

Morten Bøås and Anne Hatløy

After the 'Storm'

Economic activities among returning youths.
The case of Voinjama



Fafo

Research Program on Trafficking and Child Labour

Morten Bøås and Anne Hatløy

After the 'Storm'
Economic activities among children and youth
in return areas in post war Liberia:
The case of Voinjama

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Foreword

The Fafo Research Programme on Trafficking and Child Labour

Over the past seven years, Fafo has developed a research profile on child labour and policies to combat it. Studies of work life are a core research area for Fafo, and our surveys of living conditions have targeted children and youth as a particularly important group to be examined. Fafo's origins in the trade union movement have resulted in a particular interest in developing institutional frameworks for regulating work and labour rights issues in the best interests of national economic development and the work force.

The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs drew upon Fafo's expertise to assist in preparing and hosting the International Conference on Child Labour in Oslo in 1997. Since then, Fafo has been commissioned by the International Labour Organisation, the World Bank, and others to provide applied research of interest to those combating child labour. The studies have been multifaceted and have addressed such issues as child labour and international trade, child relocation and domestic work, how to identify and measure child labour in national statistics, and how to identify and study child soldiers and the trafficking of children.

In 2002, the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs generously agreed to finance a Fafo programme on child labour, enabling us to collate and consolidate our research on the subject. International efforts to combat child labour must be knowledge-based; that is, they require a good empirical understanding of its causes, forms, and extent. One challenge is to develop methodologies that can strengthen the planning and efficiency of national programs to counter child labour. It is Fafo's aim to contribute to this goal by providing knowledge and methods to map the challenges and measure results.

The specific objectives of the programme are to:

1. Help improve the empirical understanding of the variations of child labour, including their social and family contexts;
2. Improve and validate qualitative and quantitative methods to study and map child labour, with a particular focus on its worst forms;

3. Explore how an understanding of children as actors may help develop preventive measures aimed at improving living and working conditions for children and reducing the prevalence of child labour.

We are pleased to present the sixth and final working paper in the series from this programme, which is coordinated by Anne Hatløy. This report documents the kind of formal and informal work that children and youth may be involved with in the context of a return situation in a fragile post-conflict period. Previous reports include *Achievements and Setbacks in the Fights Against Child Labour: Assessment of the Oslo Conference on Child Labour October 1997* by Lise Bjerkan and Christophe Gironde; *Travel to Uncertainty* by Kari Hauge Riisøen, Anne Hatløy and Lise Bjerkan; *Identification of Street Children: Characteristics of Street Children in Bamako and Accra* by Anne Hatløy and Anne Huser; *Child Labour and Cocoa Production in West Africa: the Case of Côte d'Ivoire and Ghana* by Morten Bøås and Anne Huser; and *Living in a Material World – Children and Youth in Alluvial Diamond Mining in Kono District, Sierra Leone* by Morten Bøås and Anne Hatløy.

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The fieldwork on which this report is based was carried out in November 2005, led by Morten Bøås and Anne Hatløy. I would like to thank the authors of this report, Morten Bøås and Anne Hatløy, and research director Jon Pedersen, who provided valuable input during the work. Special thanks also to John Bryant and our affiliated team of Liberian staff -- Sarah Saah, Verney Stubblefield, Vashti Goe and Kukor Davis -- from the Liberian Institute of Statistics and Geoservices (LISGIS), for their indispensable contribution to the fieldwork, and also to Henriette Lunde and Christopher Bryhn Pettersen for valuable assistance during the fieldwork. We would also like to thank Dr. Edward Liberty, the Director of LISGIS, who provided invaluable support for our work. Special thanks also to all the children, youth, adults and organisations in Liberia who were willing to share their experiences and histories with us.

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Mark Taylor
Managing Director
Fafo Institute for Applied International Studies

1 Introduction

Fourteen years of nearly relentless war in Liberia came to an end in August 2003 when president Charles Taylor left Monrovia for exile in Nigeria.¹ The consequences of the war have been devastating. Both the economy and infrastructure were destroyed. Those not part of a military faction became prey to the various militias and rebel armies that roamed the country. Many were forced to leave their home communities, ending up either as internally displaced persons (IDPs) or refugees in neighbouring countries. During the second part of the Liberian civil war (1999 - 2003), when the rebel groups Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) marched towards Monrovia from, respectively, the northern and the southern parts of the country, they pushed a good part of the civilian population in front of them. Huge IDP camps were therefore established around Monrovia, Buchanan, Gbargna, Zwedru, and other larger towns. At the time, around 315,000 people were officially recognised as IDPs, in addition to the approximately 105,000 registered as refugees in neighbouring countries. The actual numbers were probably much higher. Many have returned, but others have not, and still live as refugees or IDPs.

The Liberian civil war affected all parts of the population, but its impact was particularly felt among the most vulnerable groups, i.e. women and children. Displacement also increases one's vulnerability. This study is concerned with returnee children and youth (between 10 and 18 years of age).² The study site – Voinjama in Lofa County, northern Liberia – was chosen both because the level of wartime displacement in the area was extremely high, but also because it is now one of the main return areas in Liberia. All the children in this study have a background as IDPs or refugees. The 'storm' of the civil war is now over, but life is still difficult in this part of Liberia.

The situation of returnees is an important but understudied dimension of the economic activities of West African children. Indeed, understanding the situation of

¹ Charles Taylor's exile in Nigeria came to an end on 29 March 2006. He was extradited first to Liberia before being transferred to the Special Court for Sierra Leone, where he is currently facing 17 charges of war crimes and crimes against humanity for his alleged role in Sierra Leone's brutal civil war.

² Children and youth are used synonymously in this report, unless specifically indicated otherwise.

returning children and their families is crucial not just to the study of children and youth in West Africa, but to more general planning for policy interventions in return situations in Liberia and elsewhere in the region. Return situations are most often chaotic, which is both a cause and effect of the fact that they are difficult to design: people tend to return in a swift but haphazard manner. This is certainly the case in Lofa. Yet the situation in this Liberian county also shows us how important it is to take into consideration the various groups who originally lived in the return area, the relationship between these groups and the dynamics of the war, and how and in what way both their background and their war experiences affects the economic activities of children, youth, and their families.

In the second part of the Liberian civil war, Lofa County and Voinjama District were almost completely emptied of people. As LURD and Charles Taylor's forces fought to control the area, most of the population fled – some to Monrovia, others across the border to Guinea and Sierra Leone, and still others seeking refuge in the bush. The county and its towns and villages were thoroughly looted, and the destruction of dwellings and infrastructure was widespread. It has been estimated that, when the war ended in August 2003, only 300 civilians remained in Voinjama City.

This is now changing rapidly: the population in Lofa increased by 46 percent from July to the end of October 2004, while in Voinjama District, the population increased from about 20,000 to 30,000 during the same five months. From June to October 2004, the number of households increased from 3,300 to 7,200.³ Return was further facilitated nationwide when, as part of the preparations for the 11 October 2005 parliamentary and presidential elections, the IDP camps referenced above were emptied – with the assistance of the international community – so that people would return to their home areas to vote. The returnees to Lofa include both Mandingo refugees returning from Guinea and IDPs, mainly Loma and Mandingo, returning from the camps around Monrovia. People continue to return, but there is not much to return to. For most returnees, it will take considerable time before their life can be characterised as having returned to normal. Almost everything must be rebuilt; and the fields, having not been farmed for a long time, must be re-established. However, many of the returnees lack even the most basic agricultural tools and the seeds needed to replant their farms. People therefore try to carve out a new existence as best as they can. Some have started to farm – others have not. Some do petty trading, whereas for others this is not an option, as they lack even

³ Lawrence Golightly (2004). ICRC Population update of Lofa County – July 2004, ICRC: Voinjama, see also Lawrence Golightly (2004). ICRC Population update of Lofa County – October 2004, ICRC: Voinjama. More recent figures do not exist, but the information we collected shows that the trend has continued, see Figure 5.1, Chapter 5.

the few resources needed to embark on this as a coping strategy. The gun does not rule Lofa anymore, but life is still very hard for the returning population. Most are happy to have been able to return home, but the future is still uncertain.

In rural Africa, children tend to work from an early age, and to work many hours per day (see Bass 2004; Kielland and Tovo 2006). This should also have been the case in Voinjama; in fact, because this is a return situation, one could expect that the work pressure on children would be even stronger than in a normal African setting, as labour would be in high demand in the effort to re-establish farming communities. However, the findings presented in this study contradict the traditional African picture of hard-working children. As we will show in Chapter 6, the children in Voinjama work much less than children in other places in rural Africa. We return to this issue in detail in that chapter, but would here like to suggest that the explanation for this relates to the particulars of the return situation in this area.

In this report, we will map the kind of formal and informal work children and youth (in the age group 10-18) are currently involved in, differentiating between children living in (a) an urban area (Voinjama city), (b) the rural Mandingo villages, and (c) the other rural villages.⁴ The analysis will to a certain degree also distinguish between children living with their own parents and children living with relatives. However, the overall majority of the children currently living in Voinjama are living with their families. To some degree, we can say that these are the among the more fortunate children emerging from the civil war, as they either were not separated from their families during the war, or were reunited with their families during or after the war. This suggests that their level of social security is higher than children living on their own in other parts of Liberia (mainly in or around Monrovia), or as refugees in Guinea or Sierra Leone.

In the following chapters of this report, we first briefly describe the war, and in particular how it affected Lofa County and Voinjama. We then present and discuss the fieldwork and the research methods utilised. Chapter 4 outlines the background of the children in Voinjama, including information about their parents, education, and war experience. The following chapter describes and analyses their migration pattern during and after the war, while the analysis in chapter 6 explains their current economic activities. A chapter discussing how these children see their own future follows, before the report concludes on a discussion on the research and policy implications of our findings.

⁴ As almost the entire population in this area of Voinjama fled during the war, it was not possible to look at differences between children that moved during the war versus those that stayed at home, as was the intention before the fieldwork. The level of displacement that we found in this part of Liberia was higher than that suggested by any of the reports and observations we consulted before going into the field.

2 The Liberian civil war and its effects on the population in Voinjama

To understand the challenges facing children in Liberia and, in particular, Voinjama, it is necessary to grasp what the civil war was about. Some have seen it as just another example of an African ‘resource’ war, where children and youth were manipulated to fight on behalf of the interests of competing but equally corrupt elites.⁵ This is not an assumption that we support. On the contrary, we believe that the Liberian conflict was concerned with much deeper questions about the composition of the Liberian state and polity. The background for the war is found in Liberian history. This implies that the various international agencies now working in Liberia could easily find themselves facing severe difficulties if their approach is built on a simplified understanding of the conflict. This is, as we will show, particularly the case for Lofa County and Voinjama. The Liberian war is not a ‘new’ war, but the present manifestation of a social conflict that started when the first settlers arrived in the early 19th century (Bøås 2003).

During recent decades, Liberia has become synonymous with war, chaos, and destruction. This picture clearly captures an important aspect of daily life in Liberia. However, when media and other observers report about death, destruction, and human suffering, it is crucial that these images are contextualised. What we must keep in mind is that, until 1980, Liberia was *de facto* an apartheid state – but because a black rather than white elite ruled Liberia, it was not a major concern for the international community (see Brown 1982). For the agencies now working for the improvement of living conditions and human rights in Liberia, however, this particular history should matter a lot, both as a means of understanding the war and as a precondition for their policy interventions. Of particular relevance is the fact that the spectre of war is nothing new in Liberia; indeed, the argument can be made that Liberia has been at ‘war’ with itself from the very beginning of its existence as an independent state (Bøås 1997, 2003; see also Moran 2006). This is first and

⁵ The Liberian war has been portrayed as a primary example of Mary Kaldor’s ‘new wars’, drawing attention both to the economic motives and the global character of the conflict (see Kaldor 2001). However, as even authors closely associated with the ‘greed and grievance’ thesis (see Berdal and Malone 2000) have later argued, to focus excessively on material explanations may lead to one-sided explanations of conflict (see Berdal 2003).

foremost a 'war' over the questions of what it means to be a Liberian, and how the polity of the country should be constituted. The task for the various stakeholders currently involved in Liberia is not simply putting Liberia back together again, but – for the first time – constructing a state and a population based on the principle of inclusion instead of exclusion (Bøås 2005).⁶

The constitution of Liberia

Liberia consists of 16 major indigenous groups of people, each possessing its own traditions, customs, religious philosophy, and language and dialects.⁷ However, in order to understand current Liberia, we must acknowledge the experience of the group of freed slaves repatriated to the West African coast from the United States between 1822 and 1861. These freed slaves established the Republic of Liberia, and became known as the Americo-Liberians. The number of repatriates was never large – there were about 12,000 colonists between 1822 and 1861 – and small settlements were created along the coast (Gifford 1993). The intention behind this programme of repatriation was to create a safe haven for freed slaves; the problem, however, was that they were just as much strangers in Liberia as they had been in the United States. In 1847, the small settlements of colonisers joined together to declare themselves a republic and adopted a constitution based on the American model. According to the constitution, all men are born equally free and independent, and have certain natural, inherent, and inalienable rights. This was, however, only in theory and not in practice. Given a land to govern, the Americo-Liberians built their system of rule on the only political and administrative system with which they were familiar: the system of the plantations in the deep south of the United States. The main difference was, of course, that this time they were the 'masters', while the indigenous population in the country they had been given to govern became their slaves (Bøås 1997). This meant that 'all men' did not mean all men who inhabited the area to which the constitution laid claim; on the contrary, the constitution strongly delineated between the repatriated and the indigenous. The members of the so-called 'native tribes' were not eligible for election or voting. This institutionalisation of

⁶ For a more comprehensive analysis of the war, we refer to Bøås (1997, 2003, 2005; Ellis (1999), Huband 1998; Utas (2003) Richards, Archibald, Bruce, Modad, Mulbah, Varpilah and Vincent (2005) and Moran (2006).

