labour market assistance (relatives/friends and NGO's)	44.83 1	15.169 (*0.048)	9.7%		59.1 42	2.941 (*0.745)	0.3%		53.1 94	- 1.786 (*0.8 49)
Non material information assistance	-	-			-	-	-		-	-
Other non material assistance (relatives/friends and NGO's)	46.85 8	0.962 (*0.873)	0.1%		61.8 63	-3.790 (*0.583)	0.8%		56.3 06	- 5.836 (*0.4 15)

Return migration to Sierra Leone

Psychosocial or medical assistance (relatives/friends and NGO's)	48.49 7	-4.414 (*0.521)	1.1 %		62.03 0	-9.780 (*0.214)	3.9%		51.489	5.739 (*0.485)	1.3%
assistance before return from NGO (total)	51.07 1	-7.484 (*0.201)	4.1 %		64.90 1	-10.776 (*0.108)	6.5%		62.807	-20.332 (*0.002)	21.4%
Pre-return Assistance about asylum NGO	48.34 5	-3.157 (*0.627)	7.8		58.54 9	3.743 (*0.617)	8.0%		55.748	-9.767 (0.205)	20.2%
Pre-return Assistance about situation SL NGO	-	-	-		-	-	-		-	-	-
Pre-return Training/education from NGO	-	-	-		-	-	-		-	-	-
Pre-return Mental assistance from NGO	-	-	-		-	-	-		-	-	-
Pre-return finding contacts in SL from NGO	-	-	-		-	-	-		-	-	-
assistance before return from Home/host government	42.65 4	9.306 (*0.110)	6.4 %		62.75 0	-6.063 (*0.372)	2.1%		53.338	0.876 (*0.902)	0.0%
assistance before return from friends/relatives (total)	47.35 6	0.115 (*0.985)	0.0 %		62.47 7	-5.049 (*0.461)	1.4%		55.237	-4.185 (*0.557)	0.9%
Assistance before return total	-	-	-		-	-	-		-	-	-
Assistance during return	42.73 8	5.647 (*0.471)	1.3 %		57.73 8	2.299 (*0.800)	0.2%		45.313	9.136 (*0.329)	2.4%
assistance after return by NGO	43.85 4	6.963 (*0.235)	3.6 %		57.70 8	3.780 (*0.579)	0.8%		53.888	-1.950 (*0.783)	0.2%
assistance after return by home/host government	-	-	-		-	-	-		-	-	-
assistance after return by friends/relatives	59.38 9	-10.506 (*0.205)4	4.1 %		65.00	-6.274 (*0.514)	1.1%		54.449	-1.827 (*0.855)	0.1%
assistance after return total	-	-	-		-	-	-		-	-	-
Social categories											
Sexe	40.46 2	6.202 (*0.492)	1.2 %		52.37 5	6.479 (*0.533)	1.0%		68.294	-13.730 (*0.200)	4.2%

Return migration to Sierra Leone

Age Cs: 18-30 31-47 48-65 <66	41.95 8	12.953 (*0.029)	16.4%	58.59 8	1.549 (*0.830)	4.4%	48.921	10.374 (*0.157)	7.7%
		-			-			-	
		-			-			-	
Marital status CS: Single Engaged Married	43.88 0	0.361 (*0.962)	6.7%	53.75 0	-2.361 (*0.771)	19.4%	47.466	5.362 (*0.556)	6.1%
		10.138 (*0.131)			18.780 (*0.011)			12.436 (*0.123)	
Children	41.21 2	9.092 (* 0.147)	5.3%	53.33 3	9.241 (*0.203)	4.1%	45.722	10.495 (*0.163)	4.5%
Ethnic minority/majority ⁷	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Pre-education	42.79 3	1.936 (* 0.371)	2.1%	49.80 2	4.118 (*0.095)	7.0%	45.828	2,954 (*0.253)	3.3%
Migration Cycle									
First reason CS: general unsafety due to conflict Personal unsafety due to conflict Discrimination Economic Other	49.31 7	-3.419 (*0.594)	26.6%	62.58 3	-10.083 (*0.154)	34.6%	50.027	-1.042 (*0.903)	8.3%
		-			-			-	
		-13.169 (*0.071)			-12.676 (*0.108)			6.201 (*0.517)	
		-			-			-	
Combined reason CS: Safety Economic	46.51 1	-3.149 (*0.594)	40.2%	58.42 4	-5.091 (*0.626)	13.8%	48.767	13.951 (*0.217)	7.9%

Return migration to Sierra Leone

Pers&family		38.906 (*0.001)			29.076 (*0.068)			22.066 (*0.192)		
Fear&(ec or pers)		5.156 (*0.393)			5.465 (*0.512)			5.967 (*0.504)		
Econ&pers		-33.511 (*0.005)			-15.924 (*0.310)			0.712 (*0.966)		
Expectation of getting permit	-	-	-		-	-		-	-	
Duration abroad	50.40 1	-0.062 (* 0.512)	1.1 %		62.09 5	-0.051 (*0.640)	0.6%	52.266	0.013 (*0.909)	0.0%
Housing secure CS: Asylum Insecure	49.92 1	0.079 (*0.997)			60.50 4	4.496 (*0.842)			14.998 (*0.515)	
Semi-insecure independent		-4.676 (*0.482)	2.2 %			-0.270 (*0.971)	6.3%		2.919 (*0.701)	10.4%
other		-7.171 (*0.506)				-0.296 (*0.980)			10.239 (*0.408)	
		0.912 (*0.965)				-34.254 (*0.135)			-37.085 (*0.112)	
Education abroad CS:yes No	45.02 4	1.1629 (*0.812)			59.73 2	2.374 (*0.762)		51.170	3.510 (*0.672)	
No,not aplicable		12.476 (*0.392)	2.9 %			6.518 (*0.695)	3.8%		1.174 (*0.947)	0.5%
Yes, only langauge course		6.286 (*0.480)				-8.482 (*0.407)			0.715 (*0.947)	
Employed abroad	47.05 2	0.757 (* 0.898)	0.0 %		60.07 9	-0.892 (*0.896)	0.0%	50.710	4.467 (*0.527)	1.0%
Savings abroad	46.63	2.308	0.4		58.02	4.743	1.1%	49.882	8.807	3.6%

