

**INFORMATION AND REPATRIATION:
THE CASE OF MOZAMBICAN REFUGEES IN MALAWI**

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of Doctor of Philosophy**

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Abstract

Repatriation is the end of the refugee cycle. In the context of a growing global refugee crisis, it is often the most favourable durable solution. However, the concept of repatriation is not properly understood. Although there are an increasing number of empirical studies on repatriation, there is a dearth of theoretical reflection. The overall aim of this thesis is to design a model to explain when the refugee cycle comes to an end for different refugees, and thereby to provide a device through which similarities between repatriation movements in a global context can be critically examined.

The intellectual thrust of the thesis is that potential repatriates arrive at a decision whether to repatriate or not by comparing conditions in exile with conditions at home. It follows that the receipt and evaluation of information about conditions at home is central to the decision-making process. A refugee cycle is conceived, in which the country of origin and the country of exile are linked by flows of information. Characteristics of these flows of information are articulated in a '*model of a repatriation information system*', which was tested amongst Mozambican refugees in Malawi. In this system, information is conveyed between a transmitter in the country of origin and the refugee in exile by an agent. The flows of information have quantitative and qualitative characteristics, and are subjectively evaluated by the individual in arriving at an assessment of conditions at home.

This thesis contributes towards the body of literature concerning African refugees generally and more specifically concerning Mozambican refugees, as well as contributing to the incorporation of refugee studies in the discipline of geography. It also has applications beyond these by providing a more generally applicable model of repatriation. The nature of certain findings also pitch the thesis into key debates in the evolving global migration system, including the extent to which there is a distinction between refugees and other sorts of migrants.

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Abbreviations and Codes

Abbreviations

AGRICOM	Agricom Empresa de Comercialização Agrícola
DARG	Developing Areas Research Group (Institute of British Geographers)
FRELIMO	Frente de Libertação de Moçambique
IGC	Intergovernmental Consultations on Asylum, Refugee and Migration Policies in Europe, North America and Australia
ILO	International Labour Organization
OAU	Organization of African Unity
PGSG	Population Geography Study Group (Institute of British Geographers)
RENAMO	Mozambican National Resistance (MNR)
RGS	Royal Geographical Society
RSP	Refugee Studies Programme, University of Oxford
SIDA	Swedish International Development Authority
UNHCR	Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNRISD	United Nations Research Institute for Social Development
USCR	United States Committee for Refugees

Transcript Codes

...	Omission for clarity, where omission does not interfere with passage meaning
[]	Inclusions for clarity
K:13	Field notes reference for transcript (letter refers to camp, number to page number in note books i.e. in this case Page 13 in Kalanje note book); coding to maintain anonymity.

Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1. Aims and objectives

The *thesis* is that the receipt and evaluation of information about home conditions is critical in the decision by refugees whether or not to repatriate. The premise of this thesis is that potential repatriates, like potential return migrants, base a decision whether to return upon a subjective comparison of conditions in exile *vis-a-vis* conditions at home. The *aim* of this research is therefore to identify and analyse how refugees in exile receive, evaluate and use information in coming to a decision whether to repatriate.

This aim is achieved via two *objectives*. First, a '*model of a repatriation information system*' is developed which understands repatriation in terms of the receipt and evaluation of information. In the model, information receipt relies upon a set of objective factors such as the existence of a transmitter of information at home and a means of information conveyance. The evaluation and subsequent use of information relies upon objective factors including the quality and quantity of information, but also subjective factors such as the perceived reliability of the transmitter or conveyor of information and the interaction between the individual, household and community levels in decision-making. Second, this model is tested in the field. The *empirical research* is intended not only to confirm whether the model's supposition of the way in which information is received and evaluated is correct, but also to investigate the processes involved: it therefore combines quantitative and qualitative methodologies.

The derivation of the model is firmly based within the *theoretical rationale* of this study. This rationale is twofold. First, theory-building is a valuable tool for understanding some of the general processes involved in refugee movement: free-standing empirical case studies cannot generally extend particular local observations into a broader context. Second, refugees and refugee movement should not be considered a separate entity from other types of migrants and their movement. From this rationale a *contextual framework* for this study is developed, namely a '*system of a refugee cycle*'. This system is drawn from migration studies. It understands refugee movement in either direction between the

country of origin and the country of asylum as a function of the relationships between the individual refugee, the two countries, and the external environment. In the system, feedback is represented by information from people in the one area to those in the other. The system is also linked to the external environment via a set of inputs. The model specifically tries to locate repatriation in this refugee cycle.

Ideally, testing the model would have involved cross-border research such that information transmitters in the country of origin and refugees in the country of asylum, as well as agents of information conveyance who cross the border, could be incorporated. However the emphasis of the empirical work is the receipt, evaluation and use of information, and thus the focus is upon the refugees. The sample population is drawn from Mozambican refugees in Malawi.

A theme which pervades this study is the blurring of the distinction between refugees and other types of migrants. As well as testing and elaborating upon the model, the empirical research supports the theoretical supposition that refugees should not always be categorised separately from other types of migrant.

1.2. Background

1.2.1. Refugee studies and geography

There has been, until only recently, very little academic consideration of the phenomenon of refugees. Reflecting upon this observation, Baker (1983, p.viii) ponders:

May it be that in many minds (and within established university departments) refugees are seen as immigrants with little distinction drawn between them? Or could it be too difficult an area of research, involving a multidisciplinary approach which academics tend to dislike? Or maybe it has little kudos attached to it and attracts few research grants, hence it is not useful for promotion purposes? Perhaps it is also too painful a subject for social scientists to get close to?

Whatever the reasons for the previous dearth of consideration, there is no doubt that in the past few years refugee studies have attracted increasing academic interest (Black, 1991). Publications have come from a variety of disciplines in a variety of formats. There have been research monographs from anthropology (Harrell-Bond, 1986); economic

history (Kibreab, 1985); geography (Rogge, 1985a); international relations (Gordenker, 1987) and sociology (Zolberg, *et.al.*, 1989). There have been a number of edited books (Joly and Cohen, 1989; Loescher and Monahan, 1989; Bramwell, 1988; Rogge, 1987; Black and Robinson, 1993), also from a number of disciplines. There has also been a new interdisciplinary journal, the *Journal of Refugee Studies*, as well as special issues of existing journals including *International Migration Review* (1981, 1986), *Third World Affairs* (1987), *Current Sociology* (1988) and *African Studies Review* (1989). Finally, there has also been a plethora of unpublished material, often in the form of reports for policy makers or conference papers, and particularly associated with the output of the Refugee Studies Programme of Oxford University. This thesis is intended to build upon this growing literature.

The thesis is also intended to address three significant lacunae in the existing literature, which can be described as conceptual, theoretical and empirical. First, there has been a certain ambivalence towards whether refugees should be treated as a separate entity from other migrants. Second, probably the majority of work in refugee studies has been in the form of free-standing empirical case studies, with a dearth of comparative work and more significantly of theory-building (Robinson, 1993). Third, the emphasis in most literature has been upon refugee flight, exile and to a lesser extent resettlement. Refugee repatriation and what happens when people arrive home has been largely ignored.

In addressing these lacunae, the thesis employs a geographical approach, and therefore also seeks to strengthen the contribution of the discipline of geography to refugee studies, which has included research monographs (Rogge, 1985a; Kuhlman, 1990), edited books (Rogge, 1987; Black and Robinson, 1993) and a recent Geographical Intelligence Paper published by the Royal Geographical Society (RGS, 1993). Assessing the contribution of geography to refugee studies to date raises definitional problems, as the discipline consists of so many perspectives (Black, 1993a). In reviewing the geographical work on refugees, Black (1991) identified three areas where interest had focused, namely the explanation of the causes of refugee flows, evaluation of the consequences of refugee flows for less developed countries, and the analysis of refugee resettlement patterns in the more developed world. The point was made that none of these areas of research could be considered exclusive to geographers, and that much of the existing work

reflected the somewhat multi-disciplinary nature of geography.

However, as both Black (1991, 1993a) and Robinson (1992, 1993) have observed, there is a particular contribution which geographers can make to refugee studies. First, fresh perspectives on the causes of refugee flows can be made by drawing upon a long-standing interest in people-environment relationships. Second, geographers have the necessary spatial skills to quantify, chart and monitor spatial patterns of refugee generation, refugee flows and refugee resettlement. Third, the geographical emphasis upon space and place can throw light upon topics such as why some individuals become refugees whilst others do not, why some refugees eventually return while others do not, and how refugees choose their destinations upon flight, resettlement or return. Finally, as Robinson (1993) observed, if refugees are conceived as comparable to other types of migrants, then there is an opportunity to adopt the concepts, theories and methods of geographical migration studies in studying refugees.

In this context this thesis does conceive of refugees as comparable to other sorts of migrants. This allows the development of the contextual framework (a '*system of a refugee cycle*') which draws upon the systems approach to migration studies (Mabogunje, 1970). The focus is the receipt, evaluation and use of information about home conditions in the process of repatriation, which is modelled (the '*model of a repatriation information system*'), and in which repatriation is compared with return migration. Testing the model provides an empirical examination of the parallels between the experiences of refugees and other types of migrant during the return phase.

1.2.2. Mozambican refugees in Malawi

The sample population is drawn from Mozambican refugees in Malawi. More or less since Independence from the Portuguese in 1975 Mozambique has suffered a war, variously described as a civil war or a war of external aggression waged by South Africa. The underlying logic of the war is much debated, and discussed in more detail in Chapter 5. The two combatants in the war have been the Government of Mozambique, still known by the acronym under which the anti-colonial struggle against the Portuguese was fought, FRELIMO (*Frente de Libertação de Moçambique*), and the Mozambican National Resistance (whose original acronym was MNR but which has been more usually known

as RENAMO since 1983). The war has devastated the economic and social infrastructure through most of Mozambique. Besides the inestimable deaths, there is little doubt that this war has been the underlying cause of the displacement both internally and externally of millions of Mozambicans since Independence, although the nature of the causal chain between the war and displacement is complicated (Wilson, 1992a), as discussed in Chapter 5.

Most sources agree that in 1992 there were some two million Mozambican refugees (as well as a further three million internally displaced people). Certainly more than this number fled Mozambique during the war, but some have returned and some have died (although some will have returned and then fled again). There are no available figures upon which to base a calculation of refugee stocks as a percentage of refugees who fled. The refugees are in Zambia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Swaziland, and South Africa, although about half (over one million) were in Malawi in 1992. The locations, numbers and institutional framework for these latter are described in detail in Chapter 5, for it is from those refugees that the sample populations in this study are drawn.

The case of Malawi has been the focus of this research for a number of reasons. First is the size and significance of the refugee population there. Behind Pakistan and Iran, Malawi has hosted over the last few years the third largest refugee population in the world. Also, with approximately one in nine of the population a refugee in 1992, Malawi has had one of the highest concentrations of refugee populations in the world. The second reason is geographical. Malawi borders more Provinces of Mozambique than any other country of asylum for Mozambicans, probably providing, in the context of a war which varied in nature and intensity through the Provinces of Mozambique, a greater range of displacement experiences. The third reason relates to the focus of this research upon repatriation, and especially self-repatriation. This process was better facilitated from Malawi than from most asylum countries because of the concentration of large numbers of refugees on 'porous' borders, unlike in Zambia where many refugees were relocated to Ukwimi settlement away from the border (Black, *et al.*, 1990), or Zimbabwe, Swaziland and especially South Africa where the border was to some extent closed to potential returnees. Finally, unlike in the cases of Tanzania and South Africa, there was at the commencement of this research at least a limited set of research on Mozambicans

in Malawi, particularly that of Wilson, upon which to draw. Such research (e.g. Wilson and Nunes, 1991) had already shown that self-repatriation had occurred from Malawi, largely because the length of the border with Mozambique combined with spatial fluctuations in the intensity of the war in Mozambique meant that different regions of Malawi often bordered temporarily peaceful areas in Mozambique.