⁷ These are the Bassa, Belle, Dey, Gbandi, Gio, Gola, Grebo, Kissi, Kpelle, Krahn, Kru, Loma, Mandingo, Mano, Mende and Vai, but as Lofa County and Voinjama District are inhabited predominantly with people of Loma and Mandingo origin, it is these two groups that this report primarily concerns.

‘masters’ and ‘servants’ laid the foundation for the entrenched alienation between the different ethnic groups in Liberia, and between these groups and the new upper class constituted by the Americo-Liberians. The intention behind this strategy was obvious. The repatriates, as an emerging economic elite, wanted to secure their domination over political and economic life in the newly constituted nation-state. Apart from some reforms, mainly cosmetic in nature, this system of rule stayed in place until a group of young officers conducted a coup in April 1979.

Samuel Doe, a young man of Krahn origin, led this coup. Initially the coup was well received among ordinary Liberians. However, it soon became apparent that the only thing separating Doe’s regime from his predecessors’ was that the new regime lacked the facade of glamour and elegance with which the former Americo-Liberian rulers had surrounded themselves. Doe’s reign quickly turned out to be a nightmare of corruption, grand theft of state resources, murder, rape, plunder and other human rights abuses. The result was that the new rulers effectively cemented the ethnification of the Liberian polity that originally began with the administrative boundaries established by Americo-Liberian rule. Thus, ethnicity became even more politicised and polarised as the social construction of difference between different groups increased. It was within the context of mismanagement of an already dysfunctional state that the Liberian civil war started on Christmas Eve 1989.

The war in Lofa County

Lofa is the northernmost Liberian county, and Voinjama is the largest city and county capital. The two main ethnic groups are the Loma and the Mandingo, although Kissi, Kpelle, and Gio and Mano communities also exist in Lofa County. The county comprises green and fertile mountainous land. It is the site of Mount Wuteve, the highest mountain in Liberia.⁸ Once Liberia’s breadbasket, Lofa has always been a world apart from Monrovia and central Liberia. Nevertheless, the area was quickly integrated into the war. This was partly due to the dynamics of the war itself, but also due to pre-existing tension between the Loma – who consider themselves autochthonous to the area – and the Mandingo, who are generally seen as latecomers. Different stories exist about the settlement pattern of the Lofa area. Most scholars believe that the Loma arrived before the Mandingo in the 16th century, whereas the first people of Mandingo origin came into the area in the 17th century – and it was

⁸ Mount Wuteve is 1,380 metres high.

only as late as the second half of the 19th century that larger groups of Mandingo people immigrated into Lofa from southeastern Guinea (see Højbjerg 2005). This migration changed the social and political fabric of Lofa, as it brought both Islam and the Mandingo trade networks to this area. For many people of Loma origin, a narrative of Mandingo expansion and imperialism is an integral part of their cosmology. However, the basic problem today is that, in Lofa as in other parts of Liberia, people of Mandingo origin are not considered proper Liberians, but seen as strangers and foreigners (see Bøås 2005).

Consequently, the relationship between the two main ethnic groups in Lofa has been tense and hostile, particularly since the beginning of the war in 1989-90. The Mandingo people accuse the Loma of supporting Taylor's forces when they reached this part of Liberia in autumn 1990, whereas the Loma believe that the attacks in 1992 on Loma towns by the Mandingo militia, United Liberation Movement for Democracy in Liberia (ULIMO),⁹ were unjustified and mainly carried out in order to grab their land and steal their belongings. A similar pattern is evident after LURD crossed over the border from Guinea in 1998-99: the Loma claim that LURD forces – also a Mandingo-dominated movement – attacked their villages indiscriminately.¹⁰ The same tension is also present in the current return situation, and it came to the forefront during the elections in October and November 2005. In the first round of the presidential elections, the Mandingo voted for their candidate, the former Mandingo warlord, Alhaji Kromah, and his All Liberian Coalition (ALCOP). In the Mandingo towns along the border to Guinea, Kromah received over 95 percent of the votes. However, as the Mandingo are only a majority in a few places in Lofa, mainly along the border, Kromah only received about 18 percent of the total votes in the county, taking him to second place in the first presidential round in Lofa. The main reason for Kromah's strong showing among the Mandingo is that the former warlord is seen by them as a hero, the one who defended them not only against Taylor's forces, but also against Taylor's allies among the Loma.¹¹

⁹ ULIMO was originally established in Sierra Leone by members of Samuel Doe's fragmented army and Liberian refugees. Most of the original ULIMO fighters were of Krahn and Mandingo origin. Under the leadership of Alhaji Kromah, a Mandingo and former Doe official, ULIMO first fought in southeastern Sierra Leone before it fought its way back to Liberia and Lofa County. See Gberie (2005); Reno (2007).

¹⁰ LURD was formed in Guinea as a successor to the Mandingo faction of ULIMO, just after Taylor's victory in the 1997 elections. For further details, see Huband (1998); Reno (1998); Ellis (1999); Bøås (2005); Reno (2007).

¹¹ As a consequence of the nature of the war in Lofa, the Loma formed their own militia, Lofa Defence Force. It was established with support from the Poro society in 1993-94. Its political leader was Francois Massaquoi. See Ellis (1999).

In the Mandingo collective memory, the massacres in Bakiedou in 1990 and in other Mandingo towns and the wartime burning of their mosques are still very much alive. Their dual sense of ethnic solidarity and uncertainty – given that their overall position in the Liberian polity is contested – is an integral part of daily life for Mandingos, including the children and youth in this area. The fact that both Lomas and Mandingos are now returning from both refugee camps in Guinea and IDP camps in Liberia make the situation in Lofa even more tense, as conflicts over both land and houses are taking place. Those who have returned first, mostly Mandingos, have settled on their original land, but also in houses and land that once, sometimes nearly 15 years ago, belonged to people of Loma origin. The war, both in the form of physical destruction, but also in terms of memory and identity, is still very much present in Lofa, and influences people's lives. Almost all inhabitants have extensive experiences of migration, as well as other wartime experiences that affect the kinds of coping strategies and educational opportunities that are currently available to them. The experiences of war and migration will therefore be commented upon throughout this report.

3 Methods

This study is built on methods already developed under Fafo's research programme on child labour in West Africa.¹² The research for this study was carried out in Electoral District 3, Voinjama District in Lofa County in November 2005. This is the northern part of Voinjama District, and includes both Voinjama City and a series of smaller towns and villages – some overwhelmingly populated by the Mandingo, others predominantly Loma towns, while a few have an ethnically mixed population. The fieldwork consisted of a quantitative survey (479 children in the age group 10 to 18 years) combined with ethnographic life history and focus group approaches. The sample of children interviewed for the quantitative survey was based on households randomly selected in all villages in the selection area. Some of the children interviewed for the quantitative survey were also re-interviewed in the qualitative work. However, in the qualitative process we also interviewed and conducted focus group sessions with parents, village elders and leaders, government officials, NGO workers, and local politicians. In the individual 'life history' interviews and focus group sessions, the point of departure was the informants' location when the session was taking place. In other words, the actual physical site of the encounter provided the starting point, and from this site the interviewer and informants tracked backwards. The aim was to establish the chain of events that led the informant(s) to the particular place where the session was taking place (see also Bøås and Hatløy 2005). These informants were not randomly selected but picked strategically.

A random number of households were selected in each village. In each of the selected households, a household member, usually the head of the household, was interviewed about the members of the household. This part of the survey was concerned with gathering information on members' age, sex, and relation to head of the household. For households with members between 10 to 18 years of age, one was randomly chosen (using a Kish-table) for a more extensive interview, concerned with the child's background, education, skills levels, wartime experiences, and current activities.¹³ All villages within the selection area were visited; the number of

¹² See Hatløy and Huser (2005); Bøås and Hatløy (2006a, 2006b); and Bøås and Huser (2006).

¹³ See questionnaire in Appendix I for further details.

interviews in each village was determined proportional to population size; and the actual households to be interviewed were selected based on a pre-determined pattern of random walking.

The fieldwork was carried out by two senior Fafo researchers (the authors of this report), two field assistants from Fafo, and a Liberian team of field researchers from our partner institution in Liberia, the Liberian Institute for Statistics and Geoservices (LISGIS). This team consisted of one field supervisor and four interviewers.

The towns that lie nearest to the Guinean border in Voinjama District comprise Electoral District 3. This includes Voinjama City and seventeen rural towns and villages of different sizes. People of Mandingo origin predominantly inhabit the towns on the northeastern side of Voinjama City, while those on the northwestern side are by and large Loma towns. The only exceptions are Tobogizizu, which is a Kissi town, and Kugbemaï and Vonema. The two latter towns lie more directly north of Voinjama City, and have a mixed population of Loma and Mandingo people. In both of these towns, the Mandingo population started their return earlier than their Loma neighbours. The same pattern is evident if we compare the ten Mandingo towns to the Loma towns: in general, the Mandingo have been returning to Lofa earlier than the Loma, and therefore to a certain degree have also changed their status as newcomers to this area (see map of Voinjama District below). This is an important point that we return to as we analyse children's background and wartime experiences.

As rural farming towns, the Mandingo and Loma towns are not very different. The most striking feature distinguishing them are the mosques in the Mandingo towns and the Poro structures in the Loma towns. However, the fact that Mandingos are Muslims and Loma are Christians (but still adhere to their traditional Poro structures) does influence people's lives. Similarly, the distinct backgrounds of these two peoples have also influenced not only their own wartime experiences, but also how they themselves view the wartime experiences of the other group. For example, many Loma tend to believe that, because the Mandingo are not only Muslims but also have ethnic kin across the border (e.g. the Konianké), they had a much easier life as refugees in Guinea than people of Loma origin. There is nothing in our material that suggests that this was actually the case, but such perceptions still influence how people think about themselves and other groups in this area. This is something that agencies planning interventions in Lofa must take seriously, as any intervention that can be perceived as favouring one group over another will only add to the long list of grievances that these two groups already have against the other. A return situation in an immediate post-war environment is always fragile, and this is made even more difficult when the situation is like the one in Lofa, involving two populations with a long history of tension.