Return migration to Sierra Leone

	3	(* 0.711)	%		5	(*0.508)			(*0.234)		
Remittances abroad	45.54 7	6.983 (* 0.292)	2.8 %		55.77 8	14.412 (*0.055)	9.1%		51.139	6.524 (*0.413)	1.7%
Contact abroad	43.80 9	6.170 (* 0.301)	2.7 %		55.71 1	6.720 (*0.329)	2.4%		47.046	9.982 (*0.160)	5.0%
Health abroad	-	-	-		-	-	-		-	-	-
Status return											
CS: In asylum procedure	55.95 2	-			71.78 6	-			66.507	-	
Temporarily protection											
Rejected in procedure		-5.558 (*0.417)	19. 7%			-15.384 (*0.112)	7.0%			-19.508 (*0.048)	12.3%
Illegal		-22.394 (*0.014)				-13.202 (*0.227)				-12.885 (*0.242)	
Other		-				-				-	
Reason return											
CS: Voluntary but no opportunities to stay	13.36 3	-			60.88 2	-			51.280	-	
Fully voluntary		-				-	4.1%			-	18.2%
Pressured by authorities		-4.275 (*0.509)				-2.387 (*0.752)				3.974 (*0.583)	
Forcible returned											
Other personal related reasons		-				-				-	
Years back	44.14 4	1.148 (* 0.359)	2.2 %		53.00 2	2.328 (*0.102)	6.7%		41.534	3.979 (*0.005)	18.1%

Appendix IV: Score on the level of embeddedness and future plans

Cases	ECONOMIC embeddedness	SOCIAL embeddedness	PSYCHOSOCIAL embeddedness	Plans: stay or leave
1	45,83333333	45	49,30555556	Re-emigrate illegally
2	45,83333333	57,5	42,99242424	No plans
3	45,83333333	21,25	50,18939394	Apply for asylum in other country
4	58,33333333	52,5	14,58333333	Other:Try to migrate legally to finish education
5	39,16666667	66,66666667	40,83333333	Try to become embedded in society
6	38,33333333	62,5	41,66666667	Try to become embedded in society
7	40,83333333	51,25	69,50757576	Try to become embedded in society
8	87,5	100	83,33333333	Other: Try to become embedded & only go abroad to study and visit
9	52,5	77,5	42,1875	Apply for asylum in other country
10	83,33333333	75	58,33333333	Try to become embedded in society
11	61,66666667	58,75	53,33333333	Try to become embedded in society
12	43,33333333	32,5	36,45833333	Try to become embedded in society
13	5	45	34,89583333	Other:No plans, but would like educatin and a job
14	50	58,75	41,66666667	Re-emigrate illegally
15	52,5	58,75	66,04166667	Apply for asylum in other country
16	60,83333333	81,25	83,85416667	No plans
17	80	58,33333333	57,00757576	Try to become embedded in society
18	60	90	74,30555556	Try to become embedded in society
19	45,83333333	57,5	18,75	Try to become embedded in society
20	54,16666667	51,25	20,83333333	No plans
21	54,16666667	51,66666667	69,27083333	Try to become embedded in society
22	50	51,25	45,3125	Try to become embedded in society
23	21	40	64,0625	No plans
24	34,16666667	38,75	27,46212121	Other
25	34,16666667	81,25	85,98484848	Other
26	66,66666667	75	92,91666667	Other: Try to become embedded& go and study

Return migration to Sierra Leone

27	55,83333333	100	56,43939394	Try to become embedded in society
28	55,83333333	57,5	66,66666667	Try to become embedded in society
29	13,75	75	71,59090909	Try to become embedded in society
30	11	38,75	20,83333333	Other: Wants to go to the Netherlands, but no money/opportunity
31	62,5	81,25	68,75	Other: Try to become embedded & only migrate on concrete action (study/conference)
32	72,5	71,25	72,39583333	Try to become embedded in society
33	52,5	13,75	53,64583333	Other: Try to become embedded when enough money, otherwise migrate
34	50	65	66,28787879	Other: Try to become embedded when enough money, otherwise migrate
35	40,83333333	13,75	7,765151515	Other: Tries to get permit for the Netherlands
36	24	68,75	71,35416667	Re-emigrate illegally
37	26	75	30,83333333	No plans: to build future or to migrate
38	50,83333333	26,25	14,20454545	Apply for asylum in other country
39	16	57,5	43,22916667	Other Try to become embedded & migrate for study only
40	45,83333333	62,5	82,29166667	Try to become embedded in society
41	55,83333333	100	77,08333333	Try to become embedded in society