Since the commencement of this research, the war in Mozambique has ended. A Peace Accord was signed on 4 October 1992, and a Ceasefire declared on 15 October 1992. With the exception of a few minor incidents, the ceasefire has held. However, the number and complexity of tasks necessary to complete the transition to proper security, including for example de-mining, demobilisation, efficient aid distribution and national elections, have meant that the transition has proved difficult to achieve, in the face of RENAMO delaying tactics, UN inefficiency and FRELIMO ineffectuality.

In this context, but also partly because of the inappropriateness of its repatriation plans and partly because of a lack of funds, the UNHCR has delayed the initiation of official repatriation in all the asylum countries. However self-repatriation has been occurring, involving relatively small numbers except in Malawi, where it is estimated that some 30% of the refugees have repatriated to date (September 1993). As recent field studies by Juergensen (1993) and Bonga and Wilson (1993) have shown, self-repatriation from Malawi has been a complex process. It has varied spatially: while up to 80% of refugees from the central Malawian districts of Dedza and Ntcheu may have already returned home, the percentage is much less in the southern and eastern districts. However, even in Dedza district it is estimated that 90% of the registered refugees who no longer reside in Malawi still return there for bi-monthly food rations (Juergensen, 1993). This might account for the discrepancies in recent UNHCR figures according to which over 250,000 refugees have repatriated from Malawi, whereas the number of refugees receiving aid has dropped by only about 100,000. If added to this is the estimate that up to 200,000 refugees self-repatriated during two or three years before the Peace Accord, it is clear that the repatriation process is not a straightforward one. It is this complexity, not only in the Malawi/Mozambique context but generally, which provides the context for this thesis.

1.3. Context

1.3.1. Repatriation and information

Even the quantification of repatriation, in terms of the scale or directions of movement, is very difficult. Significantly few attempts have been made, and those which exist (e.g. Rogge and Akol, 1989; Rogge, 1991) have relied upon UNHCR statistics. However, these statistics cannot be considered accurate. First, the UNHCR only enumerates as refugees those who are in receipt of assistance in exile. Thus significant numbers of self-settled refugees (Chambers, 1980*a*), or people who are for one reason or another not granted refugee status, are omitted, and their returns are neither enumerated nor included in repatriation statistics. Second, although there are exceptions such as the repatriation of Namibians in 1990, the official repatriation even of camp refugees is often a 'messy' process. Return occurs at different paces for different people; often families will divide such that some members return in order to negotiate social and economic re-entry into the home country while others wait for this to be achieved; often repatriation is not 'full' meaning that people who have returned will come back to collect rations, and so on.

Recent research, particularly associated with the Intertect Institute and directed by Cuny and Stein since 1988, has focused attention upon the process of self-repatriation (the term 'spontaneous repatriation' is often used, but is rejected in this thesis as a misnomer, for reasons which will become apparent). Self-repatriation occurs outside an institutional framework. It is estimated (Stein, 1992) that worldwide over the past decade, more refugees have self-repatriated than have been repatriated under official programmes. There is a range of self-repatriates, including not only those who are impatient with waiting for the initiation of official schemes, such as in the case of Mozambicans presently repatriating from Malawi, but also people who return before conditions at home are secure enough for official schemes to be considered by the UNHCR (Cuny and Stein, 1989). The point is that self-repatriation is refugee-initiated, refugee-organised and occurs outside an institutional framework: it is therefore very hard to enumerate.

The range of repatriation experiences, from official through various types of self-repatriation, speaks to the complexity of the repatriation process: it is not clear when or why people go home. This thesis seeks to place repatriation in the refugee cycle by focusing upon the decision-making of the refugees themselves. This does not mean it is

a thesis solely concerned with self-repatriation, however. Self-repatriates are not categorised totally separately from official repatriates; rather it is argued that the whole range of repatriation experiences can be to some extent explained by a focus on refugee decision-making. After all, not all refugees respond to official programmes: some may ignore them and remain in exile while others may self-repatriate despite the existence of official schemes. This argument can even be extended to forcible repatriation (*'refoulement'*), Crisp (1984a), for example, describes how many Ethiopian refugees resisted harassment by the Djibouti army to return until they were convinced it was safe to go home.

In this thesis it is argued that the decision whether to repatriate by a refugee is based upon a comparison of conditions in exile with conditions at home. It follows that information about conditions in the place of destination is central to this decision-making process. The decision-making process of the potential repatriate can therefore be compared with that of the potential return migrant, and this comparison between refugees and other sorts of migrant provides a second contextual theme for this thesis.

1.3.2. Refugees and economic migrants

It is very important in any discussion concerning refugees to specify exactly what is meant by the term refugee. In this thesis, the term is used conventionally and applies to those people who have fled their home countries primarily on the grounds of a well-founded fear of persecution (see Appendix I). In practice even this is not a globally uniform definition, as various regional statutes have extended this original 1951 UN Convention definition of the refugee, as discussed in Chapter 2, and as the UNHCR sometimes adopts its 'good offices' in further extending the definition. Nevertheless, this narrow definition is adopted for the sake of continuity through this thesis. Doing so, however, does not necessarily indicate that I disagree that the granting of refugee status to some asylum-seekers may be a politicised procedure which may exclude genuine claimants (Black, 1993a), nor that I necessarily reject the validity of a wider definition which might include, for example, 'environmental' refugees (McGregor, 1993), 'displacement-induced' refugees (Cernea, 1993) or the internally displaced (Bascom, 1993). Indeed, in its findings this thesis reinforces the observation by many that there are often multiple motivations in refugee movement.

As is discussed in Chapter 2, the distinction between refugees and economic migrants has recently become highly politicised, especially in countries of the North. This politicisation has come in the light of an increasing number of asylum-seekers in the North, an increasing number of whom, it is claimed by some, are economic migrants seeking to overcome tightening immigration procedures by posing as refugees. What this politicisation has drawn attention away from is the fact that over the last decade especially, there has been a blurring of economic and political criteria and motivations for refugee flight. Increasingly refugees are not necessarily fleeing political persecution alone, but also the environmental, social or economic ramifications which have a more direct impact upon their lives. What is needed is an analytical distinction between the underlying causes of refugee flight, and its immediate precipitants.

In understanding motivations to return, this thesis contributes further to this blurring, demonstrating that some refugees do not repatriate even when the immediate precipitants of their flight have been removed, primarily for economic reasons. However, it is not only the motivations of refugees and other sorts of migrants which can be compared. This thesis also suggests that the decision-making process of potential repatriates can be compared with that of potential return migrants.

This study also draws even bolder comparisons between refugees and other sorts of migrants, albeit tentatively. It lends credence to an attempt, not made in this thesis, to develop a fully integrated migration theory which includes all types of migration (Zelinsky, 1983). It does this by suggesting that a sharp conceptual differentiation between refugees and economic migrants may not be valid. This is because one of the findings of this thesis is that some refugees, who are correctly labelled, have in effect become economic migrants in exile. There have equally been examples, such as some Iranian students in England, of primarily economic migrants becoming refugees in exile. It may be possible to conceive of a single continuum, perhaps with the 'conventional' refugee at one end and the 'conventional' migrant at the other, along which continuum either can move towards the status of the other according to various pressures.

1.4. Structure of the thesis

The remainder of the thesis can be considered to be in three parts. First, the model to be tested is placed in context and developed. Second, the way in which this theoretical model is translated into a workable means of collecting data is described. Third, the empirical findings are described and analysed, and their implications discussed.

In Chapter 2, the theoretical rationale for this thesis is developed. The purpose is to elevate this thesis from the status of an empirical case-study to an exposition of a method of analysis which can be applied to other refugee situations. This is achieved by contextualising refugee flows, and builds upon the few previous attempts to place refugees in a broader context. The chapter concludes that the most appropriate contextual framework should focus upon the micro-analytical level of the refugees themselves, as opposed to the macro-analytical level of institutional policies. The applicability of such a framework to an examination of the end of the refugee cycle is then discussed.

In Chapter 3 the '*model of a repatriation information system*' is hierarchically developed. First, in the context of past efforts to theorise refugee movements, the '*system of a refugee cycle*' is depicted. Then attention is focused upon repatriation in the cycle, and specifically upon the role of information in repatriation. The theoretical model is then presented and discussed.

The field strategy for testing this model is discussed in Chapter 4. Combining as it did the personal level of refugees who receive and evaluate information, and the more impersonal level of agencies which convey information, and seeking as it did both to describe patterns in the information system but also to understand processes, the field strategy combined quantitative and qualitative methodologies. The result was an integrated set of multiple field methods.

In Chapter 5 the refugee population involved in this study is placed in historical context. The discussion describes the stages of the refugee cycle, progressing from pre-flight experience through flight, settlement in Malawi and repatriation to date. At each stage a brief discussion of the national experience in Mozambique and Malawi is followed by a more detailed discussion of the experience in the Provinces and Districts from which

the majority of my respondents fled, and in which they are settled.

Chapter 6 provides a profile of my sample population, including their demographic structure, occupational profiles before and after flight, previous experience of migration and more recent experiences of flight and return. Within this context, the geography of my respondents' information networks, and their information sources are discussed. This latter is largely based upon the quantitative data obtained during the fieldwork, and broadly confirms the *patterns* in the refugee information system predicted by the model. In contrast, Chapters 7 and 8 are largely based upon qualitative data, and focus upon the some of the important *processes* in the information system.

In Chapter 7 the way in which respondents evaluated and used the information received is analysed. Evaluation is largely a behavioural process, and an assessment of how evaluation occurs, tied up as it is with psychological and sociological factors, is beyond the scope of this thesis. However, the mental process of evaluation is conceived of as only one part of the evaluation process, the 'how'. Equally important is the 'what' of evaluation, in other words the object being evaluated, and an evaluation framework is designed which focuses upon this latter. Thus evaluation is understood in terms of the quantity and quality of the information received. Attention is then turned to the way in which information evaluation was translated into the use of that information in making a decision whether to return, and it is suggested that this process is mediated by personal return motivations at the individual level, and by the interaction between different people at a more collective level.

Chapter 8 focuses upon the evolution of the information system. The process of information receipt by the individual generally evolved from an initial stage of information vacuum, through a drop-out stage and sorting stage, culminating in a mature stage. The process was indexed by a reduction in the number of individual information networks which exist, but an increasing quality of those which remained. The process of information evaluation evolved according to the evolution of individual or group motivations and priorities, which determined what sorts of information were evaluated highly. The understanding that both these processes did evolve through time is central to an understanding that the decision-making process itself is dynamic. That is why

repatriation occurs at different times in the refugee cycle for different people.

In Chapter 9 an '*integrated information model of repatriation*' is developed. Drawing upon the insights provided by the empirical findings in the previous three chapters, a three-stage model is constructed which understands the range of repatriation experiences in terms of the receipt and evaluation of information about home conditions. This model represents the qualified achievement of the aim of this thesis. In an evaluation, it is suggested that the model is not only generally applicable in analysing the repatriation experiences of my sample population, but may also be more broadly applicable to repatriation movements in other contexts.

Chapter 10 presents the conclusions. As a result of the theoretical rationale adopted to achieve the aim of this research, it is inevitable that this thesis has implications beyond the limits of this aim. These are reviewed in Chapter 10.

Chapter 2 Contextual Framework

2.1. Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to develop a theoretical rationale which can serve to elevate this thesis from just an empirical case-study of a certain refugee population in Malawi to an exposition of a method of analysis which can be applied to other refugee situations and to the links between refugees and other types of migrant. A theme throughout the chapter is a critical comparison between the experiences of refugees and other types of migrants. It is shown that the distinction between refugees and economic migrants, despite its recent politicisation in countries of the North, has in fact become increasingly blurred, and it is suggested that therefore the decision-making process whereby refugees flee and return can be compared to that of other types of migrant.