Figure 3.1 Map Voinjama. Light marks indicate Electoral District 3



4 The children living in Voinjama

Among the interviewed children there were, as Table 4.1 shows, a higher number of girls than boys: 56 percent versus 44 percent. In the rural areas, the difference was very small, close to equal in numbers. However, in Voinjama city, nearly two-thirds of the interviewed children were girls. There are also overall a higher number of children in the youngest age group (10-13) than in the oldest (14-17): 54 percent versus 46 percent. In Voinjama city, there is an equal number of older and younger children, whereas in the rural areas there are more younger children. Nearly 60 percent of the children were Mandingos, while 27 percent were Loma, and only 15 percent belonged to other ethnic groups. This reflects the fact that more Mandingos were among the early returnees than people of Loma and other ethnic origins. This is related to the war experience: the faction that gained control of, first, Voinjama, and later the whole of Lofa County was the Mandingo faction LURD. This meant not only that it was easier for people of Mandingo origin to return to their home areas but, even more importantly, that they were less scared of going home than the Loma and other ethnic groups. To a certain degree, the Mandingo emerged in the immediate post-war situation as part of the winning faction. This changed with the

Table 4.1 Gender, age, ethnicity, religion and movement status by place of living in percent

		Voinjama city	Rural Mandingo	Rural other	All
Sex	Male	37	47	48	44
	Female	63	53	52	56
Age	10-13	50	55	58	54
	14-17	50	45	42	46
Ethnic group	Mandingo	34	97	4	59
	Loma	39	1	71	27
	Other ethnic	27	2	25	15
Religion	Christian	62	2	93	39
	Muslim	35	98	4	59
	Other religion	3	0	2	2
Refugee or IDP	Refugee	53	86	48	68
	IDP	47	14	52	32
All		34	48	19	100
N		161	229	89	479

election. LURD was strong in terms of its military power; but politically the Mandingo parties are weak, and did not attract much support outside of Mandingo circles.

In Voinjama city the population is divided into three almost-equal parts, with roughly one-third Loma, one-third Mandingo, and one-third from other ethnic groups. In the rural areas, the situation is different. The villages are almost completely homogenous in ethnic terms – the division made in Table 4.1 of the rural area into Mandingo and others is based on the ethnic affiliation reported in the questionnaire. Religious affiliation corresponds to ethnic group: the Mandingos are Muslims, while the Loma – and most of the other ethnic groups – are Christians.

More than two-thirds of the children have been refugees, mainly in Guinea. The remaining children have been internally displaced in Liberia. None of the children we interviewed had stayed at their place of origin during the war. However, more Mandingo than non-Mandingo sought sanctuary in Guinea, whereas the Loma and people of other ethnic origins from the area of research tended to seek refuge internally in Liberia. There are two inter-related reasons for this. The Mandingo are related to the Konianké, who live across the border in Guinea's forest region; and many more Mandingo than Loma are able to speak and understand French. It was simply somewhat easier for people of Mandingo origin to negotiate an existence as a refugee in Guinea than for people who are Loma. That said, many of Mandingo we interviewed complained bitterly about their wartime experiences in Guinea.

It is also simply not true, as sometimes argued, that only people of Mandingo origin were able to find sanctuary in Guinea. Non-Mandingos also fled over the border to Guinea during the war, and many of the Loma children grew up in Guinea during the war. We return to the children's displacement and refugee experiences in Chapter 5.

As Table 4.2 shows, as many as 15 percent of the girls 14 years of age or older are engaged, married, or even widowed. Additionally, three percent of the youngest girls are married or engaged. Only one percent of the oldest boys are engaged, and none of the youngest. Girls marry at a relatively young age, but they also marry men that are considerably older than themselves. Marriage serves several functions

Table 4.2 Marital status by gender and age in percent

	Male		Female	
	10-13	14-17	10-13	14-17
Married	0	0	1	3
Engaged	0	1	1	10
Widowed	0	0	1	2
Never married	100	99	97	85
N	116	93	143	127

in this society, but few are related to the notions of love prevalent in western societies. A marriage is an act of convenience and alliance, in which the advice of town and lineage elders carries considerable clout. This does not in any way suggest that these marriages are more unhappy or dysfunctional than in other parts of the world. It only means that, when girls marry at a young age in Liberia, this decision is built on different considerations than is most often the case in a western context.

Only 2 percent of the children in Voinjama are orphans, mainly girls 14-17 years of age (see Table 4.3). This is a much lower figure than could be expected after so many years of war, and it is resoundingly clear that this figure does not reflect the total number of orphans in Liberia. In 2001, UNICEF (2001) estimated that there were 165,000 orphans in Liberia, or about 12 percent of all children.¹⁴ Considering that the war did not end until 2003, the absolute and relative figures could be expected to be larger. The only logical explanation for the difference between our findings in Voinjama versus nationwide estimates is that children without parents simply do not attempt to return to an area that is as vulnerable and physically damaged as Voinjama. For children living on their own, there is very little to return to in this area. The level of economic activity is simply too low: a child would not be able to survive on his or her own. The partial exception to this may be the older girls that have probably either returned with boyfriends or live with other relatives.

That said, it must be kept in mind that this research is based on a household survey. It may therefore be the case that children living on their own are not captured by our study. This could be particularly relevant in Voinjama city. All the same, we lived in the city for over two weeks and, during that time, did not observe any children displaying the characteristics or behaviour typical of street children. We believe

Table 4.3 Parents alive by gender and age and place of living in percent

	Male		Female		Place of living			All
	10-13	14-17	10-13	14-17	Voinjama city	Rural Mandingo	Rural other	
Both dead	0	3	2	6	5	2	2	3
Father dead	12	14	14	17	19	10	16	14
Mother dead	4	0	1	4	3	1	3	2
Both alive	84	83	83	73	73	87	79	81
N	114	90	141	120	161	229	89	479

¹⁴ More recent estimates for Liberia are currently not available. The gap between existing data and data needed is still substantial in Liberia. The UNICEF figure presented above is, in our opinion, no more than a qualified guess, as no countrywide survey has been carried out on this issue after the war started in 1990.

that, by and large, children who live on their own have not yet returned, as there is still too little economic activity to enable them to carve out a living in this city. In the rural villages, meanwhile, children will not fall outside the household structure.

However, as Table 4.3 shows, more children in Voinjama city than in the rural villages have lost a parent. This indicates that the families that have been able to stay together were among the first to return to their villages. Conversely, it seems somewhat easier for single-parent households (female-headed in particular) to re-establish themselves in the urban environment of Voinjama city.

As shown in Table 4.4, as many as 78 percent of the children live together with either one or both of the parents. The remaining live with other relatives, mainly siblings and grandparents (11 percent), uncles and aunts (6 percent), and other relatives (4 percent): only one child said they were living with people that were not relatives. This means that virtually all of the children are living within kin or extended kin networks, and are benefiting from the social security that such networks can provide. Although this social security may seem somewhat tenuous – as almost everyone in the area is poor and struggling to survive and re-establish themselves – it nevertheless seems clear that, in terms of a ‘safety net’, these children are better off than those living on the streets of Monrovia or on their own as refugees in Guinea or Sierra Leone. For example, on several occasions we heard stories from both adults and children who had been contract workers on farms in Guinea. It is highly conceivable that children living on their own as refugees in Guinea may be unable to return, and therefore locked into such an existence by default. Interestingly, it was more Mandingo than Loma who complained about their wartime experiences as contract workers in Guinea. One reason may be that more Mandingo than Loma went to Guinea, and therefore more of these stories are circulating. An alternative reason could be that exploitation in Guinea came more as a surprise to the Mandingo than the Loma. It is possible that the Mandingo believed they would be better treated because they are ethnically related to one of the groups in the forest region, the Konianké, whereas the Loma did not expect any favours from the people in Guinea.

Table 4.4 Living together with, by place of living in percent

Living together with	Both dead	Only mother alive	Only father alive	Both alive	All
Both parents	-	-	-	77	62
Single parent	-	62	27	8	16
Spouse	14	1	9	0	1
Other relatives	86	37	64	15	21
N	14	68	11	386	479

The parents' backgrounds

As we have seen, 78 percent of the children are living together with at least one of the parents. However, as Table 4.5 shows, the children in Voinjama city have less contact with their parents,¹⁵ especially their fathers, than the children in the villages. The children in the Mandingo villages have most frequent contact with their parents. This suggests that the Mandingo family units have coped better with the war and its consequences than other groups in this area. This can at least partly be explained by the dynamics of the war itself. In the latter part of the war, the dominant faction in this area was LURD, which was a Mandingo-dominated faction. However, it may also be a consequence of the original family structure of the Mandingo, which places strong value on keeping the family a Mandingo family.¹⁶ Among the children that have both parents living, but do not currently live with them, 71 percent have contact with their mothers at least monthly, while 66 percent have regular contact with their father. The most vulnerable group of children is the 7.5 percent that have little or no contact with both their parents, or whose parents are both dead. In Voinjama city, 13 percent of the children belongs to this most vulnerable group.

Most of the parents have been or are farmers. This is true for as many as 68 percent of the mothers and 63 percent of the fathers. In addition, 23 percent of the mothers have trade as their main activity. This is relatively high when compared to fathers, among whom six percent give trade as their main activity. However, as Figure 4.1 shows, economic activities among those living in Voinjama city are much more diverse than in the villages. This is as could be expected.

Table 4.5 Contact with parents by place of living in percent

	Mother				Father			
	Voin-jama city	Rural other	Rural Mand-ingo	Total mother	Voin-jama city	Rural other	Rural Mand-ingo	Total father
Dead	8	6	3	5	24	18	12	17
Rare or no contact	9	3	4	6	9	6	4	6
Regular contact	20	16	8	14	16	18	7	12
Living together	63	75	85	76	50	58	77	65
N	161	89	229	479	161	89	229	479

¹⁵ Regular contact is here defined as at least monthly. Rare contact is defined as less than monthly.

¹⁶ An often-heard complaint about the Mandingo is that, while their boys marry non-Mandingo girls, in particularly those belonging to land-owning lineages of strategic interest to the local Mandingo community, Mandingo girls are almost never allowed to marry a non-Mandingo.

Only ten percent of the children's mothers have ever gone to school, versus nearly 40 percent of the fathers. As Table 4.6 shows, the parents that farm as their main activity have less education than parents with other main activities. This pattern is the same for mothers and fathers, even though the educational level for the fathers in general is higher. This is not particularly surprising. Education in rural Liberia has always been an area of neglect, even before the war. Educated facilities were few, and education was (and is) expensive and of low quality. Many people did not send their children to school, and where education was an issue for a household, it was more often boys than girls who received some rudimentary education.

Rural education was in many parts of the country left to mission schools, and was not considered to be an area of particular concern to the state. Education was a privilege, not a right. Moreover, its purpose in pre-civil war Liberia was not necessarily to acquire skills, but to become 'civilised', i.e. to ascend to the status as a 'citizen of the Republic' (Ellis 1999). Thus, when children were sent to school, it was often not for the purpose of learning *per se*, but in order to learn the lifestyle of

Figure 4.1 Parents' main activity by children's place of living in percent

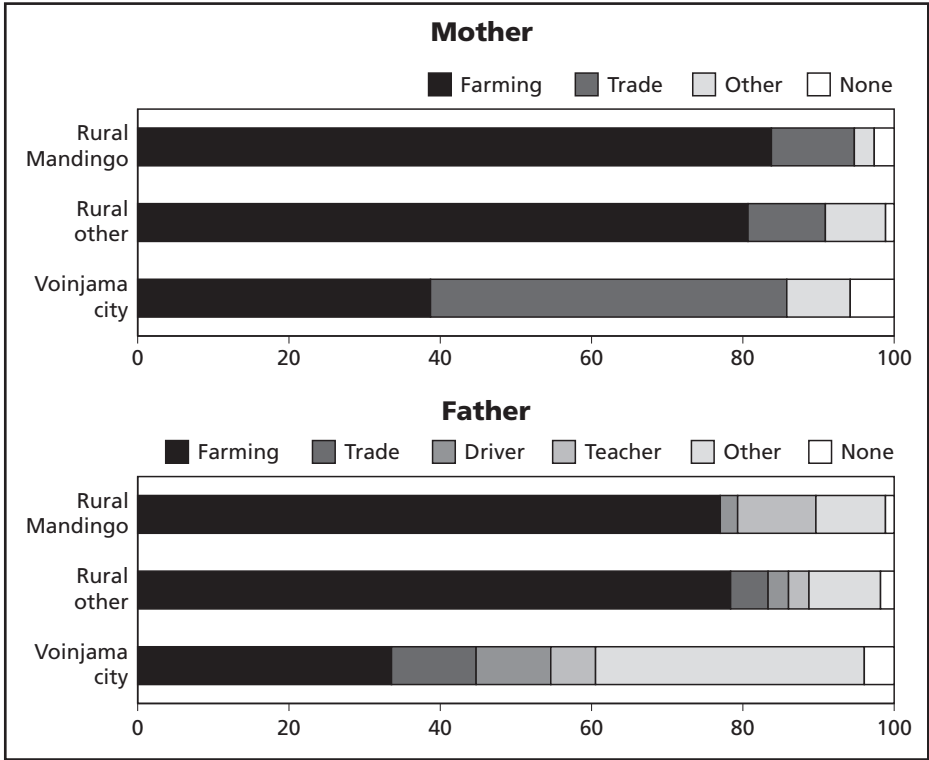


Table 4.6 Parents' education by main activity in percent

	Mother Farmer	Mother not farmer	Father farmer	Father not farmer
Never school	94	79	77	36
Less than 6 years	4	6	8	7
7-9 years	2	8	6	8
More than 9 years	1	7	9	49
N	321	144	290	168

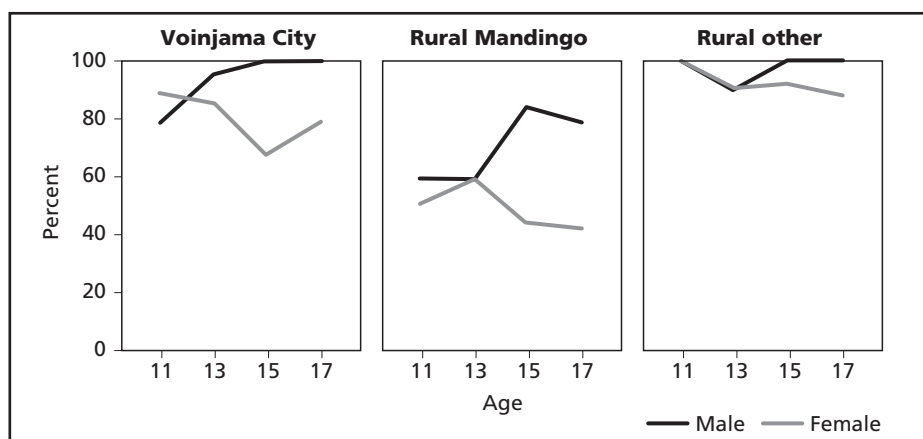
the Americo-Liberians (Brown 1982). It is important that to keep these things in mind when considering both the level of the parents' education and the situation for the children today.

The children's education

Three out of four children in Voinjama in the age group 10-17 have attended school for at least some period of time. As Figure 4.2 and Figure 4.3 show, more boys than girls have attended school. This gender imbalance with regards to education is not especially surprising. More striking is the fact that many fewer children in the Mandingo villages have attended school compared to any other groups, for example those in the non-Mandingo villages and Voinjama city.

As shown in Figure 4.3, the children living in Voinjama city, including both boys and girls, have the longest education. Here we find that more than 20 percent

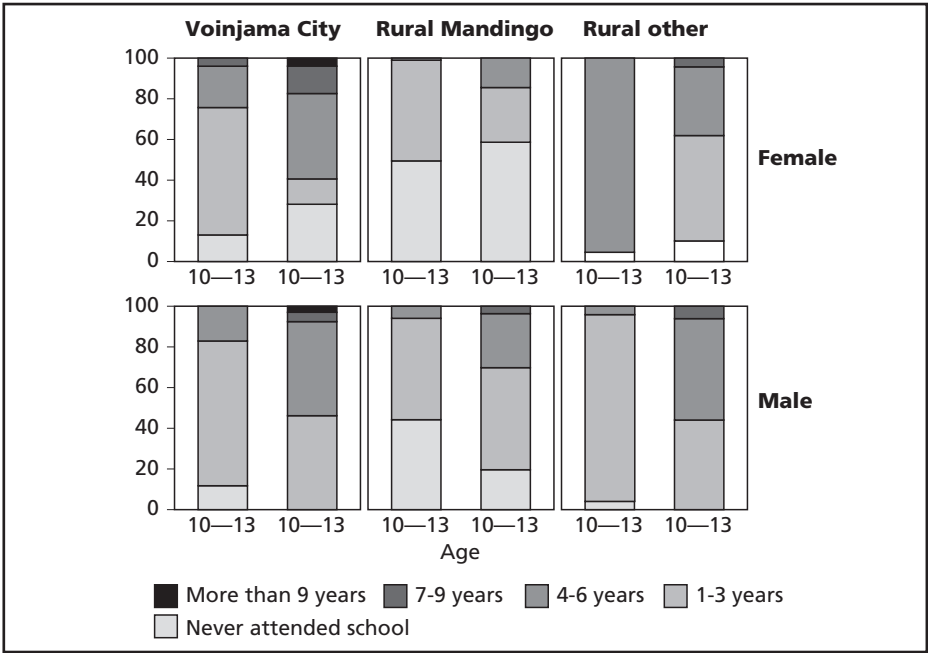
Figure 4.2 School attendance by age, gender and site of living in percent



of the youngest children have more than four years in school. In the rural areas, almost none of the youngest children have more than four years in school, and in the Mandingo villages, we find a high number of children that have never attended school. In general, more of the younger than older girls have attended school; this is the opposite tendency than seen among the boys.

We suggest that there are four different but inter-related reasons for the disparity in education levels between the Mandingo and others. The reasons are all related to the position of the Mandingo in Liberia. Because a series of governments have perceived the Mandingo as not necessarily a ‘Liberian’ people, there have been few attempts by the state to build schools in Mandingo settlements. The fact that the Mandingo are Muslims with a strong collective identity also entailed that mission schools, which were previously an important provider of educational services in rural Liberia, were not welcome in Mandingo settlements. Mandingo settlements often had Koranic schools and were not interested in Christian schools. Thirdly, as this is a people that have long felt that their position in Liberian society is insecure, Mandingos may have a perception that emphasising children’s education was not in the best interests of the household: why invest in education when you may have to fight for your right to even be considered a Liberian citizen? Finally, when we consider that children who attend school do not seem to learn very much (Figure

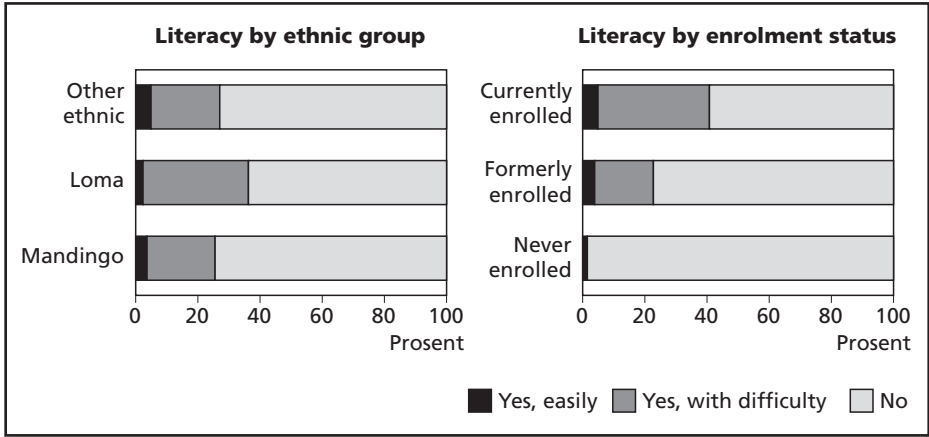
Figure 4.3 Years in school by age, gender and place of living in percent



4.4), the fourth reason may be that the Mandingo, as farmers and traders, simply see education as a waste of money and labour resources. Cumulatively, these reasons may explain the lack of interest in education that the qualitative material suggests among the Mandingo.

A Mandingo proves his status as ‘civilised’ by knowing the Koran, not necessarily by being a ‘bookman’ in the Americo-Liberian tradition.

Figure 4.4 Literacy by ethnic group and enrolment status



War experience

Some of the children have been directly involved in the war. As Table 4.7 shows, five percent were part of an armed faction, mostly with LURD. This is the case for children of both Mandingo and Loma origin. Because LURD is generally seen as a Mandingo project, this may seem strange. However, it testifies to the fact that civil wars, like the one in Liberia, are chaotic and confusing experiences, and the leaders of these movements are not always overly concerned with who makes up their rank and file. As LURD stormed into Lofa from Guinea and overran government-held positions, they took control of both Mandingo and Loma villages and, in the confusion and despair that ensued, children from several ethnic groups ended up with LURD, some as fighters and others in various support functions. Both boys and girls ended up in armed factions, and there is little difference between younger and older children. Girls and women fought for LURD, as illustrated by the images of the LURD commander ‘Black Diamond’ and her sisters-in-arms that circulated

widely in the international press in the last part of the civil war in 2003.¹⁷ Girls were often also used in various support functions. Smaller children were also useful for the armed factions, primarily as porters but also as scouts and fighters. Many senior commanders during the Liberian civil war also came to realise that children could be fierce fighters, perhaps because they do not have the same imagery about death as adults (see Ellis 1999, Utas 2003, Gberie 2005).

Table 4.7 Part of fighting force during the war by ethnic group in percent

Part of faction during the war	Mandingo	Loma	Other ethnic	All
Yes, with GOL	0	2	0	1
Yes, with LURD	4	7	1	4
Yes, with Model	0	0	1	0
No, was not part of a faction	96	91	97	95
N	282	127	69	478

Of the children that had been part of a faction, half report that they were fighters, while the rest reported working as messengers, cooks, porters, and in other support functions. There seems to be no differences in the distribution of tasks by age, gender, or ethnic group. However, it is important to keep in mind that these numbers only represent the children that have returned to Voinjama. As Table 4.1 (page 23) showed, more girls than boys, and more young than old children have returned. There are reasons to believe that there were more boys from this area directly involved in the war that have not yet returned to Voinjama. A high number of ex-combatants are still in Monrovia trying to carve out an existence as petty traders and part-time criminals in places such as Red Light in Paynesville and around Duala Market (see Jennings 2006; Bøås and Hatløy 2007).

¹⁷ See for example BBC (2003).

5 Displacement patterns and refugee experiences

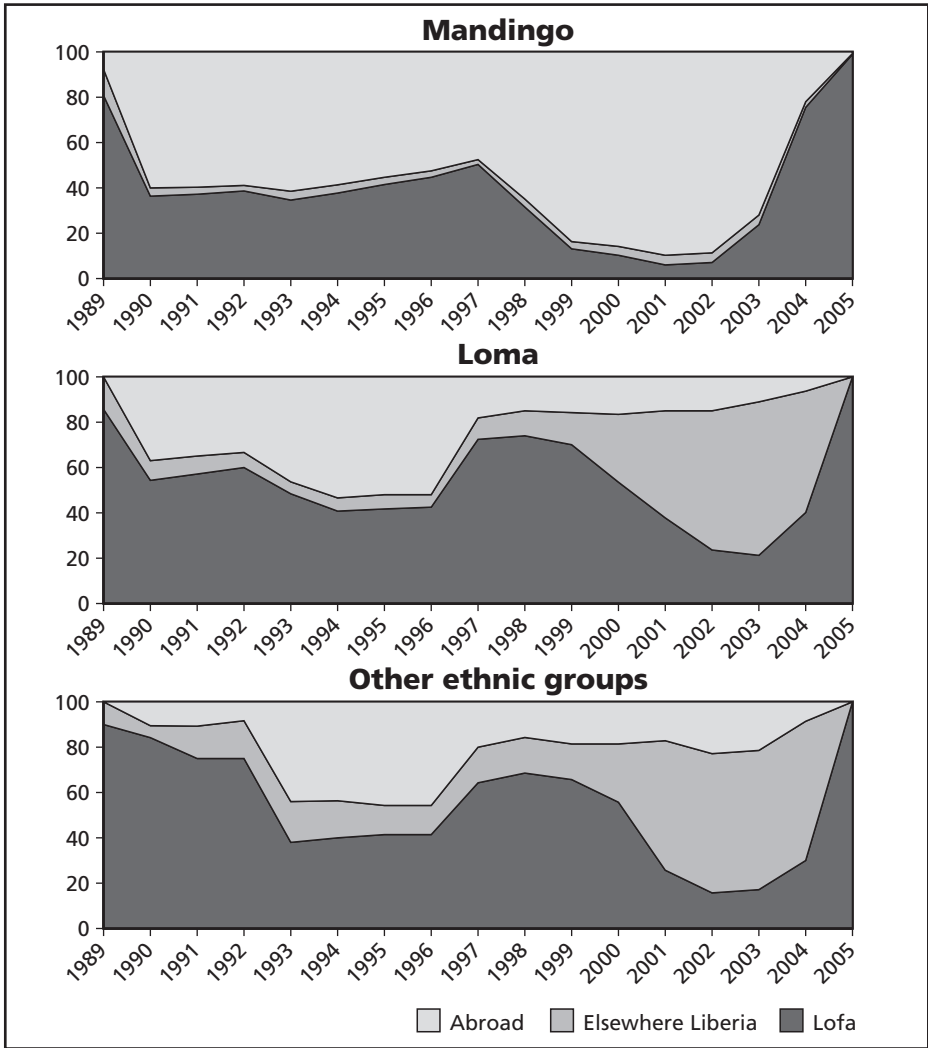
Virtually all of the internal displacement and cross-border migration reported in this study are consequences of the war. All the children had to move from the place they were born, and only nine percent had to move only once. Fifty percent have moved twice, 27 percent have moved three times, and the remaining 22 percent have had to move between four to eight times.