This aim is achieved through a contextualisation of refugee flows. First, the refugee phenomenon is located empirically within the broader context of international population movements. Second, previous conceptual attempts to place refugee flows within a broader context are discussed, and then built upon to develop a contextual framework for this study. Finally, attention is focused upon repatriation, and it is argued that the theoretical model developed later in this thesis can serve to understand the complexities of this process as it varies between different refugee situations.

2.2. Is there a global refugee phenomenon?

The second half of the twentieth century has witnessed a dramatic change in the extent and nature of international population movement. There has been an increasing number and range of migrants, including a variety of short- and long-term labour migrants as well as illegal labour migrants (Salt, 1993). The geography of international migration has also changed, characteristics being a rapid increase of migration streams originating in the developing world (Desbarats, 1992) and a globalisation of international labour migration dominated by a set of macro-regional networks (Salt, 1993).

There has also been an increasing prominence in international population movements

assumed by so-called forced migration. This prominence is in part numerical. It was estimated in 1986 (Aga Khan and Talal, 1986) that in the previous 30 years some 70 million people had left their country of origin to flee political violence and persecution. Estimates of the current number of refugees outside their own country vary between 15 million and 17 million (USCR, 1992), and this probably exceeds any previous total. These figures are for refugee stocks which represent only the residual from larger flows, as they do not include those who have repatriated or permanently resettled. These growing cumulative numbers reflect the tendency for refugees to spend increasingly longer periods in countries of asylum (Gallagher, 1986).

The prominence of refugee flows is also geographical. The location of refugee *generation* has changed considerably, significantly to include countries of both the North and the South today. In the immediate post-1945 era, the major refugee flows were either a consequence of the Second World War, or were related to the imposition of Communism in eastern Europe (Holborn, 1975; Loescher and Scanlan, 1986), and therefore originated in eastern Europe. Between the late 1950s and the late 1980s (Coles, 1989), the majority of refugee flows originated in countries of the South, and especially Africa. Since the 1980's, however, refugee generation has occurred simultaneously in countries of the North and South: as many as 3 million people have fled both from Afghanistan and from Mozambique, and 1 million from Yugoslavia, for example.

Another characteristic of refugee flows which has heralded their prominence in international population movements, has been the recent trend of refugees being displaced over greater distances. Until recently refugees normally fled to a neighbouring state under the gravity principle (Salt, 1986). This generalisation does not include the limited number of so-called 'quota' refugees, mainly from South East Asia, but also from South America and Africa (especially Ugandan Asians) who have been permanently resettled in countries of the North. Although by no means all of them have been granted refugee status, one indicator of this trend is the dramatic recent increase in flows of asylum-seekers from the South to the North. It is estimated that some 70% of asylum-seekers in Europe between 1983 and 1991 were from the less-developed countries of the South (Widgren, 1991), and that over the period 1983-92 the number of asylum-seekers in thirteen European states increased from 70,000 to 685,000 | per annum (IGC, 1993).

The numerical and geographical changes in refugee flows speak to the fact that the refugee phenomenon which used to be largely a regional issue, has become a truly global one (Desbarats, 1992). Accordingly, an international machinery has been set in place to deal with refugee flows, particularly the consequences as opposed to causes. This machinery is centred upon the UNHCR, whose mandate is to assist and protect refugees and to find them permanent solutions, but involves several other UN organisations including the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the World Food Programme (WFP), as well as the International Organisation for Migration (IOM), International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) and a host of NGO's.

The changes in the character of refugee flows also speak to their increasing prominence in international population movements as a whole. What is significant is that very little of the literature which concerns international population movements includes refugee flows, despite their prominence, and even despite the fact that in the case of South-North movements, directions of the movement of asylum-seekers mirrors that of other sorts of international migration (Widgren, 1989; Hein, 1993). For example, in the significant edited volumes of Pacione (1986) and Kritiz *et.al.* (1992), refugee flows merit attention in only one chapter in each (Salt and Desbarats respectively); while there is even less attention paid by Skeldon (1990), despite his focus upon the developing world.

What is also significant is that unlike the literature which addresses other types of migration, for example labour migration (Salt, 1993), there has been very little attempt in the literature on refugee movements to place them within a broader global context. In the following section, some of these few attempts are reviewed. The chapter then goes on to explore alternative means of placing refugee flows within a broader global context, and focuses especially upon the view that refugee movements should be considered a subset of international migration, and not divorced from other migration studies.

2.3. Towards the globalisation of refugee flows: a refugee cycle

The majority of literature on refugee movements has focused upon individual examples, and has often been in the form of case studies or designed to address particular policy issues. There have been only a few attempts to place individual cases within a broader

context. This observation is not to discredit some of the excellent case studies which have been undertaken, two of the best being on refugees in Sudan (Rogge, 1985a; Harrell-Bond, 1986). However, unless refugee movements are placed within a broader context, such that attention is focused upon general processes of causation and consequence, it is difficult to compare one refugee flow with another, or refugee flows with other migration flows. Without a framework for analysis, case-studies are difficult to compare. One of the premises of this chapter is that the contextualisation of refugee flows is a valuable tool for placing individual case studies within a broader context, and that this globalisation of discrete refugee flows can be important.

However, placing refugee flows within a broader context has proved an elusive goal. In a recent edited collection of refugee literature (Black and Robinson, 1993), for example, the link between the various chapters seems somewhat tenuous, and some people may consider the volume essentially a collection of case studies. Exactly why it has proved difficult to contextualise refugee flows is difficult to know. Salt (1986) suggested that migration specialists from whatever discipline have tended to steer clear of refugee movements as they seem unpredictable and are generally triggered by political events. Desbarats (1992, p.280) asserted that: 'Refugee movements generally result from the political structure of the international system rather than from its economic structure, so that their analysis requires different frameworks from those found useful in accounting for international labour movements'. The idea that political structures can be credited as the most important causative element of refugee flows is one which is questioned in the following discussion.

Perhaps the most significant attempt to place refugee flows within a broader context has been that of Zolberg *et al.* (1986, 1989). Their thesis linked refugee flows with political instability. They argued that although the events that trigger refugee flows are unpredictable, they do not occur randomly but are manifestations of processes which are themselves related to structural features of contemporary world politics. Therefore, the determinants of refugee flows are amenable to theoretical analysis. As one of the first attempts to access an analysis of refugee flows via a theoretical framework, the work is very important.

The thesis of Zolberg *et.al.* suggested that an analysis of the determinants of refugee movement should be cast in a trans-national framework (Salt, 1986). This is patently sensible. Refugee status, from the 1951 Convention definition through the range of regional adaptations, hinges upon the asylum-seeker being outside the country of origin. As Shacknove (1985) observes, this principle is necessary in order to respect the sovereign rights of a government in its own country. What this does mean is that many people, simply by virtue of not crossing an international border, are not considered refugees. It is estimated that there are probably more internally displaced people in the world than externally displaced (Bascom, 1993). Sometimes, as is often the case in Mozambique for example, these people simply live too far from an international border to reach it. In other cases, such as Cambodia between 1975 and 1978 (Desbarats, 1992), bureaucratic barriers have been placed in the paths of prospective refugees. The point is, however, that refugee status depends equally upon the receiving country allowing entry. Perhaps the most notorious recent example of refusal of the right of entry is associated with the electrified border fence erected by the South African Government to deter Mozambican refugees. Cases of third countries of resettlement demonstrate the necessity of including a third actor in a trans-national framework of refugee movement. More countries can be brought into the framework when consideration is given to the phenomenon of 'refugees in orbit' which results when the responsibility for examining asylum claims is shifted from country to country (Melander, 1986), or by the inclusion of the host of donor countries which support refugees via the UNHCR.

Salt (1986) and later Desbarats (1992) sought to place refugee movements within a broader context by adopting such a trans-national framework. In doing so both authors adopted a systems approach from the corpus of migration theory (Mabogunje, 1970), which approach seeks to articulate the linkages between a number of elements which constitute the system, and between the system as a whole and factors external to it. The three elements in Salt's refugee system (derived from Zolberg, 1985) were Third World countries; reception countries and the super and major regional powers. Third World countries were seen as the major sources of refugee flows, where political, economic and social weakness and endemic poverty and inequality can often be exacerbated by the actions of major regional and superpowers. The recognition of people as refugees depends upon the attitudes of the potential receiving countries, and so they were the third

element. The three elements in Desbarat's system were source countries; first-asylum countries and resettlement countries. Apart from articulating the multiplex relationships between these three sorts of countries as well as similarly placed countries, her system hardly improves upon that of Salt as a framework for understanding the causes or consequences of refugee flows.

The systems of Salt then Desbarats made the very valuable point that refugee movements are inextricably linked with the characteristics and policies of source, first asylum and other countries. They also provided a framework for comparing different refugee flows. However, a number of case studies, perhaps best exemplified by a wealth of local studies in Mozambique (e.g. Geffray and Pederson, 1988; Roesch, 1991; Wilson, 1991; Wilson and Shumba, 1991) have demonstrated the inadequacy of such macro-level approaches in explaining the actual processes of flight and the individual experiences of the people involved. What such local case studies point to is the need to separate analytically the underlying causes of refugee flight, which may usually be political, from their immediate precipitants which are often not. In any case it is obvious that refugees flee a range of factors, often inextricably linked, of which political insecurity may be only one. An emphasis upon the macro-level also ignores the tenacity of refugees in overcoming or defying institutional procedures. Thus, for example, many refugees negotiate unofficial entry into asylum countries, and settle outside the official framework (Chambers, 1980a).

Furthermore, neither system included all of the stages of the refugee experience, from displacement through exile to a stage of completion. Salt's refugee system was concerned only with displacement, and although Desbarat's system extended the analysis to third country resettlement, this has been numerically the least important of the three so-called durable solutions for refugees (Stein, 1986), which also include local integration and repatriation. However, a number of case studies have shown that the stages in the 'cycle' of refugee movement are not discrete, and that to study them as such fails to reveal important processes (e.g. Bulcha, 1989; Makanya, 1991). The research presented later in this thesis, for example, shows the importance during both flight and return of family networks, whereby only a few members of a family moved in order to establish a means of economic livelihood before the remainder joined them. From the point of view of

policy-makers I also consider it important to stress the notion of a refugee cycle (Black, 1993a; Koser, 1993a), thereby emphasising that refugees should not be conceived as a permanent burden, but rather as a temporary phenomenon for whom there is a solution.

In contrast, this thesis adopts a different approach for contextualising refugee flows. The theoretical framework is a refugee cycle and is thus still founded in the systems approach. However, the emphasis is upon placing refugees themselves back into the system, and thus shifts from the macro-analytical level of the national and trans-national to the micro-analytical level of the individual, household and community, and the interaction between these three levels. Refugee movement through the cycle is explained in terms of the decision-making processes of refugees, tied up as they are with individual values, perceptions and preferences. Of course decision-making occurs within the context of environmental factors which include policies of the countries of origin and asylum. Such a focus is overtly geographical, as it draws upon the traditional geographical interest in people-environment relationships, and seeks to understand the diversity of individual and group experiences in different places (Black, 1991).

By focusing upon the decision-making of individuals as opposed to institutional policies, the approach in this thesis also enables a critical comparison between refugees and other sorts of migrants, and parallels to be drawn between the decisions of the two whether to move. This comparison is a further tool used to place refugee movements into a broader context. However, in the context of a blurred distinction between refugees and other sorts of migrants; the refugee cycle becomes an elusive concept, in terms of who enters it, when and why, but also when and how it ends.

2.4. Refugees or economic migrants?

The definition of a refugee was laid down in the 1950 Statute of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and in the 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. The Convention defined as a refugee:

any person who...[a]s a result of events occurring before 1 January 1951 and owing to well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality and is unable

or...unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.