As shown in Figure 5.1, the pattern of displacement and forced migration among the Mandingos and the other ethnic groups varies significantly. In 1990, the movement out of the area was very high. This was particularly the case for the Mandingo. The Mandingo who remained stayed in Lofa until 1997, when nearly all of them moved abroad, mostly to Guinea. They started their return to Lofa in 2003, but the larger group of returnees came one year later, in 2004. The Loma also fled from Lofa in 1990, and many went abroad to Guinea – although their numbers were nowhere near the extent to which the Mandingo crossed into Guinea. In 1997, many Loma people returned to Lofa, but their stay was to be relatively short. In 2000, the Loma once more started to move out of Lofa. However, this time they primarily moved to other areas in Liberia, particularly to Monrovia and its environs and Bong County. The Loma started their return to Lofa in 2004, but the larger group of returnees only emerged in 2005.¹⁸ The figure therefore also shows that Voinjama is still an important point of return for many IDPs and refugees.

The patterns of displacement and war-driven migration displayed here are closely connected to the dynamics of the war. The Mandingo population was the first to flee this area. They escaped to Guinea after Taylor's forces, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), deployed into Lofa from neighbouring Nimba County. In that county the NPFL had been fighting Mandingo militias allied to Samuel Doe, and when they arrived in Lofa, they regarded the Mandingo towns as enemy sites. Loma towns, on the other hand, received somewhat better treatment. A decisive event for the Mandingo was the massacre at Bakiedou in 1990: many Mandingos were convinced that they had to leave Liberia at least temporarily if they were to survive as a people. The only possible return under the circumstances was an armed one.

¹⁸ As the interviews were carried out in Lofa, by definition 100 percent are back in 2005.

Figure 5.1 Place of living by ethnic group and year (status in December) in percent



These experiences therefore led both to a large movement of people of Mandingo origin in 1990-91, and the formation of the armed Mandingo faction ULIMO. This movement was originally an alliance between Krahn and Mandingo leaders, and when this insurgency emerged in Voinjama in 1992-93, it attacked not only NPFL positions but also Loma towns and villages. This seems to have been something of a *quid pro quo*, as the Mandingo had come to believe that the Loma had allied themselves with Taylor and his forces in order to expel them from Liberia and steal their land and belongings. This is not exactly what happened. Some Loma people

took advantage of the situation to settle old scores with neighbouring Mandingo communities, but many Loma people also suffered from the NPFL invasion, and some took considerable personal risk in order to help, hide, and support their Mandingo neighbours. However, when ULIMO started to attack Loma towns and villages in 1993, many Lomas fled – many to Guinea, but some also to central Liberia and Monrovia.

The attacks on Loma villages by ULIMO led to the formation of the Lofa Defence Force (LDF) in refugee camps in Guinea in 1993-94, with the support of the Loma Poro society. LDF became an ally of Charles Taylor and NPFL, although this was more by default than conviction. Simply, Taylor and his organisation were the only ones the LDF thought they could turn to for the weapons and military equipment they felt was necessary to protect their villages and interests. However, when this armed Loma insurgency appeared in Lofa, its military tactics mirrored those used by the NPFL and ULIMO: it attacked not just enemy military positions, but also the towns and villages inhabited by people they believed to support their enemies. Thus, LDF fought not only against the Mandingo-led ULIMO, but also attacked Mandingo towns without regard to the presence of ULIMO soldiers. The pattern presented here repeated itself in the latter stage of the war as well. Thus, the history of displacement and war-driven migration in this part of Liberia is a consequence of the dynamics of the war and its ebb and flow.

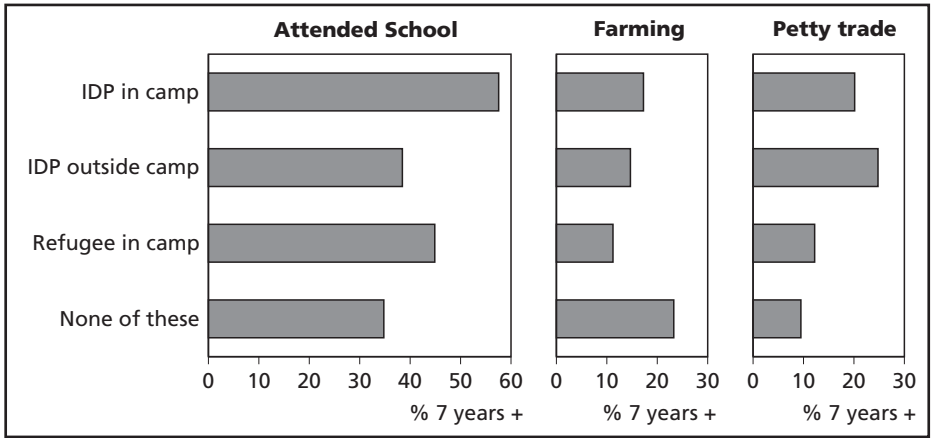
Some have seen this pattern as evidence of a war of greed, where looting and plunder were the main motivations. There is little doubt that such activities took place when a town or village was attacked. Ethnic rivalry between the Loma and Mandingo has a long history in this area, and many found in the civil war a pretext for settling old scores. However, we should also take into consideration that, in Lofa as in many other places in rural Liberia, the concept of 'non-combatants' simply does not make much sense. As one former ULIMO combatant explained when discussing some of the wartime atrocities (both that he had taken part in, and that had happened to his village): 'In war you cannot pick and choose'. This means that, in war, all and everything that 'belongs' to the enemy is potentially powerful and dangerous. Wars are fought both in the visible and the invisible world, and 'there can be no non-combatants in a war in which not all weapons can be seen' (Moran 2006:46).

Life away from home

The war drove children and their families away from their homes of origin. Some children were also born while their fathers and mothers were displaced, or living as refugees in Guinea. Before the children returned to Voinjama, they either lived as IDPs in formal camps, as IDPs outside the structure of formal camps, or in refugee camps in Guinea. Very few lived as refugees outside the camps. That said, in a limited number of cases they lived outside the camps and did not consider themselves either IDPs or refugees.

Figure 5.2 shows that children’s activity while displaced was to some extent impacted by where they were living. However, this is not a strong connection. It is natural to believe that living in a camp would offer easier access to school than living outside a camp structure. This is indeed partly borne out by those who had been IDPs: 58 percent of the children living inside IDP camps reported having attended school. Yet more surprising is that as many as 38 percent of the children living as IDPs outside camps also reported school attendance in the area. This number is unexpectedly high in the context of displacement during a period of war. This is good news – although, as seen in Chapter 4, the quality of the education they received may be questionable.

Figure 5.2 School attendance and main activity for the children 7 years of age or older when moving



6 Current activities

In a rural African setting, children tend to become involved in household work at an early age. The youngest, often as small as three or four years-old, are employed in domestic work, while older boys and girls also contribute to economic activities outside of the immediate boundaries of the household. Moreover, not only do children start working at a young age, they must also often work many hours per day. For example, studies have shown that boys between 10-14 years spend on average seven hours per day herding animals in Botswana; while material from Benin shows that girls between 6-14 years and not attending school spend as many as nine hours per week on fetching water alone (Kielland and Tovo 2006). Yet as indicated in Chapter 1, the findings presented here contradict the traditional picture of hard-working rural African children.

As shown in Table 6.1, the children in Voinjama spend on average two hours a day on economic activities regardless of age and gender, as well as another three to four hours on domestic work. This may seem high, but is in fact many fewer hours of work per day than found among other children in rural Africa (see Bass 2004; Kielland and Tovo 2006).

This is surprising in itself, but particularly so in the context of a return situation, where one would believe that labour would be in great demand, given the need to re-establish livelihood activities literally from the ground-up: fields need to be cleared, brushed, and cultivated. We suggest that the reason the children's labour is not in high demand at present is that the returning population has not yet been able to re-

Table 6.1 Mean number of hours (95% CI) worked by gender and age

Age	Male	Female	N
Economic activities			
10-13	1 h 25 min (1 h 04 min – 1 h 46 min)	1 h 44 min (1 h 25 min – 2 h 04 min)	257
14-17	2 h 11 min (1 h 45 min – 2 h 36 min)	2 h 20 min (1 h 59 min – 2 h 42 min)	217
All	1 h 54 min (1 h 43 min – 2 h 05 min)	2 h 01 min (1 h 47 min – 2 h 16 min)	474
Domestic work			
10-13	3 h 09 min (2 h 55 min – 3 h 23 min)	3 h 37 min (3 h 23 min – 3 h 29 min)	246
14-17	3 h 14 min (2 h 56 min – 3 h 32 min)	4 h 05 min (3 h 49 min – 4 h 22 min)	219
All	3 h 11 min (3 h 00 min – 3 h 22 min)	3 h 51 min (3 h 40 min – 4 h 02 min)	465

establish their activities. They lack the necessary seeds and agricultural tools; and in November 2005, when the fieldwork was conducted, many had just recently returned and had not yet attempted to cultivate. People survived largely on food aid, either directly received or through relatives still in the refugee camps in Guinea, as well as on food items from the bush. In such a situation, children are shielded from heavy work pressure, and many are therefore allowed to attend school. For the children this may be a happy life, but it is likely not permanent. However, it is arguable that the temporary nature of this situation is in fact good for the children in the long run, because if it were to last, the households would only become increasingly poor. We return to the policy implications of this in chapter 8.

Economic activities

63 percent of the children are involved in some sort of economic activities in addition to their domestic duties in the household. As shown in Figure 6.1, farming is the most important activity: 42 percent of the children are currently involved in farming and, while less than 40 percent of the girls and younger boys do farming, as many as 68 percent of the older boys are involved in it. The older girls are more likely to do petty trading, with 37 percent claiming this activity.

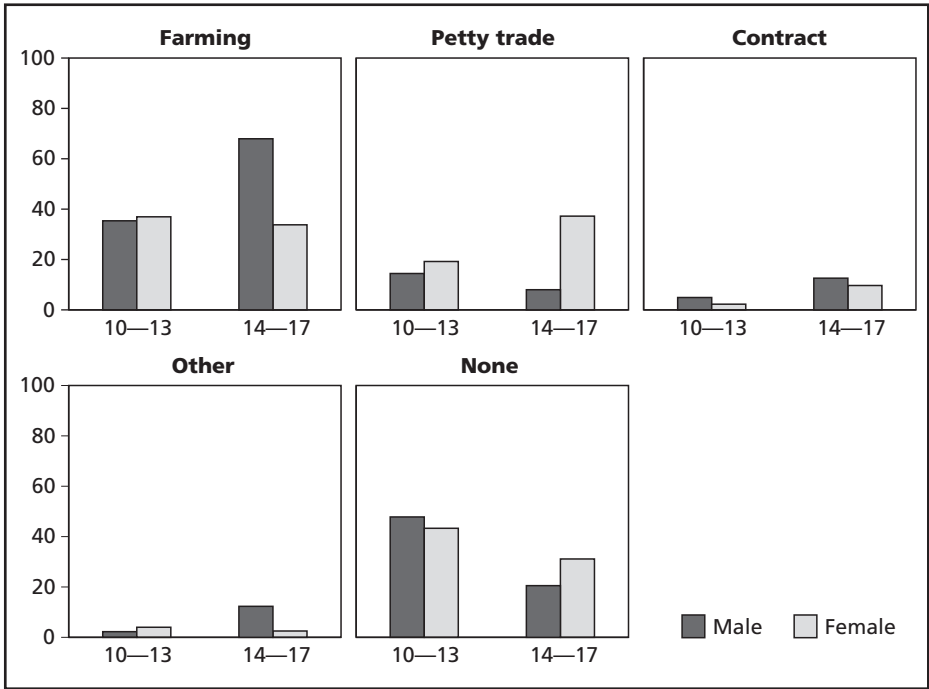
A much smaller number of children are also involved in various kind of contract work. This is work conducted for some sort of salary or other benefits, for example food or non-food items, which are received for carrying out certain tasks after an agreement. Some contract work is agricultural, while other involves working as porters, fetching firewood, or assisting in petty trade. More older than younger children are involved in this kind of work, and also slightly more boys than girls.

However, the most striking feature exposed here is the high number of children not involved in any kind of economic activity. Over 40 percent of boys and girls between 10-13 years of age do not participate in any economic activity; the same is true for nearly 40 percent of the girls between 14-17 years, and about 20 percent of the boys in the same age group. This is quite remarkable,¹⁹ and can only be explained by the low level of overall economic activity in the area. In a return situation in an isolated area such as Lofa, it takes time for the various communities to reconstruct

¹⁹ According to Kielland and Tovo (2006:63), at least 80 percent of African child labour is related to subsistence agriculture. The more farmland a peasant family has, the more likely it is that children of the household will work.

themselves as economic agents. This reduces the work pressure on the children, but at the same time it means that the income of their households is very low – perhaps too low to be sustainable over the long term.

Figure 6.1 Economic activities children are currently doing in percent by gender and age



Domestic work

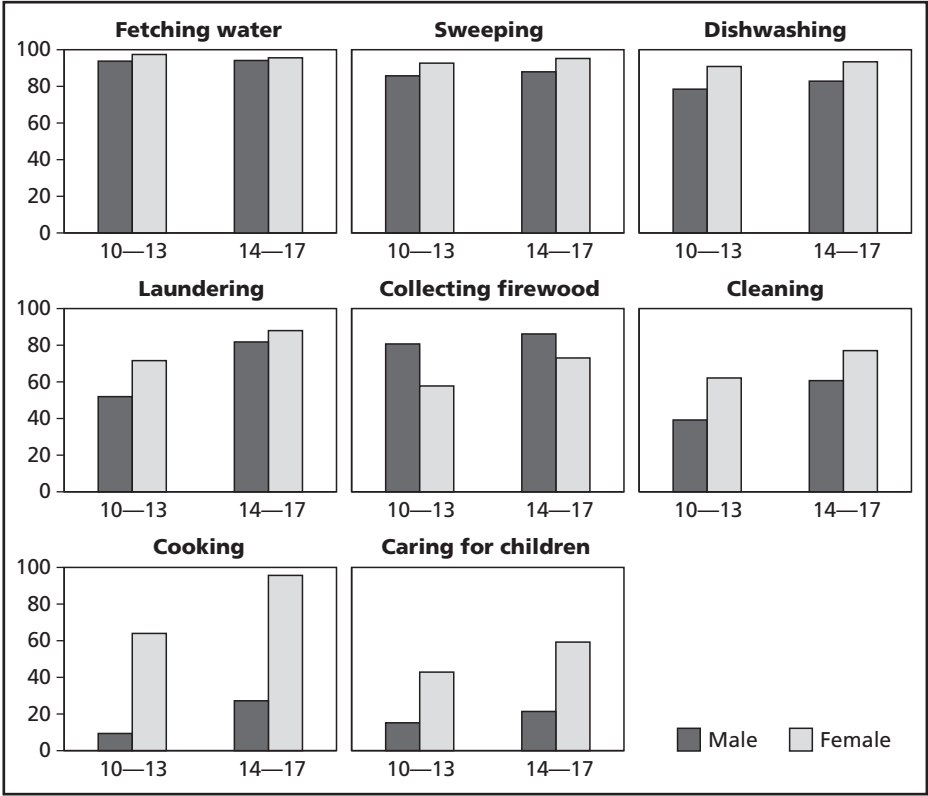
In addition to economic activities, children are also involved in daily household tasks. Among children between 10–18 years, nearly all take part in some form of domestic work. In our sample, only two children reported that they had no domestic tasks at all.

As Figure 6.2 shows, nearly all the children fetch water, sweep, and wash dishes. Both boys and girls and younger and older children do these tasks. However, when we look at the various activities within this category, there are significant gender differences. Fetching firewood is an activity that is done more often by boys than girls, while girls more frequently cook and care for children than boys. Laundering and cleaning are also more frequently performed by the oldest children, although

the girls start doing these chores at a younger age than boys. These differences by age and gender are not unexpected.

In total, the children use an average of 3 hours and 34 minutes a day on domestic tasks. However, as Table 6.1 shows, the girls, both youngest and oldest, spend significantly more time on domestic work than the boys: the youngest girls spend 28 more minutes on average than the youngest boys, and the oldest girls spend 51 more minutes each day on domestic tasks than the oldest boys. Moreover, although the girls' burden of domestic tasks increases by age, the domestic workload of the boys is quite stable.

Figure 6.2 Domestic tasks currently carried out by gender and age

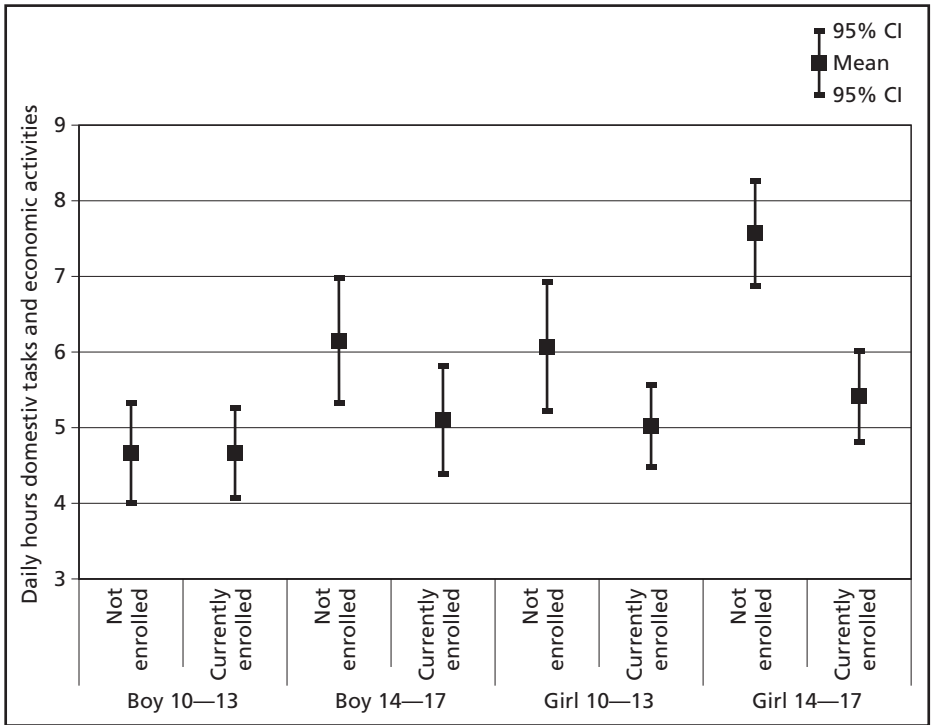


Work pressure

On average, the children spend five hours and 29 minutes daily on both domestic tasks and economic activities. There are no differences in the time spent on such activities between the children living with their parents and the children living with relatives. However, girls spend more time than boys, and older children more time than younger ones. As Figure 6.3 shows, the children currently enrolled in school generally spend less time on their duties than those that are not enrolled. This is not, however, the case for the youngest boys, which spend nearly five hours a day on their duties. The oldest boys and the youngest girls that are not enrolled spend six hours on their duties, while enrolled children spend on average one hour less. The oldest girls not enrolled in school have the highest work pressure, using seven and a half hours per day on duties, seven days a week. Conversely, the oldest girls that are enrolled use roughly two hours per day less on duties.

What this shows is that, even though children enrolled in school have somewhat fewer duties at home and outside the home, they still have a workload in addition

Figure 6.3 Mean hours daily used on domestic tasks and economic activities by enrolment, gender and age



to their schoolwork. It also shows that girls not enrolled have a significantly higher work burden than boys of a similar age, even those similarly not enrolled. What this implies is that boys in the age group 14-17 years that are not currently enrolled in school are under-employed compared to what is typical in rural Africa (see Kielland and Tovo 2006; Bass 2004). This also shows that, again compared to other places in rural Africa, girls and boys are kept longer at school. If and when the economic activity in the area increases, it is most likely that the girls will be taken out of school earlier than the boys. This proposition is supported by the figures from Table 4.7, which shows that the children's fathers have received more education than their mothers. This finding has some important policy implications that we return to in Chapter 8.

The children with a high work pressure are somewhat more exposed to injuries than other children. This is shown in Table 6.2. The most alarming result is the level of infected wounds and cuts: 38 percent of the children with a low work pressure report having had such infection, while as many as 60 percent of children with a high work pressure have experienced infected wounds or cuts. The children that work the most also have more ear and eye damage than other children.

These numbers are fairly high, although not significantly higher than may be expected in any rural African community. There is nothing indicating that the

Table 6.2 Injuries by work pressure in percent

		Work pressure - hours a day			
Eye damage		1 - 3	4 - 6	7 +	All
	Yes, during work	4	7	12	7
	Yes, not during work	7	4	4	5
Ear damage					
	Yes, during work	1	3	6	4
	Yes, not during work	8	5	11	8
Broken arms or leg					
	Yes, during work	4	5	7	5
	Yes, not during work	9	1	4	4
Infected cuts or wounds					
	Yes, during work	29	44	53	42
	Yes, not during work	9	3	7	6
Burns					
	Yes, during work	14	10	10	11
	Yes, not during work	7	2	7	5
N		137	184	135	456

work these children are doing is any more dangerous than that conducted by other children in similar African communities. In fact, as emphasised above, the one feature separating the children in Voinjama from their counterparts in other rural African societies is that they work less. However, one should also note that, due to the destruction and displacement in this area, it is not a good place to get ill. Apart from the medical services provided by the Pakistani battalion associated with the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) in Voinjama city, there are very few health services in the area.

7 Perceptions about the future

Almost all the children in Voinjama think that their lives have improved during the last year – as many as 94 percent (see Table 7.1). There are no differences in that regard across age, gender, or ethnic group. However, the children that have the highest work pressure seem to be least positive about their situation. Nevertheless, even among those children, more than 90 percent claim that life is better now than it was one year ago. This can only mean that they are happy that they have been able to return to their home of origin together with their parents or close relatives.

Even if the children think that their situation could be better, they also clearly expect improvements over the next year. As Table 7.1 shows, nearly all expect life to improve in the coming year. This again something that separates these children from other children elsewhere in West Africa. Although it is quite natural for children to think that life will improve, in similar studies we have carried out elsewhere in West Africa we have never come across a population who so clearly believe that their lives

Table 7.1 Thoughts about life in the past and the future by work pressure in percent

Life now compared to one year ago	Work pressure - hours a day			
	Low	Medium	High	All
Better than one year ago	96	95	91	94
Different, but of same quality	3	3	7	4
Worse than one year ago	1	3	2	2
Expectation for the future				
Go to school	90	88	72	84
Better job	4	6	13	8
Other wish	6	6	15	9
Thoughts about life one year from now				
Better than now	99	98	99	99
Different, but same quality	0	1	1	1
Worse than now	1	1	1	1
All	29	41	30	100
N	132	184	134	450

have improved and, in addition, think that this will also be the case for the future (see Hatløy and Huser 2005; Bøås and Hatløy 2006).

As we have seen, as many as three out of four children are attending, or have attended, school – and in asking them what they want to do in the future, as many as 84 percent say they want to go to school. Their dream to continue their education is far higher than we have found in comparable studies, e.g. in Sierra Leone (Bøås and Hatløy 2006a). Of course they also dream about other things, but continuing their education is their main aspiration for the future.

The reason why they dream this dream is somewhat more difficult to understand. When we conducted focus group sessions among older boys and girls about their future, the answers we received were somewhat more vague. They wanted a life different from their parents', and they dreamt about the kind of consumer goods that teenagers want all over the world, like Nike sneakers and the right brand name for their trousers and t-shirts. Yet to what degree they felt that continuing their education would help them fulfil these dreams was more unclear. It may very well be that children say they want to continue to go to school simply because the only alternative available, agricultural work, is seen as even less desirable. It is viewed as hard and boring, and with few prospects for social mobility.