The most significant feature of this definition for the purpose of this discussion is that political persecution is the essential characteristic of the refugee so defined. Since the Convention, the constraining time limitation was waived, first to accommodate Hungarian refugees in 1956, and finally abolished in the 1967 Protocol to the Convention (Rogers, 1993). In response to the fact that the definition reflected a specific historical and geographical context (Shacknove, 1985), there have been some 30 international agreements and 20 regional instruments (Desbarats, 1992), usually in order to extend the Convention to include local circumstances. Perhaps the most important were the 1969 OAU Convention on Refugees which extended the definition of a refugee beyond compulsion to leave because of persecution, to include external aggression, occupation, foreign domination or events seriously disturbing public order, and the OAS Cartagena Declaration (1985) which extended the definition to include those fleeing from internal conflict or massive violations of human rights. The point to note is that no definition explicitly includes people fleeing for primarily economic reasons.

The distinction between political refugees and economic migrants has recently become highly politicised, particularly in Europe¹. The context for this has been a tightening of immigration procedure in many European countries, including such measures as carrier sanctions, the imposition of visas upon citizens of potential and actual refugee producing countries, and an increasing denial of the right to appeal (Gasarasi, 1991; Dacyl, 1992). These measures have come about as a result of rapidly increasing numbers of asylum-seekers especially in European countries. The fear, certainly to some extent founded, is that amongst the asylum-seekers are 'bogus' claimants, seeking to short-circuit immigration procedures by claiming refugee status. Why this situation has become politicised is because of the fear that tighter determination procedures in many European countries (Black, 1993b) as well as the United States (Gibney, *et al.*, 1992) may be excluding 'genuine' as well as 'bogus' claimants. Thus, in an environment of recession and retrenchment, and a concern not to import ethnic problems which might threaten

¹ So sensitive is the issue in some circles that the 1991 international seminar entitled '*Refugees or Economic Migrants?*', organised by RSP, and including statements from representatives of government, public service and business sectors, was held under 'Chatham House Rules' of non-attributability.

national security, a general concern to repel immigration might be drawing attention away from the needs of refugees. The evidence is unclear. Desbarats (1992, p.297), for example, stated categorically that: "most asylum-seekers [in the West] are not economic migrants in disguise", although in making this assertion she drew upon the analysis of UNHCR figures by Aga Khan and Talal in 1986. Despite the important difference between the dates, if Desbarats' assertion is correct, then Widgren's (1991) estimate that in 1991 some 70% of asylum applications in Europe were not recognised would point to the denial of refugee status to at least some 'genuine' claimants. In any case, the recent example of the admission *en masse* of refugees from ex-Yugoslavia by neighbouring countries demonstrates that the principle of individual determination is not necessarily inflexible in the face of the plight of 'genuine' claimants.

However, as Black (1993a) points out, the political significance of asylum-seekers in the North far outweighs their numerical importance in a global context. The politicisation of the distinction between political refugees and economic migrants has drawn attention away from an objective assessment of the fact that there has been a blurring of economic and political criteria and motivations in refugee flight throughout the world in recent years. Inevitably, those who flee have mixed motives, which include political, economic, but also social and environmental factors (McGregor, 1993). Many of the refugees involved in this study could not be considered to have fled political persecution. Coming from a rural background as most did, the collapse of the economic infrastructure, albeit as a result of mainly RENAMO activities, resulted in a far more potent threat to livelihoods and survival than political persecution. As Desbarats (1992) observed, over the past decade or so, the pertinence of the distinction between economically and politically motivated international migrants has been eroded by the growing number of refugees who flee the economic bankruptcy of some repressive regimes or war-torn countries, and who are, therefore, difficult to distinguish from other migrants. Procedures of refugee recognition have to some extent recognised the importance of mixed motives. Thus since about 1969, African countries have tended to grant refugee status *en masse* to asylum-seekers (Harrell-Bond, 1989). There are also a range of refugee statuses in many Northern countries, including 'A' and 'B', or 'Convention' and 'Humanitarian' refugees in Europe, for example. It is clear that the available definitions of a refugee are incapable of incorporating the range of 'genuine' claimants which exists today.

I personally concur with Shacknove's (1985) seminal definition of a refugee based on the notion of a minimal social bond between a state and its citizens, which includes all those who leave their home country (and are therefore within access to international assistance), do not have access to basic rights (including political freedom, social and economic inputs as well as freedom from abuse or persecution) upon which subsistence depends, and do not have recourse to the Home Government. Of course there are many people who are refugees according to the Shacknove definition, but are not recognised as such. USCR (1992) lists some 3.5 million such people, the largest single group being about 750,000 Palestinians in Jordan, but also some 500,000 Iraqis in Iran. This is hardly surprising considering that some of the most important countries of first asylum (for example India, Jordan, Mexico, Pakistan, Thailand and South Africa) are not signatories of the 1951 Convention and therefore do not necessarily abide by the Convention definition of a refugee (Desbarats, 1992). It was not until 1989, some four years after the first arrivals of Mozambicans, that the Government of Malawi passed the Refugee Act (8 May 1989) which recognised the displaced Mozambicans as refugees (Maluwa, 1991). Nevertheless such people are still included in the refugee cycle in this thesis. So too are people who 'become' refugees in exile, an example being some Iraqi students in Britain or some Vietnamese in Hong Kong, who did not move as refugees, but who might be endangered by return. It is equally likely that some people who have been granted refugee status are in fact successful 'bogus' claimants. These people are not included in the refugee cycle.

It is in this context of a blurring of the distinction between political refugees and other sorts of migrants, that this thesis seeks to examine the similarities between the two types of migration. At a macro-analytical level this would be difficult, as policies and procedures for refugee admission and the admission of other types of legal migrants differ to the extent that they perhaps could not be located within the same framework of analysis. However, at the micro-analytical level, where attention is focused upon the processes of migration at the individual level, there is an opportunity to place the movement of both within the same framework. A starting point is to examine critically the extent to which there are similarities between the flight of refugees and the movement of other types of migrants.

A standard comparison, certainly in common parlance, and to an extent in literature on refugees and other types of migrants, is between a migrant exercising free choice, and a refugee exercising no choice upon moving. Hence Kunz (1973), for example, used the term 'kinetic' to describe the process of refugee displacement, comparing the refugee to a billiard ball which is bounced from cushion to cushion with no control over its movement or final resting point. However, a number of theoretical studies, supported by a host of empirical studies, have shown that common assumptions of refugee powerlessness during displacement are flawed. Although these studies are the focus here, it is worth noting that as a corollary many studies of migration equally have undermined the notion of migrants with free choices (e.g. Zolberg, 1981; Richmond, 1988).

The assumption of refugee powerlessness upon flight denies the possibility that there may be different reasons for refugee flight. Stein and Tomasi (1981), for example, argue that refugee movements are patterned events and that there is what could be called a 'refugee experience' which produces what may be termed a 'refugee behaviour'. However, several authors have theorised different categories of refugees, the distinction between categories being based upon the reason for flight. Kunz (1973) first distinguished between 'acute' and 'anticipatory' refugees, then later proposed a more sophisticated categorisation (Kunz, 1981), distinguishing between 'majority identified'; 'events related', and 'self alienated' refugees. Bulcha (1989) distinguished between five categories of refugee on the basis of flight, namely: contenders for power; opponents of change; revolutionary activists; persecuted minorities, and displaced masses. The point of these categorisations is that the process of flight of only some refugees, namely 'majority identified' or displaced masses, comes even close to the conception of 'blind', or 'panicked' flight.

Hansen (1981*a*) introduced the notion that the flight of all categories of refugees can be studied within a choice framework and that refugee flights are therefore neither automatic nor inevitable. As Kibreab (1991, p.34) observed: 'in the majority of cases, people, no matter how pressured, may still be able to exercise some form of residual power to influence their decision as well as their destination'. Indeed, Cuny and Stein (1991) assert that the decision to flee reflects the refugee's belief that his or her power and self-control are now inadequate to provide protection from insult, injury, imprisonment or death: thus

flight represents an attempt to utilise whatever power, control and mobility the person still possesses to escape from a threatening situation to safety. There are often other alternatives available: to stay, to flee internally or to join the threatening force, for example. In this context flight is a decision arrived at after alternatives are compared.

This notion that different refugees flee for different reasons, and that flight may represent but one of a number of albeit restricted choices, has been borne out by numerous empirical studies, one of the most comprehensive being that of Wilson and Nunes (1991) on patterns of flight from Mozambique to Malawi. It speaks of the possibility of comparing the decision-making processes of refugees and of other sorts of migrants, and equally of repatriates and return migrants. This comparison provides the basis for the '*model of a repatriation information system*' developed in the following chapter. It is argued that potential repatriates, like potential return migrants, go home as a result of a balanced decision depending upon their personal aspirations, and information available on wider structural conditions. The decision-making process, and importantly the role of information in that process, are central in explaining the movement of all migrants, including refugees, throughout the cycle of relocation or displacement.

For the purpose of this thesis, the cyclical implication carried by the description 'cycle' is not intended (although it is true that some refugees enter the cycle of displacement and return more than once): in fact the concept is used to imply quite the opposite, that the refugee phenomenon does come to an end for the individual. In the refugee cycle, that end occurs when a person ceases to be a refugee either as a result of naturalisation in the host or a third country, or of repatriation. However, what this thesis does demonstrate is that there are other means of exiting the refugee cycle, which speak to the further blurring of the distinction between refugees and economic migrants.

Perhaps the crudest example of exiting the refugee cycle is death in exile. This is a phenomenon which is rarely enumerated, thus making the calculation of refugee stocks all the more difficult. It is also a phenomenon which is understudied, an exception being the work of Harrell-Bond and Wilson (1990), despite the fact that it must be becoming more prevalent as certain refugee populations have been in exile for very considerable periods. This is not, however, a concern in this study. Another means of exiting the

refugee cycle, which is addressed in this thesis, is the transformation of refugees in exile into other sorts of migrants. It is suggested that some Mozambican refugees in this study have in effect become economic migrants in exile, and that they have effectively exited the refugee cycle before any of the three durable solutions have occurred. Information networks between relatives at home and refugees in exile have been one mechanism by which this transformation has been achieved. In this finding, this thesis provides empirical justification for the theoretical comparison of refugees with other sorts of migrants.

The transformation of some refugees into economic migrants clearly has implications for understanding when and how the refugee cycle ends for the individual. This finding lends credence to the observation made above that the stages of the refugee cycle are not discrete: the end of the cycle must be understood in terms of experience in exile, for example. It is the end of the refugee cycle which is the focus of this thesis.

2.5. The end of the refugee cycle

During the immediate post-1945 era, refugees from eastern Europe were expected to settle permanently in exile in Europe or North America. Most did so. Between the late 1950's and the early 1970's, the main cause of refugee generation was anti-colonialism in countries of the South, and especially African countries. During this period repatriation following the victory of 'freedom fighters' (Rogge, 1985*b*) was commonplace (Stein, 1992). During these periods, then, the way in which the refugee cycle would end for most individuals was largely predicted, and these predictions were normally accurate.

However, since the mid-1970 s, the end of the refugee cycle has become a difficult concept. Until the recent exodus from ex-Yugoslavia, refugees have overwhelmingly been concentrated in the poorer countries of the world. According to Black (1993*a*), in 1991 27 low-income countries, each with a level of GNP per capita of less than \$500, were host to almost half of the total number of refugees in the world. Sometimes permanent settlement in these first countries of exile has been possible: examples of resettlement schemes during the 1980 s are the Etsha scheme for Angolan refugees in Botswana; the Katumba, Ulyankulu and Mishamo schemes for Rwandese and Burundian refugees in Tanzania, settlements such as Qala en Nahal for refugees from Zaire, Chad, Eritrea and

Uganda in Sudan (Rogge, 1985*b*), and more recently the Ukwimi scheme for Mozambicans in Zambia (Black, *et.al.*, 1990). However, naturalisation programmes and resettlement schemes have been problematic (Bascom, 1991; Daley, 1991; Gasarasi, 1990*a*; Gorman, 1986). There is also little doubt that despite the potential benefits which a refugee population can infer upon a host country and its population (Kibreab, 1985; Rogge, 1985*b*; Smythe, 1987), the sheer numbers involved preclude large-scale permanent settlement. For the relatively small numbers who can be included, the option is also expensive (Harrell-Bond, 1989).

For the same reasons, third country resettlement in another country in the developing world has not usually been a viable solution. At the same time, countries of the North have generally maintained a very low resettlement ceiling for refugees from the South since the resettlement of 'quota' refugees mainly from South East Asia (Bach, 1989). According to Rogers (1993), in 1991 only ten countries in North America or Europe announced refugee resettlement quotas, making 156,800 resettlement places available in total.

In this context, repatriation has become the favoured solution, both because it returns refugees to their home areas, but also because it represents the cheapest option for the international community (Coles, 1985; Harrell-Bond, 1989). Repatriation is itself, however, a 'not-so-simple' solution (Rogge, 1991).

The majority of refugees both in the South, but also currently in ex-Yugoslavia, have fled circumstances which do not have foreseeable solutions comparable to the end of anti-colonial struggles, for example. Kibreab (1991) identified the five major categories of contemporary refugee flight in Africa as: South Africa's destabilisation policies; the denial of the right of self-determination for groups annexed to others by former colonial powers; tyranny of some political leaders; religious persecution, and forcible relocation or villagisation. Again the point must be made that these may be underlying causes of flight, however even precipitant factors such as famine or drought are themselves often severe and lasting.

In some cases, organised repatriation has proved possible. Perhaps the best example was

the repatriation of some 40,000 Namibian refugees in 1990 (Gasarasi, 1990*b*; Simon and Preston, 1993). Indeed so great were the hopes of the UNHCR for large-scale repatriations at the beginning of this decade that it was dubbed the 'decade of repatriation' (Rogers, 1993). However this optimistic forecast has so far been disappointed (Stein, 1992). In some cases, wars which were partly fuelled by the super powers, and the settlement of which was expected with the rise to political hegemony of the United States following the collapse of Communism (Dacyl, 1990), such as in Afghanistan, have continued even after the withdrawal of super power patronage. In other cases, such as Angola and Cambodia, the settlement of internal wars has proved short-lived, and the peace process shown to be fragile (Ogata, 1993). In the case of Mozambique, where peace has by and large been maintained, the transition to a properly secure situation has been slow and compounded by problems such as drought in northern Mozambique which has actually generated a further exodus.

However, it is not only the nature of conditions in refugee generating countries which has made repatriation a difficult solution. Cuny and Stein (1989) demonstrated the ineffectuality of the UNHCR in repatriation programmes. Partly this relates to a shortage of funds in UNHCR coffers, which has meant that some repatriation programmes have been put on hold, one example being that of Mozambicans in Malawi (Wilson and Nunes, 1991). They also asserted that the principles of the UNHCR are too inflexible to cope with the circumstances of many contemporary repatriation initiatives. For example, a reluctance to deal with non-recognised entities means that the UNHCR cannot support return movements to areas held by those entities. Also, in satisfying one half of its mandate, the protection of refugees, UNHCR errs to the side of caution before condoning or supporting repatriation initiatives to the extent that the other half of the mandate, solution, is often precluded.

The problems associated with repatriation may also be linked with the refugees themselves (Crisp, 1986; Rogge, 1991; Rogge and Akol, 1989). Particularly in the context of long periods of exile, refugees may become socially or culturally incorporated in the host country, or economically dependent, to the extent that they do not wish to repatriate. Repatriation for some might also make them economically vulnerable. Refugees may also undergo political transformation, for example several Afghan refugee

camps in Pakistan became hot beds of Islamic fundamentalism such that refugees had new political demands of the home government which were not related to the root causes of flight (Zetter, 1988). On the flip-side, refugees may not always be welcomed by home governments upon their return. These sorts of problems raise questions about how much pressure should be applied upon refugees to repatriate. Crisp (1984a, 1984b) describes two examples where the dividing line between voluntary repatriation and forcible repatriation (*'refoulement'*) became blurred.

The above discussion paints a bleak picture of the prospects for repatriation, and of a crisis of durable solutions generally. The impact of resultant long periods in exile can be deleterious for both refugees and host countries (Chambers, 1986); indeed the economic, social and environmental impact of Mozambican refugees in Malawi was an important theme in the 1992 Blantyre *'Conference on First Country of Asylum and Development Aid in Malawi'* (especially Bonga, 1992; Kakhome, 1992). However, self-repatriation has still occurred on a quite large scale. A number of recent studies have demonstrated the tenacity and self-sufficiency of refugees in negotiating their own repatriations, outside of an institutional framework.

The Intertect Institute's project on *'Spontaneous Voluntary Refugee Repatriation'*, co-ordinated by Cuny and Stein since 1988, has stressed that there have been a range of repatriations over the last ten years, of which official repatriation, in the context of some of the institutional obstacles discussed above, has played a decreasing part. It is estimated that over this period self-repatriation has accounted for more than half the repatriation movements worldwide (Stein, 1991). Often refugees have returned without the settlement of conflict in the home area (Stein and Cuny, 1991; Cuny and Stein, 1992). The findings of Stein and Cuny have not been based upon their own fieldwork: however they have been supported by a number of case studies, including those contained in a recent edited volume of repatriation in Central America (Larkin *et.al.*, 1991) and many of those presented at the UNRISD *'Symposium on Social and Economic Aspects of Mass Voluntary Return of Refugees from One African Country to Another'*, a number of which appear in a forthcoming edited volume (Allen and Morsink, 1993).

What these case studies also remind us is that it is not only the existence of a range of

repatriation types which makes repatriation a complex process to understand. Even within the same refugee population, some people self-repatriate, others repatriate officially, and others intend not to repatriate. Also, different people repatriate at different times, for different reasons and in different units, as in-depth studies by Wilson (1991) and Wilson and Nunes (1991) have demonstrated in the context of Mozambique. Repatriation is therefore not a clearly understood process or concept.

2.6. Conclusion

In this chapter a theoretical rationale and contextual framework for this study have been developed. The theoretical rationale is that refugee flows should be placed within a broader context, both in terms of their empirical importance in international population movements as a whole, but also by analysing the general processes of causation and consequences of refugee flows. The contextual framework is that it is the decision-making of individuals, not the policies of institutions or nations, which is central in understanding characteristics of refugee flows, and specifically in this thesis the process of repatriation.

The chapter has introduced the notion of a refugee cycle, arguing that it is important to study the refugee experience throughout this cycle as its stages are not always discrete, and that even a focus upon repatriation should be placed within the context of the other stages. The chapter has also elaborated upon a theme which permeates through this thesis, which is the comparability of refugees with other sorts of migrants. In order to achieve this, the '*system of a refugee cycle*' developed in the next chapter, deliberately draws upon the systems approach from migration theory, although that is not to say that similarities between refugees and other types of migrant could not equally be pursued via other approaches such as ecological or behavioural approaches. The focus is upon only one part of that system, namely repatriation. The '*model of a repatriation information system*' which is therefore derived is tested in later chapters, and the results empirically support the theoretical assertion that refugees do not need to be categorised as a separate entity from other sorts of migrants.

Chapter 3 Information and Repatriation: A Theoretical Model

3.1. Introduction

The model developed in this chapter, the '*model of a repatriation information system*', emerges from the theoretical rationale explained and contextual framework designed in the last chapter. It is this model which the empirical work in the following chapters seeks to elaborate and test.

The model is developed hierarchically. First, foundations upon which such a model might be based are sought from the existing literature in refugee studies. Certain weaknesses in that body of literature are addressed by examining the potential applicability of theoretical reflection in migration studies, and the systems approach to migration is identified as perhaps the most suitable upon which to draw.

As a result, a '*systems model of a refugee cycle*' is developed and evaluated. The cycle consists of all the stages of the refugee experience, from flight through exile to repatriation. Movement throughout the cycle is understood as largely being the result of a decision by the potential mover, albeit within certain environmental constraints. One of the most important elements in the decision whether to move in whatever direction in the refugee cycle is identified as information from the potential destination.

However, the focus is narrowed to the end of the refugee cycle, that is repatriation, and even more specifically to the role of information in that process. In the final section of this chapter, a '*model of a repatriation information system*' is developed, in which information received by a potential repatriate about home conditions is seen as crucial in the decision whether or not to return, and the receipt, evaluation and use of information about home are modelled.

3.2. Existing theoretical literature

The purpose of this section is to review some of the previous attempts which have been made to seek explanation in refugee studies through models and theory-building, upon

which the model developed in this chapter might be founded. As was pointed out in Chapter 1, however, there is not a strong theoretical basis in refugee studies, and as a result it is suggested that a contribution to the development of the model might be made by migration studies, with its greater theoretical basis. Attention is focused upon the systems approach to migration studies, and its applicability to refugee studies explored.

3.2.1. Theory in refugee studies

There is a striking dearth of theoretical reflection in refugee studies, and existing approaches are generally weak. As a result, there has been little evolutionary development of theoretical approaches as might normally be expected, whereby more recent approaches build upon previous work, and there is therefore not a generally agreed approach from which this thesis can draw.

At the same time, there are a number of general observations which can be made of the existing literature. First, most theoretical reflection has focused upon only one stage of the refugee cycle, particularly flight (Kunz, 1973; Kunz, 1981; Richmond, 1988; Richmond, 1993; Zolberg *et.al.*, 1989) and occasionally integration in exile (Goitom, 1987; Kuhlman, 1991). Despite recent advances in our understanding of the process of repatriation (Cuny and Stein, 1989; Harrell-Bond, 1989; Larkin *et.al.*, 1991; Stein, 1991; Stein and Cuny, 1991; Zetter, 1988), there is a lack of theoretical reflection upon this last stage of the refugee cycle. Furthermore, rarely have the different stages of the refugee cycle been integrated (exceptions include Bulcha, 1989; Kunz, 1981; Zetter, 1988). Second, only a few approaches provide a means of comparing different refugee situations: in some cases (Kunz, 1973; Bulcha, 1989; Goitom, 1987; Kuhlman, 1991), for example, they are designed specifically to address refugees from and in the South. Third, most theories can also be considered historically specific; for example, very few encapsulate people such as internal displacees, who are in refugee-like situations, and very few can be applied to certain contemporary causes of forced migration, such as environmental degradation. Finally, very few theoretical statements have been empirically tested (exceptions include Bulcha, 1989, and Goitom, 1987).

If explanation in the study of forced migration is to be sought through theory-building, then it seems that new theories must both seek to remedy some of the above weaknesses,

and also turn to other disciplines or sub-disciplines for contributions. Given the point, made in the preceding chapter, that the distinction between refugees and other types of migrants may represent an analytical oversimplification, then it does seem that the discipline of migration studies, with its far more developed literature and greater theoretical armoury, may have a valuable contribution to make to refugee studies (Robinson, 1993). Indeed, theoretical approaches from migration studies have been adopted both explicitly and implicitly in several examples of theoretical reflection upon refugees.

Several authors have applied theories of migration to their formulations of models of refugee movements and experiences: Kuhlman (1991) drew upon the theories of Goldlust and Richmond (1974) and Lee (1966); Richmond (1993) upon the theoretical perspectives of Richmond and Verma (1978) and Richmond (1988); and Zolberg *et.al.* (1986, 1989) upon his own reflections on migration theory (Zolberg, 1981, 1989). The strength of such applications is that they have managed to maintain a distinction between forced and voluntary migration, thus not ignoring characteristics which can be central in refugee studies such as human rights. On the other hand, a weakness of such applications is that they have on the whole failed to explore the distinction between refugees and other types of migrant, and to recognise that the distinction may be an oversimplification.