8 Concluding remarks: After the storm – what comes next?

The Liberian civil war was a storm that hit Voinjama very hard. The level of destruction and displacement was enormous. The question now is what will happen to the children that have returned home. Right now they are enjoying the calm and sober aftermath of this storm -- and these children are indeed among the fortunate in Liberia. Not only did they survive the war, but many also lived through it (or are now reunited) with their parents or other close relatives. As we have seen, only two percent of the children in Voinjama are orphans. This is much lower than the national average.²⁰ These children are not living on their own, and this increases their social security. This indicates that the first returnees, at least among this age group, will be those that have been able to survive the war together with their families. This has at least one important policy implication: policies targeting children in this area must focus on the children *and* their families and not only on the situation of the child as such. That said, there are good reasons to believe that many children from this area, who either lost their families or got separated from them during the war, still live in Guinea as contract workers on farms in the forest region. They may be unable to return, and relevant agencies should look into this matter more closely. Inability to return may also be the case for former child soldiers from Voinjama. Five percent of the children in our study were part of an armed faction during the war but, taking the dynamics of the war into consideration, there is every reason to believe that there were more boys and girls originating from this area involved in the war. We know from related studies we have implemented in Liberia that there is still a high number of former child soldiers in and around Monrovia. As the communities in Voinjama are re-established, frameworks should be put in place to facilitate the return of some of these youths. Such return should be voluntary, and one should seek to target those who can return to families or kin networks first.

²⁰ Nobody knows for certain the current national average, but there is every reason to believe that it is substantially higher. Already in 2001 UNICEF estimated that 12 percent of Liberian children were orphans.

There are currently more Mandingo children in this area than children of other ethnic origin. This will, however, change as more Loma and other ethnic groups return to Voinjama. In a return situation, it is always important that all groups feel that they are treated in a fair and unbiased manner. In Voinjama this is of particular importance, as the two main ethnic groups in this area, the Mandingo and the Loma, have a long history of ethnic rivalry that was made even more tense by the civil war. Policy interventions in this area that can be seen as favouring one group over another could have disastrous consequences. It is therefore extremely important that all agencies working in this area, whether they have children as their mandate or not, pay attention to the possibility of bias.

As we have seen, these children are currently not under a very high work pressure. In fact, one could argue that, compared to similar rural populations elsewhere in Africa, these children are relatively under-employed (see Bass 2004; Kielland and Tovo 2006). This is both good and bad. It is good because it gives the children more spare time and allows them to devote more time to their education. However, this is also bad because it is a sign of a very low level of economic activity in the communities. This cannot be sustained in the long run. The challenge for policymakers is to design programmes that support the current work structure of the children by increasing the income potential of the adult population. If such policies are not put in place sooner or later, the work pressure of the children will have to increase. Otherwise, households will not survive over the long term.

The children most likely to face more work pressure first are the girls currently enrolled in school. It is probable that they will have to work more and eventually be taken out of school, as this is the traditional pattern in their area (as elsewhere in rural Africa). Thus, to a certain degree we can say that agencies that work for the benefit of children are now facing a window of opportunity with regards to alleviating children's work pressure. To take advantage of this, however, policies must be implemented quite swiftly, as this window of opportunity will not stay open too long. If such policies are implemented, they should seek to redress current gender and ethnic imbalances with regard to school enrolment.

As we have shown, more boys than girls have attended school, and fewer Mandingo than non-Mandingo children have attended school. In this regard, the children are following the pattern of their parents. More fathers than mothers have received some education, and the education level of non-Mandingos is generally somewhat higher than among people of Mandingo origin. It is now time to try to break this pattern. Putting in place policies that ensure that children continue to be relatively under-employed is therefore the way forward. However, such policies will only work if they include components that increase the income of the adult persons of the households. If not, children will have to start to do more work. Ensuring that more Mandingo children start going to school may also have positive ramifications

for how this group of people see their situation in Liberia, as it may entail that they grow more certain that their right to live in this area will be respected by the Liberian state.

These children want to continue their education, and they should certainly be supported in this effort. However, as our data also show, the effectiveness of the education they have received can certainly be questioned. It is good that children go to school, but education will only matter if they actually learn something. Our data suggest that, even among children enrolled for more than four years, some have still not learned to read. This suggests that stakeholders must find ways of strengthening the school system. Teachers must be paid a wage that they can actually live on, and one must make certain that teachers have a minimum level of knowledge themselves so that they can teach others.

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Appendix 1 Questionnaire

Economic activities for children in Voinjama, Liberia

Questionnaire Identification				
AI01	Serial number of questionnaire			
AI02	Place			
AI03	Household			
Staff				
AS01	Interviewer			
AS02	Data entry operator			
Interview status				
AR01	Interview status	Interview completed 1 Refusal converted 2 Partly completed 3 Status not determined 4 No usable information 5 Structure does not exist 6 No household lives in structure 7 Not eligible 8 No contact 9 Refusal 10		
AR02	Interview date	dd-nm		
AR03	Start of interview (time)	hh-nm		
AR04	Stop of interview (time)	hh-nm		
AR05	Data entry date	dd-nm		
Respondents and questionnaires				
AC02	Total number of HH members			
AC03	Number of HH members aged 10 to 18			

Selection table (List all household-members aged 10-18 years of age)

HR01	HR03 (sex)	HR04 (Age)	Youth #	Selected

Household roster				
HR01 # of per- son	Name Defined as: Surname + given name Enter the names starting with the household head. Include all that slept here last night or usually live here.	HR02 What is's relationship to the household head? 1 Head 2 Spouse 3 Son/daughter 4 Son/daughter of sp. 5 Sibling 6 Sibling of spouse 7 Parent 8 Parent of spouse 9 Son/daughter in law 10 Grandchild 11 Other relative 12 Other relative of sp. 13 Other non-relative	HR03 Sex 1 Male 2 Female	HR04 How old is ...? 97 = ≥ 97 years 98 = DK 99 = NA If less than 1 year, mark 00
1		0 1 1	1 2	
2			1 2	
3			1 2	
4			1 2	
5			1 2	
6			1 2	
7			1 2	
8			1 2	
9			1 2	
10			1 2	
11			1 2	
12			1 2	
13			1 2	
14			1 2	
15			1 2	
16			1 2	
17			1 2	
18			1 2	
19			1 2	
20			1 2	
21			1 2	
22			1 2	
23			1 2	
24			1 2	
25			1 2	
26			1 2	
27			1 2	
28			1 2	
29			1 2	
30			1 2	

Go to first page – fill in selection table, and select the youth to interview!

Background						
LI01	Sex (=HR03)			M F	1 2	
LI02	Age (=HR04)			In entire years		If < 10 or ≥18 →END
LI03	What religious affiliation do you belong to?			Christian Muslim Traditional believes Other	1 2 3 4	
LI04	Which ethnic group do you belong to?	Americo-Liberians Bassa Belle Congo people Dei Gbandi Gio Gola Grebo Kissi Kpelle	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	Krahn Kru Loma Mandingo/ Konianke Mano Mende Vai Other _____ DK NA	11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 98 99	
LI05	Are you married or engaged?			Yes, married Yes, engaged Separated/divorced Widowed No, have never been married DK NA	1 2 3 4 5 8 9	If NOT 1, 2 →LI07
LI06	Are you living together with your spouse?			Yes No DK NA	1 2 8 9	
LI07	Do you have own children?			Yes No DK NA	1 2 8 9	If NOT 1 →LI09
LI08	Are you living together with your child[ren]?			Yes No DK NA	1 2 8 9	
LI09	Who do you live with here in this area?			Both parents Mother Father Spouse/girlfriend/boyfriend Siblings Grand parents Uncel/aunt Other relatives Friends Employer Colleagues No one, on my own Other _____ DK NA	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 98 99	If 1 or 2 →LI15
LI10	Is your mother alive?			Yes No DK NA	1 2 8 9	If 1→ LI12

LI11	How old were you when she died?		In entire years, 98=DK, 99=NA			All → LI15
LI12	In which district does your mother live? If Abroad, specify country		Bomi 1 Bong 2 Gbarpolu 3 Grand Bassa 4 Grand Cape Mount 5 Grand Gedeh 6 Grand Kru 7 Lofa 8 Margibi 9	Maryland 10 Montserado 11 Nimba 12 River Cess 13 River Gee 14 Sinoe 15 Abroad _____ 16 DK 98 NA 99		
LI13	Do you have any contact with your mother?		Yes 1 No 2 DK 8 NA 9			If NOT 1 → LI15
LI14	How often do you have contact with your mother?		Weekly 1 Monthly, but not every week 2 One to three times every half year 3 One to three times every year 4 DN 8 NA 9			
LI15	What is [was] your mothers' <u>main</u> activity in addition to domestic tasks?	Farming 1 Herding 2 Hunting 3 Mining 4 Logging 5 Blacksmithing 6 Petty trade 7 Business 8 Brewing 9 Tailoring 10 Basket weaving 11	Weaving 12 Car repair 13 General mechanics 14 Carpentry 15 Brick production 16 Charcoal production 17 Driver 18 Teacher 19 Civil servant 20 Social worker 21 Militia member 22	Police 23 Military 24 Nurse 25 Birth attendant/midwife 26 Hairdresser 27 Soap production 28 Masonry 29 Other _____ 30 None 31 DK 98 NA 99		If NOT 7 or 8 → LI18
LI16	Does [did] your mother trade abroad?			Yes 1 No 2 DK 8 NA 9		If NOT 1 → LI18
LI17	Where does [did] you mother trade?		Guinea 1 Sierra Leone 2 Other _____ 3 DK 8 NA 9			
LI18	Have your mother ever gone to school?		Yes 1 No 2 DK 8 NA 9			If NOT 1 → IntCheck
LI19	What is the highest grade she has completed?		Primary school (grade 1-6) 1 Junior secondary (grade 1-3) 2 Senior secondary (grade 1-3) 3 Technical education and vocational training 4 University/Institutions 5 Others 6 DK 8 NA 9			
Interviewer check: If Living together with father (LI09=1 or LI09=3) → LI25						

LI20	Is your father alive?				Yes No DK NA	1 2 8 9	If 1→ LI22	
LI21	How old were you when he died?		In entire years, 98=DK, 99=NA		_ _		All→ LI25	
LI22	In which district does your father live? If Abroad, specify country		Bomi Bong Gbarpolu Grand Bassa Grand Cape Mount Grand Gedeh Grand Kru Lofa Margibi	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9	Maryland Montserado Nimba River Cess River Gee Sinoe Abroad _____ DK NA	10 11 12 13 14 15 16 98 99		
LI23	Do you have any contact with your father?				Yes No DK NA	1 2 8 9	If NOT 1→ LI25	
LI24	How often do you have contact with your father?				Weekly Monthly, but not every week One to three times every half year One to three times every year DN NA	1 2 3 4 8 9		
LI25	What is [was] your fathers' <u>main</u> activity?	Farming Herding Hunting Mining Logging Blacksmithing Petty trade Business Brewing Tailoring Basket weaving	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11	Weaving Car repair General mechanics Carpentry Brick production Charcoal production Driver Teacher Civil servant Social worker Militia member	12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22	Police Military Nurse Birth attendant/midwife Hairdresser Soap producer Masonry Other _____ None DK NA	23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 98 99	If NOT 7 or 8 →LI28
LI26	Does [did] your father trade abroad?				Yes No DK NA	1 2 8 9	If NOT 1→LI28	
LI27	Where does [did] you father trade?				Guinea Sierra Leone Other _____ DK NA	1 2 3 8 9		
LI28	Have your father ever gone to school?				Yes No DK NA	1 2 8 9	If NOT 1 → Next section	
LI29	What is the highest grade he has completed?		Primary school (grade 1-6) Junior secondary (grade 1-3) Senior secondary (grade 1-3) Technical education and vocational training University/Institutions Others DK NA		1 2 3 4 5 6 8 9			