Less explicitly, approaches to refugee studies can broadly be seen to have mirrored theoretical developments in the field of migration, although normally the contribution of the latter has not been acknowledged. Broadly, generalisations about the causes and spatial patterns of migration have evolved through three approaches since the pioneering work of Ravenstein, namely ecological, behavioral and systems. Each approach has different emphases, and refugee studies can be considered to have equally reflected these shifts in emphasis.

The ecological approach, the best example of which is the gravity model, emphasises the importance of differences between origin and destination places in the decision to move. The pattern of migration is seen as a function of the relative sizes of, the distance between, and intervening opportunities between the origin and destination. Salt (1986) observed that most refugees only move a short distance across borders, and thereby can

be seen to obey the gravity principle. According to this approach, movement is a predictable outcome, and is considered to be governed by a physical law. There are striking similarities between this concept of migration as a predictable process, and Kunz's pioneering theoretical contribution to forced migration (1973). Kunz described the movement of refugees as 'kinetic', with the pattern and process of their flight determined by differences between the places of origin and destination.

During the 1960s, migration studies began to focus upon the 'human' factors involved in the decision to move, in recognition of the fact that migration is a choice, and not simply an automatic outcome. This choice was seen as related to factors such as cultural and societal norms and values, as well as variables such as age, sex or family status. Kunz's adaptation of his original theory of forced migration recognised this shift of emphasis. He categorised types of forced migration, to show that different refugees flee for different reasons, and that therefore all refugees do not behave similarly. Chambers (1980a), Hansen (1981b, 1982), Spring (1982), and Bulcha (1989) all adopted a broadly behavioural and not ecological approach in explaining patterns and processes of refugee settlement and integration in exile. Meanwhile Rogge and Akol (1989) can be considered to have adopted the same approach in explaining the individual decision whether to repatriate.

A more recent approach to explaining the causes and patterns of migration is the systems approach (e.g. Kritz, *et.al.*, 1992), although it actually draws upon the work of Mabogunje in 1970 (Mabogunje, 1970). This approach broadly combines the last two approaches. It sees migration as part of a system of interrelated elements; thus the individual decision to move occurs within the context of structural conditions in the place of origin and destination. A number of recent approaches in refugee studies can be seen to incorporate the systems approach, including those of Kuhlman (1991), Richmond (1993) and Zolberg *et al.* (1989). The theoretical model developed in this chapter also draws upon the systems approach from migration theory. In the next section this approach is elaborated, and its value in contributing towards a theoretical model of forced migration explored.

3.2.2. The systems approach

A system can be defined as an object of study which consists of a set of entities with specifications of the relationships between them and their environment. A model is an idealized and structured representation of the real. Mabogunje's systems model for rural-urban migration in Africa (1970) was one of the first applications of the systems approach in migration studies. However, it has been adopted in more recent migration studies (e.g. Salt, 1986; Kritiz *et al.*, 1992) because it has been recognised above previous approaches as allowing a dynamic perspective upon international migration. This perspective has contributed to migration theory in three specific ways (Kritiz and Zlotnik, 1992). First, it helps not only to understand causes of movement, but the consequences too, both for the individuals involved, and the communities they leave and join. Second, it has allowed the introduction of a time dimension as well as a purely spatial dimension, thus allowing for processes such as the maturing of migration streams. Finally, it has introduced a means of understanding linkages in the economic and political spheres of sending and receiving countries which shape the process of migration. These characteristics suggest that the systems approach might be applicable to a theory of refugee movement.

In the context of the above discussion of some of the weaknesses of existing theoretical reflection in refugee studies, and also in the context of the objectives of the model developed later in this chapter, the systems approach can be considered valuable for a number of reasons. First, although the point was made above that theoretical approaches in refugee studies have not evolved in a hierarchial manner, the subsequent discussion showed that they have nevertheless often mirrored the evolution of approaches in migration studies. Therefore, it could be argued that the adoption of one of the most recent approaches from migration studies is a logical step in the evolution of refugee studies.

Second, the application of the systems approach allows for a refugee cycle, and the interrelatedness of its various stages. In Mabogunje's model, for example, rural-urban migration and return co-exist. Also, these two directions of movement may occur simultaneously: while some individuals or households are migrating to urban areas, others may be returning to rural areas. The system also allows for the cyclical movement

of any one individual or household. Furthermore, it allows for the notion that some individuals or households may enter the cycle of migration-return more than once.

Third, the application of the systems approach allows for a generally applicable theory which is not specifically founded in either a geographical or an historical context. This is achieved via a more sophisticated analysis of the causes and patterns of migration than is often found in refugee studies; for example the introduction of a time dimension allows for a whole range of time-periods spent in a country of destination by migrants. The approach also allows for a range of causes and patterns of movement. Table 3.1 (after Pryor, 1981) attempts to provide a comparative classification of theories in refugee studies and systems theories of voluntary migration according to three factors, namely the freedom of mobility, the nature of decision-making and direction and causation.

Table 3.1 Classification of theories of forced migration and systems theories of voluntary migration (after Pryor, 1981)

Factor	Refugee Theory	Systems Theory
Freedom of Mobility	Forced; constrained (e.g. Kunz, 1973)	Adaptation to socioeconomic change
Nature of Decision-Making	Coerced; under pressure (e.g. Crisp, 1984 <i>a,b</i>)	Multiple-causation; relative stress
Direction and Causation	Push-pull forces (e.g. Zolberg <i>et.al.</i> , 1989)	Diffusion, adjustment, adaptation

A consideration of various empirical findings, as outlined in the preceding chapter, would indicate that systems theories of migration may be applicable to all three factors in the context of refugee flows. It has been shown, for example, that neither flight nor repatriation are necessarily forced and constrained, as is often assumed of refugee mobility (e.g. Kunz, 1981; Bulcha, 1989). The multiple-causation of refugee decision-making has also been demonstrated (e.g. Stein and Cuny, 1989). Finally, the notion that the direction and causation of refugee movements are somehow 'kinetic' (Kunz, 1973) and in response to push-pull factors alone has also been undermined; the processes of diffusion, adjustment and adaptation probably being more applicable (e.g. Bulcha, 1989).

Finally, if a model which derives from the systems approach to migration can be shown empirically to be applicable to refugee movements, then the systems approach also provides the opportunity for conceiving of refugees and other types of migrants in the

same framework. It may be that the systems approach can therefore provide a means of integrating migration and refugee theories. In the following section, therefore, a theoretical model which derives from the systems approach is formulated.

3.3. A systems model of a refugee cycle

3.3.1. The model

A '*systems model of a refugee cycle*', derived from the systems approach to migration and especially Mabogunje's model (1970) is depicted in Figure 3.1. The system incorporates three main elements, namely: the potential mover, the country of origin sub-system and the country of asylum sub-system. The three elements are linked by energy and feedback, and the system as a whole is also linked to the external environment. The nature of these elements and their relationships in the system are now briefly considered.

The potential mover

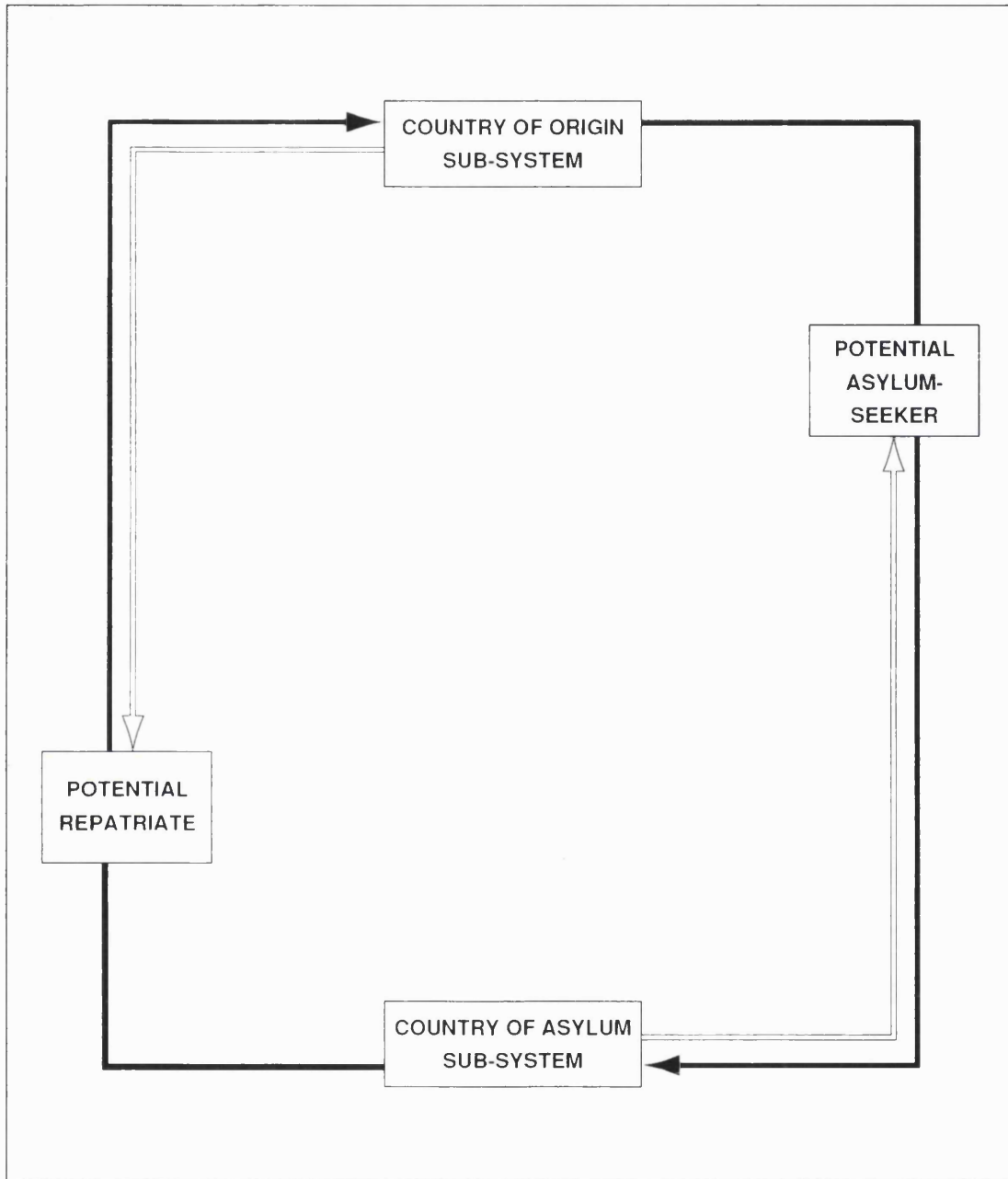
The cyclical nature of the refugee cycle means that movement can be in either direction between the country of origin and asylum sub-systems, therefore the mover can be either a potential asylum-seeker or a potential repatriate. The system compares their movement with that of migrants and return migrants in that they have at least a limited choice over whether to move, and the decision is understood as being based upon a subjective comparison of conditions in the present location with those in the prospective location. However, the other two sub-systems also consist of various institutional and societal influences which can promote or hinder movement.

The country of origin sub-system

The country of origin sub-system is conceived as constituting the following elements: security; economic livelihood; social welfare; social integration; political affinity, and the environment, which are now briefly defined.

(i) Security refers to the ability to continue every day activities without the threat of danger. Although insecurity may be at the root of many refugee flights, the direct cause of flight is often a function of that insecurity, such as an inability to maintain a basic standard of livelihood, or a breakdown of social support systems.

ENVIRONMENT
International, national
and local policies



ENVIRONMENT
National policies, local
and regional policies, aid
agency policies

- energy (movement)
- feedback (information)

Figure 3.1 A systems model of the refugee cycle

(ii) Economic livelihood refers to the ability to produce or earn sufficient to satisfy a minimum standard of living. Clearly the definition of an acceptable minimum standard of living varies between individuals and households greatly. Economic livelihood is often associated with the security situation or the environment.

(iii) Social welfare refers to the accessibility of means of social support. This category includes the provision of schools, hospitals and support for those who may be incapable of providing for themselves such as the elderly or infirm. Perhaps more so in less-developed countries, and more so in rural areas in those countries, the welfare of an individual or household is often determined according to community membership. For example, the absence of institutionalised welfare systems in such areas means that so-called vulnerable people are often dependent upon the local community for support. Social systems or networks can break down in the face of insecurity.

(iv) Social integration refers to the degree to which an individual or household is accepted by the dominant social grouping of the country of origin. There are many examples of the persecution of so-called minority groups defined on the basis of religion or tribe, for example.

(v) Political affinity with the local or national ruling power can be an important determinant of welfare. In extreme cases, political dissidents may be killed; alternatively they may be denied access to resources of production such as land, or resources of consumption such as schools.

(vi) In some cases the environment can negatively affect the lives of a population. Examples are land exhaustion; pollution; earthquakes; volcanic eruptions; drought and floods. These various environmental factors are sometimes associated with the economic activities of people. Their effects can also be exacerbated during insecurity.

The country of asylum sub-system

The third element is the country of asylum sub-system. Kuhlman (1991) provided the most comprehensive categorisation of host-related factors; which is adopted here, and to which are added the categories of type of refugee settlement and aid. The country of

origin sub-system therefore constitutes the macro-economic situation in that country; the natural resource base of the settlement region; aid; type of refugee settlement; the ethno-cultural make-up of the settlement region; social stratification; socio-political orientation and auspices. These are defined in turn.

(i) The macro-economic situation in the country of asylum is an important determinant of the capacity of the country to integrate an influx of refugees. Kuhlman (1991) makes the distinction between structural and conjunctural characteristics of the host economy.

(ii) The natural resource base of the settlement region refers to the capacity of a region to receive refugees without suffering environmental deterioration.

(iii) The provision of aid is clearly a fundamental factor in the country of asylum sub-system. In the absence of access to land and resources in exile, it is the main determinant of refugee welfare.

(iv) A distinction can be made between organised settlements and so-called spontaneous settlements, where refugees settle in local villages amongst the local population (Chambers, 1980*a*). Akol (1991), for example, identified their type of settlement in exile as a variable in explaining the attitudes towards repatriation of Southern Sudanese refugees in Uganda. Amongst organised settlements, a further distinction can be made according to the nature of the settlement. Some settlements are fenced and policed, creating a captive constituency; while others are open and access to and for the local population is not hindered. This category also includes the degree to which the activity of political organisations is permitted in refugee settlements. Makanya (1991) found that the level of political activity by Zimbabwean liberation movements permitted in refugee camps influenced the attitudes of Zimbabwean refugees in Zambia towards repatriation.

(v) The ethno-cultural make-up of the settlement region is a measure of the degree to which refugees and hosts are culturally compatible.

(vi) The social stratification in the settlement region is a measure of the social class in which refugees are likely to find themselves in exile.

(vii) The socio-political orientation of the host society relates to variables introduced by Kunz (1981): whether the host society welcomes immigrants in principle or accepts them reluctantly; and whether it tolerates cultural diversity or is monistic in tendency. Kuhlman (1991) argued that the socio-political orientation is a characteristic of host society as opposed to a policy matter, as these orientations usually arise from national consensus.

(viii) Auspices are defined as assistance from kin or co-ethnics; it is a separate category from government or aid agency auspices.

Relationships between the elements

The two forms of relationship between the elements are movement and feedback. Movement represents the energy in the system, and there are two sorts of energy. Potential energy is constituted by the stimuli both internal and external to the system, and information acting upon potential movers. Kinetic energy is constituted by the cost, distance and direction of movement once the potential mover has been dislodged.

Information sent back by movers about their experiences represents the feedback in the system. This feedback can be both deviation-amplifying, positive feedback; and deviation-counteracting, negative feedback. The level of information existing in the system is related to the degree of organisation. Any system tends towards a state of maximum disorder (maximum entropy); but where positive feedback from one place encourages the movement of others, organised migratory flows will occur. This implies a decrease in the level of entropy and an increase in order. The existence of well developed information streams in the system therefore encourages greater deviation from the random state. In either direction, information can be considered essential in explaining movement.

Relationships with the external environment

The system as a whole is subject to inputs from the external environment. These inputs can be the dynamic of change. In the country of origin, the effects of international, national or regional policies, controlled by a number of actors including the national government and multi-national corporations, can be important. Such policies can determine most aspects of economic livelihood (land tenure, credit availability, wage

policies and so on), as well as the availability of social welfare; conditions for social integration, and the terms of political affinity. Conflicts, at both the international and intra-national levels, can also be relevant environmental determinants of change in the country of origin sub-system. Three aspects of the external environment are particularly important for conditions in the country of asylum sub-system. They are national policies towards refugees; local or regional policies, and the policies of aid agencies including the UNHCR.

3.3.2. Commentary

The '*systems model of a refugee cycle*' can be considered a useful tool for the critical comparison of different refugee situations, and also of refugees with other types of migrants. First, it can be considered to apply to all refugee populations with the exception of the Palestinians, for whom there is not an internationally-recognised home country. Second, it does not specify a single cause of flight as it recognises that the country of origin sub-system constitutes a host of factors, of which security is only one, and therefore can be applied to most contemporary causes of flight. Third, if the terms country of origin and country of asylum were replaced with the terms area of origin and area of asylum respectively, there is no reason why the system could not also apply to internal displacees. Finally, this system can be considered applicable to all types of migrants, of which refugees are considered a subset.

One means by which the system achieves this characteristic of a general applicability to all sorts of migration, is by understanding movement as being the result of the choice of the potential mover, albeit within certain constraints. Of course there are many factors involved in decision-making, but the model suggests that information from the potential destination can play a very important role in explaining movement. While information is probably essential in explaining movement in either direction, the focus here is its role specifically in return movements, and its receipt, evaluation and use by the potential repatriate.

3.4. Placing repatriation in the refugee cycle

Having introduced the notion of a refugee cycle, attention is now focused upon placing repatriation in that cycle. This emphasis reflects the fact that repatriation has already been

identified as the least-studied stage of the refugee cycle. It is asserted that repatriation may be understood as the outcome of a subjective comparison by refugees of conditions in exile *vis-a-vis* conditions at home. This is often true for both official and self-repatriation. This approach highlights the significance of information about home conditions in the decision-making process.

3.4.1. Official vs. self-repatriation

Repatriation is the end of the refugee cycle. It represents one option which may be taken after flight and temporary exile in a country of asylum. Other options are permanent settlement in the country of first asylum, and third country resettlement. Together these three are the tripartite of so-called durable solutions promoted by the UNHCR (Stein, 1986).

The usual vehicles for official repatriation programmes are Tripartite Commissions consisting of the UNHCR and the governments of asylum and origin. The political nature of official repatriation programmes has been emphasised by Harrell-Bond (1989), who argues that repatriation has become the preferred solution of the UNHCR, largely because it is a body with no mandate for action independent of the donor countries, in which repatriation is often perceived as the cheapest option. The repatriation of some 40,000 refugees to Namibia following the Declaration of Independence on 21 March 1990 is the best recent example of a successful large-scale programme organised by the UNHCR (Gasarasi, 1991*b*, Simon & Preston, 1993).

However repatriation is not necessarily a process which occurs in response to official programmes. It may be possible to view it in terms of a rational decision made by individual refugees. Rationality is subjectively defined and will depend upon the information available to the refugee. The limited research on repatriation suggests that refugees do not necessarily wish to participate in official repatriation schemes. They may ignore them and remain in exile, or self-repatriate either before the introduction of official programmes or parallel to them.

The failure of official schemes has often been a function of the mistiming of their introduction. An example of an unsuccessful official scheme occurred in the context of

Ugandan refugees in Sudan, for whom an official repatriation programme was launched at a time when 'battles continued within earshot of many [refugee] settlements..' (Harrell-Bond, 1986, p.196), and was therefore largely rejected by the refugees. A similar resistance to repatriation amongst Ethiopian refugees was found in Djibouti throughout 1983, even though they faced considerable harassment from the police (Crisp, 1984a). The majority of refugees returned at the end of 1983 and beginning of 1984 only after they received assurances regarding their safety and the recovery of their property upon return.

Nonetheless, although they are by nature difficult to document and enumerate, it is estimated that on a global scale self-repatriation accounts for more returnees than organized programmes (Cuny and Stein, 1989). This estimation is generally agreed in the African context (Allen and Morsink, 1993) and in the case of repatriation from Malawi to Mozambique (UNHCR, 1993). Commonly this is described as 'spontaneous' repatriation, but the term is often inapplicable as many refugees plan in advance for these return movements. Consequently the term such self-repatriation are gaining credence. For the most part these refugees are willing to go home without material assistance and before a decisive political event at home (Harrell-Bond, 1989). These movements are based on the decision of individual refugees that they can return home (Cuny and Stein, 1989), but may sometimes be very well organised at a collective level (Hendrie, 1991).

3.4.2. Repatriates as return migrants

If it is not necessarily in response to official programmes, when do refugees repatriate? It is proposed here that repatriation can be compared to return migration. While there may well be differences between the decision-making of potential asylum-seekers and other potential migrants, there are less likely to be such stark contrasts between potential repatriates and other potential return migrants, since for the most part refugees are not living in conditions so miserable that they return home without planning. (It is important to note that this cannot be said of victims of forced repatriation, '*refoulement*', such as those involved in recent repatriation movements in the Horn of Africa.) In most cases then, light may be thrown on the process of repatriation by study of the process of return migration.

According to the systems approach to migration, the potential migrant's decision whether to move is inextricably linked with his/her knowledge, or perception, of conditions in both the countries of origin and destination. Individual migration results when a tension arises between an individual's aspirations on the one hand, and expectations about the current situation on the other. This tension prompts a search for better opportunities elsewhere. A similar framework of analysis is applicable to return migrants (Cerese, 1974; King, 1978). Migrants may not attain full knowledge of the range of opportunities in another location. They choose according to a limited subset of possible alternatives, which are determined by the information available. Thus they can be seen as 'satisficing' rather than 'maximising' agents (Molho, 1986). This distinction highlights the importance of received information in the decision-making process.

The inference is that repatriates, like return migrants, decide whether to go home as a result of a balanced decision depending on their personal aspirations. Central to that decision is knowledge of conditions at home, which are compared with conditions in exile. This is exactly the position of the potential mover depicted in the '*systems model of a refugee cycle*' above, who receives inputs from both the country of origin and country of asylum sub-systems, as well from the external environment. The limited research considering the factors involved in the decision by refugees whether to go home suggests that this framework is applicable to repatriation.

Akol (1987) identified three factors which were of importance in the decision whether to self-repatriate by Southern Sudanese refugees. First was the nature of settlement in the country of asylum. Refugees in organised rural camps are more easily mobilised than 'spontaneously settled' or urban refugees. Second was the level of socio-economic development achieved by refugees *vis-a-vis* conditions prevailing in their places of origin. Thirdly, a common ethnicity with members of the host population may reduce propensity to return. Rogge and Akol (1989) introduced another important factor. The longer the refugee has been in exile, the greater his/her acculturation in the host society. These are all, therefore, functions of the country of asylum sub-system.

At the same time, how refugees subjectively evaluate conditions in the country of origin sub-system is clearly also crucial. Basok's (1990) study of the repatriation of Nicaraguan

refugees from Honduras and Costa Rica showed that more refugees returned from the former. It also revealed that a higher proportion of '*costenos*' (indigenous Nicaraguans) than of '*ladinos*' returned. The difference in rate between countries was explained by the fact that in Costa Rica, unlike Honduras, many refugees were provided employment and became better-off in exile than they would have been in their own country. The difference in rate between populations was also explained in terms of their evaluations of conditions at home. The '*costenos*' received economic assistance upon return, whereas the '*ladinos*' were often treated with suspicion and not offered aid by the Sandinista government.