Displacement											
L130	Where were you born?	Bomi Bong Gbarpolu Grand Bassa Grand Cape Mount Grand Gedeh 1 2 3 4 5 6				Grand Kru Lofa Margibi Maryland Montserado Nimba 7 8 9 10 11 12	River Cess River Gee Shoie 13 14 15 16 16 98 99				
L131	Have you ever moved from the place you were born?										
# Move	L132	L133	L134	L135	L136	L137	What was the reason for this movement?				
	Where did you move to first [second, third, ...] time you moved?	Interviewer check: If L132=16 Which country?	When did you move to first [second, third, ...] time you moved?	Who did you live together with?	Where you living in an IDP or refugee camp, or as IDP or refugee outside camp on this move?						
	01=Bomi 02=Bong 03=Gbarpolu 04=Grand Bassa 05=Grand Cape Mount 06=Grand Gedeh 07=Grand Kru 08=Lofa 09=Margibi 10=Maryland 11=Montserado 12=Nimba 13=River Cess 14=River Gee 15=Shoie 16=Abroad 98=DK 99=NA	1=Guinea 2=Sierra Leone 3=Côte d'Ivoire 4=Mali 5=Senegal 6=Other African 7=Other non-African 8=DK 9=NA	MM YYYY	01=Both parents 02=Mother 03=Father 04=Spouse 05=Siblings 06=Grand parents 07=Uncle/aunt 08=Other relatives 09=Friends 10=Employer 11=Colleagues 12=No one 98=DK 99=NA	1=IDP in camp 2=IDP outside camp 3=Refugee in camp 4=Refugee outside camp 5=None of these 8=DK 9=NA		1=War 2=Economic reasons 3=Other 8=DK 9=NA				
1							1	2	3	8	9
2							1	2	3	8	9
3							1	2	3	8	9
4							1	2	3	8	9
5							1	2	3	8	9
6							1	2	3	8	9
7							1	2	3	8	9
8							1	2	3	8	9
9							1	2	3	8	9
10							1	2	3	8	9
11							1	2	3	8	9
12							1	2	3	8	9

# Move	L138 Did you attend school living on this place?	L139 What was your main activity living there [in addition to school]?		L140 Did you do any of the following domestic tasks living there?	L141 Did you attend vocational training on this place, if yes which?	L142 Interviewer check If attended vocational training: Was the vocational training part of a DDRR program?	L143 Have you moved from this place? Do not ask if obvious. If Yes , return to L132 If No → L144 1=Yes 2=No 8=DK 9=NA
		01=Farming 02=Herding 03=Hunting 04=Mining 05=Logging 06=Blacksmithing 07=Petty trade 08=Business 09=Brewing 10=Tailoring 11=Basket weaving 12=Weaving 13=Auto mechanics	14=General mechanics 15=Carpentry 16=Brick production 17=Charcoal production 18=Driver 19=Assistant on car 20=Hair dressing 21=Soap production 22=Masonry 23=Porter 24=Security guard 25=Other 98=DK 99=NA				
1	1 2 8 9	_____	_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 98 99	_____	1 2 8 9	1 2 8 9
2	1 2 8 9	_____	_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 98 99	_____	1 2 8 9	1 2 8 9
3	1 2 8 9	_____	_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 98 99	_____	1 2 8 9	1 2 8 9
4	1 2 8 9	_____	_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 98 99	_____	1 2 8 9	1 2 8 9
5	1 2 8 9	_____	_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 98 99	_____	1 2 8 9	1 2 8 9
6	1 2 8 9	_____	_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 98 99	_____	1 2 8 9	1 2 8 9
7	1 2 8 9	_____	_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 98 99	_____	1 2 8 9	1 2 8 9
8	1 2 8 9	_____	_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 98 99	_____	1 2 8 9	1 2 8 9
9	1 2 8 9	_____	_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 98 99	_____	1 2 8 9	1 2 8 9
10	1 2 8 9	_____	_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 98 99	_____	1 2 8 9	1 2 8 9
11	1 2 8 9	_____	_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 98 99	_____	1 2 8 9	1 2 8 9
12	1 2 8 9	_____	_____	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 98 99	_____	1 2 8 9	1 2 8 9

Now, I would like to ask you about your current activities and tasks last three months

LI44	Do you regularly carry out any domestic tasks? If yes, which? Mark all that apply				No domestic tasks 1 Cooking 2 Fetching water 3 Collecting firewood 4 Sweeping 5 Dish washing 6 Laundering 7 Cleaning 8 Caring for children 9 Other _____ 10 DK 98 NA 99				
LI45	How many hours do you daily spend on domestic tasks?				Entire hours 98=DK 99=NA		_ _		
LI46	What is your current <u>main</u> activity in addition to domestic tasks?	Farming 1 Herding 2 Hunting 3 Mining 4 Logging 5 Blacksmithing 6 Petty trade 7 Business 8 Brewing 9 Tailoring 10	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10	Basket weaving 11 Weaving 12 Auto mechanics 13 General mechanics 14 Carpentry 15 Brick production 16 Charcoal production 17 Driver 18 Assistant on car 19 Hairdressing 20	11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20	Soap production 21 Masonry 22 Porter 23 Security guard 24 Other: 25 _____ None 26 DK 98 NA 99	21 22 23 24 25 26 98 99	If NOT 7 or 8 → LI49 If 26 (None) → LI67	
LI47	Are you doing petty trade/business abroad?				Yes 1 No 2 DK 8 NA 9				If NOT 1 → LI49
LI48	Where are you doing petty trade/business?				Guinea 1 Sierra Leone 2 Other _____ 3 DK 8 NA 9				
LI49	Did you work under supervision of a member of the households, a former commander or an employer, or did you work without supervision in your <u>main</u> activity?				Supervised by household member 1 Supervised by former commander 2 Supervised by employer 3 No supervision 4 DK 8 NA 9				
LI50	Do you have an employer on your <u>main</u> activity?				Yes 1 No 2 DK 8 NA 9				If NOT 1 → LI53
LI51	Is this employer ...				... a family member? 1 ... a friend of family? 2 ... former commander? 3 ... a stranger? 4 DK 8 NA 9				
LI52	Do you get any of the following from your employer? Mark all that apply				Money 1 Food 2 Drinking water 3 Lodging 4 Medicines 5 Access to health care 6 NA 9				

LI53	Do you have any other activities from which you earn money or other goods?				Yes No DK NA	1 2 8 9	If 2 →LI59
LI54	What are the other activities from which you earn money or other goods? Mark all that apply	Farming 1 Herding 2 Hunting 3 Mining 4 Logging 5 Blacksmithing 6 Petty trade 7 Business 8 Brewing 9 Tailoring 10	Basket weaving 11 Weaving 12 Auto mechanics 13 General mechanics 14 Carpentry 15 Brick production 16 Charcoal production 17 Driver 18 Assistant on car 19 Hairdressing 20	Soap production 21 Masonry 22 Porter 23 Security guard 24 Other 25 None 26 DK 98 NA 99			
LI55	Did you work under supervision of a member of the households, a former commander or an employer, or did you work without supervision in your other activities?				Supervised by household member Supervised by former commander Supervised by employer No supervision DK NA	1 2 3 4 8 9	
LI56	Do you have an employer on your other activities?				Yes No DK NA	1 2 8 9	If NOT 1 →LI59
LI57	Is this employer ...				... a family member? ... a friend of family? ... a former commander? ... a stranger? DK NA	1 2 3 4 8 9	
LI58	Do you get any of the following from this employer? Mark all that apply				Money Food Drinking water Lodging Medicines Access to health care NA	1 2 3 4 5 6 9	
LI59	How much did you earn in total yesterday?		In Liberian Dollars 000 000 No salary 999 998 DK 999 999 NA	_ _ _ _ _ _ _			
LI60	How much did you earn in total last month?		In Liberian Dollars 000 000 No salary 999 998 DK 999 999 NA	_ _ _ _ _ _ _			
LI61	How many days per week do you work?		Entire days 98=DK 99=NA	_ _ _			
LI62	How many hours per day do you work?		Entire hours 98=DK 99=NA	_ _ _			
LI63	How many months each year do you work?		Entire months 98=DK 99=NA	_ _ _			

LI64	What was the initial reason for starting your present job?	Needed to make my own money To provide for family Encouraged by family/relatives Tired of school Adventure Only job available Forced by strangers Forced by family/relatives Other _____ DK NA	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 98 99
LI65	What did you do before you started your job?	Worked at home Worked other places School Begging Nothing Other _____ NA	1 2 3 4 5 6 9
LI66	During your current activities are you exposed to or work with any of the following...	1=Yes, 2=No, 8=DK, 9=NA 1 Pesticides? 1 2 8 9 2 Angel grinder? 1 2 8 9 3 Welding outfit? 1 2 8 9 4 Electrical pumps? 1 2 8 9 5 Other power-operated tools? 1 2 8 9 6 Mechanical tools? 1 2 8 9 7 Lacquers? 1 2 8 9	
LI67	Have you ever been wounded or suffered from any of the following? If yes, did it happen when you were working?	1=Yes, during work; 2=Yes, not during work, 3=No, 8=DK, 9=NA 1 Eye damages? 1 2 3 8 9 2 Ear damages? 1 2 3 8 9 3 Broken arms or leg? 1 2 3 8 9 4 Infected cuts or wounds? 1 2 3 8 9 5 Burns? 1 2 3 8 9	
War experience			
LI68	Were you part of a faction during the civil war? If yes, with whom?	Yes, with GOL Yes, with LURD Yes, with MODEL Yes, with LPC Yes, with Ulimo-K Yes, with Ulimo-J Yes, with LDF Yes with other _____ No, was not part of a faction NA	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 98 99
LI69	What was your task during the war?	Fighter Porter Messenger Cook Spouse/girlfriend Other support functions Other _____ DK NA	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

Education					
LI70	Have you ever attended school?		Yes No DK NA	1 2 8 9	If 2 → LI80
LI71	Are you currently enrolled in school?		Yes No DK NA	1 2 8 9	If 2→LI76
LI72	At what age did you start at school?	In whole years 98=DK 99=NA			
LI73	In which grade are you currently enrolled? Mark <u>stage</u> of education and <u>grade</u> within that stage	Primary school (grade 1-6) Junior secondary (grade 1-3) Senior secondary (grade 1-3) Technical education and vocational training University/Institutions Others _____ NA	1 2 3 4 5 6 9	 	
LI74	How many years have you gone to school altogether? Include current year	Number of years 98=DK 99=NA			
LI75	Were you often sometimes or never absent from school because of work last year?	Often Sometimes Never DK NA	1 2 3 8 9	All→LI81	
LI76	At what age did you start at school?	In whole years 98 DK 99 NA			
LI77	What is the highest grade you have completed? Mark <u>stage</u> of education and <u>grade</u> within that stage	Primary school (grade 1-6) Junior secondary (grade 1-3) Senior secondary (grade 1-3) Technical education and vocational training University/Institutions Others _____ NA	1 2 3 4 5 6 9	 	
LI78	For how many years did you go to school altogether? Ask if he/she has repeated	In whole years 98 DK 99 NA			
LI79	Where did you complete your highest education? If Abroad, specify country	Bomi Bong Gbarpolu Grand Bassa Grand Cape Mount Grand Gedeh Grand Kru Lofa Margibi Maryland Montserrat Nimba River Cess River Gee Sinoe Abroad _____ DK NA	1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 98 99		

LI80	If not continued education: What is the principal reason for not continuing your education? If never attended school: What is the principal reason for never attending school?	War 1 Finished education 2 Sickness/Disability 3 Family poverty 4 Family disintegration 5 Not interested in school 6 Repeated failure 7 Bad treatment at school 8 School not available nearby 9 Transportation not available 10 Could not pay school fees 11 Care for family members 12 No place at the school/ school overcrowded 13 Work in order to help family economically 14 Search money to survive 15 Concerns about safety 16 Poor teacher quality 17 Inappropriate shift system at school 18 Other 19 DK 98 NA 99		
LI81	Can you read and understand everyday written material, such as a letter or a newspaper?	Yes, easily 1 Yes, with difficulty 2 No 3 NA 9		
Future				
LI82	Do you think your life now compared to one year ago, is ...	... better than one year ago? 1 ... different, but of same quality? 2 ... or worse? 3 NA 9		
LI83	What do you want for the future? Read all categories	Continue the current activities 1 Get a better job 2 Go to school 3 Go home 4 Get married 5 Don't care 6 Go abroad 7 Other _____ 8 DK 98 NA 99		
LI84	One year from now, do you think your life will be...	... better than now? 1 ... different, but of same quality? 2 ... worse than now? 3 NA 9		

After the 'Storm'

This report presents the results of a study on the formal and informal work children between 10 and 18 years of age in Voinjama district, Liberia are involved in. The results show that all the children have been away from their place of origin during the war either as refugees in Guinea or as internally displaced elsewhere in Liberia. The children that have returned are mainly the ones with close networks, either parents or close relatives. The children in this study are not currently under a high work pressure, mainly due to the fact that there still is a low level of economic activities in the community in general. The report is the sixth report in a series of working papers from a Fafo research programme on child labour, generously financed by the Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs.



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