The decision to repatriate can therefore be considered to involve a subjective comparison by the refugee of conditions in exile *vis-a-vis* conditions at home. This comparison is then pitched into the context of personal characteristics such as gender and age; and objective characteristics such as nature of settlement in exile, length of time in exile and so on.

What is suggested is that, like other potential migrants, refugees in exile have information about conditions at home against which to compare their present positions. It follows that the quantity and quality of that information is critical in the decision whether or not to return and, *ipso facto*, in ending the refugee cycle. In the following section, the notion of a repatriation information system is introduced and modelled; and key elements such as the type of information available to refugees about their home areas, the sources of information and the accuracy of information are discussed.

3.5. Model of a repatriation information system

The '*model of a repatriation information system*' developed in this section focuses upon the last phase of the refugee cycle. The model is the basis for the empirical work which follows in the next chapters, and is therefore evaluated in the final chapters of the thesis. In the first part of this section, elements of an information system are derived from existing literature of the social sciences. The model is then presented, and its elements elaborated upon.

3.5.1. Elements in the information system

The purpose of this section is to identify those elements in the literature of the social sciences which can be applied to a conceptualisation of an information system in the context of refugees. The most clearly applicable body of geographical literature is that on the diffusion of innovations, at the heart of which is the receipt and use of information by adopters. Refugees may be seen as potential adopters who receive information and then decide whether to act upon it.

The modern tradition of innovation diffusion studies started with Hägerstrand in the 1950's. He emphasised the demand perspective of innovation diffusion, that is the adoption behaviour of individuals. The assumption was that all have an equal opportunity to adopt, but not all choose to do so. Later work emphasized the supply perspective (Brown, 1975; 1981). This perspective introduced two concepts. First, innovation is not usually freely accessible, it is supplied. Second, adoption is not necessarily an available option: the ability to adopt an innovation depends upon the existence of an enabling infrastructure.

The supply perspective introduces the idea of a mediator and a facilitator. Applied to the notion of a refugee receiving information about his/her home area, it translates as follows. First, information does not simply arrive with the refugee, but is collected, carried and communicated by a mediator, for example the UNHCR or another refugee. Second, a refugee cannot necessarily act upon favourable information by returning home, since return must be facilitated by a host of factors such as access to the border or adequate money for the journey home. The focus here is the receipt of information rather than the use of it, and so the emphasis is on the idea of a mediator. The nature of the mediator thus becomes central to the type and accuracy of information available to the refugee.

Some geographical research has concentrated on the role of the media as a mediator (Burgess and Gold, 1985). The inference has been that the logic of the mediator will affect the information which is supplied. There may be an intentional manipulation of information as in propaganda, or a less sinister misinterpretation of information.

Information has a quality which may also be affected by a mediator. Hägerstrand explained the decision whether to adopt an innovation or not in terms of resistance which is determined by personal or group factors, in other words the stress is on the nature of the individual. According to the supply perspective, the decision may also lie in the nature and source of the information.

3.5.2. Model of a repatriation information system

What is needed to understand repatriation in terms of the supply and evaluation of information is a working model. Such a model might have five components (Figure 3.2.):

- a) home conditions which generate information;
- b) agents who collect, mediate and pass on that information to a refugee;
- c) information reception;
- d) flows of information which connect these three components, and
- e) a series of inputs which relate the model to the external environment and cause the components to change through time.

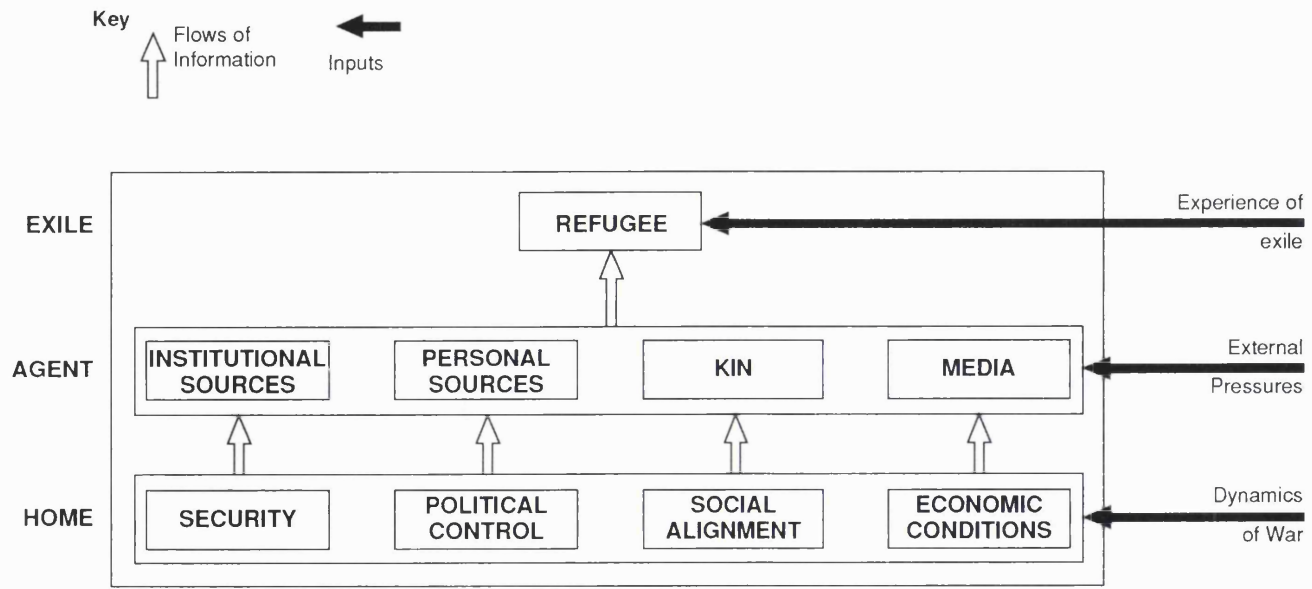
This last component is related to the other four components as they are discussed in turn.

Home conditions

As discussed above, although persecution is the most obvious reason for refugee flight, refugees do not flee physical persecution alone. Often they flee proximate factors, which have been created or at least exacerbated by persecution. It follows that refugees will base a decision whether to return upon information on a host of factors, not just security. These factors have been categorised above as elements of the country of origin sub-system in the refugee cycle, and may include the ability to gain a livelihood in the short- (i.e. up to the next harvest) and the long-term, the presence of relatives which will facilitate social reintegration, and the alignment of local authorities with whom to negotiate access to resources and facilities.

Contemporary causes of refugee flight are often low intensity conflicts of a long duration. Spatial impact varies over time. The dynamics of war mean that the spectrum

Figure 3.2 A model of a repatriation information system



of home conditions may alter many times in a refugee's absence. In a highly fluid situation the frequency and revision of information flows becomes an important issue. A distinction must therefore be made between information concerning the present, and that concerning prospects for the near future.

While home conditions generate information, it will often be transmitted by a particular person. Such transmitters can be expected to be friends, relatives or even past neighbours of the refugee, thus personal transmitters. They may equally be institutional transmitters, such as the home government. Of course in many cases, however, it may be unlikely that there will be any such transmitter in an area from which people have fled for whatever reason. Often friends and relatives, where they are still in the country of origin, will be internally displaced, for example. In such cases, potential transmitters may not have access to the area to which the potential repatriate intends to return, and not be able to transmit information about home conditions there.

A very important geographical question is that of where the potential repatriate intends to return to, although in some cases that choice may not have been made. Nevertheless, it cannot be assumed that refugees will necessarily return to the area from which they fled. Alvarez (1967) developed a five-fold typology to describe the various possibilities for return migrants as follows, where A is the place of birth, B is the place of residence immediately prior to emigration, and C is the domicile after return.

(a) $A = B, B = C$: the case of a migrant who left from, and returns to, his/her birthplace.

(b) $A = B, B \neq C$: the case of a migrant who left from his/her birthplace, but returns to a different place.

(c) $A \neq B, A = C$: the case of a migrant who shifted residence from his/her birthplace before migrating, but who returns to his/her birthplace.

(d) $A \neq B, B = C$: the case of a migrant who returns to his/her place of residence before migration, this place being different from his/her

birthplace.

(e) $A \neq B$, $B \neq C$: the case of a migrant who shifted residence before emigrating, but returns to a third location.

Agents

The agents in the system act as sources of information for the refugees. They can be grouped into the categories of institutional, the media, personal and kin.

Of the variety of institutional agents, the most active are usually the UNHCR and governments of both asylum and origin, and sometimes, as in the case of Mozambique, opposition forces in the country of origin (Wilson and Nunes, 1991). It is a self-professed aim of Tripartite Commissions to keep refugees updated on home conditions. NGOs involved in cross-border operations may also be a source of information. The Catholic Office for Emergency Relief and Refugees, for example, now regularly distributes the *Ban Vinai* Information Project Bulletin amongst Laotian refugees in Thailand.

For others the media can be an important source of information. Christensen (1985) described Burundian refugees in Tanzania regularly listening to broadcasts from Burundi, and radio broadcasts were also described as important sources of information about home conditions for refugees from Algeria (Bouhouche, 1991) and Zimbabwe (Makanya, 1991).

During exile refugees may often interact in new social networks (Marx, 1990) and develop a new range of personal contacts. These may also be sources of information. Two sorts of relationship with personal sources can be conceived; namely uniplex relationships where the single focus of interaction is the pursuit by the refugee of information, and multiplex relationships where interaction has more than a single content and the passing of information may be incidental. Respectively these can be termed action-set and communication-set social networks (Mitchell, 1969).

Personal sources who have information about home areas may include refugee warriors (Zolberg *et.al.*, 1989) who cross the border in order to fight and then return to recuperate

and regroup in refugee camps; abortive repatriates; refugees who cross the border periodically to collect firewood or occasionally to attend a funeral, for example; and refugees who work the system by repatriating temporarily without surrendering their ration cards and then re-apply for refugee status. Trade may occur between home areas and areas of exile in which case peripatetic traders may be information sources. Sometimes the most important personal source will be new refugee arrivals, although they may be unable to provide an objective assessment of an often traumatic experience.

As well as being immediate sources of information, agents can also convey information from transmitters in the country of asylum to refugees in exile. The Malawi Red Cross has developed a postal system in order to pass letters between refugees and relatives at home. In other cases refugees may visit home. Ugandan refugees in southern Sudan occasionally sent home scouts in order to assess conditions for return; these scouts may also pass on information from kin (Harrell-Bond, 1986). An alternative means of information conveyance is for people in the country of asylum to visit refugees in exile.

Agents are mediators in the information system. Ideally an agent will loyally relay information without altering it. The quantity and quality remain the same. But an agent may reject some information as soon as it is acquired, considering it irrelevant. Alternatively he or she may deliberately withhold information. Hence it cannot be assumed that information is freely available to all refugees. In any case it is impossible for an individual to communicate fully the knowledge he or she has to another (Thrift, 1985). Thus the quantity of information decreases. An agent is also in a position to alter the quality of information. The occurrence and type of alteration will depend on the motivation of the agent.

While it is impossible to conceptualise the personal motivations of kin and individual contacts, the motivations of institutional agents and the media are largely determined by pressures external to the information system. The limited literature on the mass media in Africa, for example, stresses its role as a mouthpiece of the government (Harrison and Palmer, 1986; Mytton, 1983). In some cases these pressures are contradictory. For example, the UNHCR must strive to ensure that humanitarian factors are the primary determinant of its policy (Pitterman, 1987) in the context of extreme financial pressure

(Coulter, 1991) which encourages them to promote certain policies over others (Harrell-Bond, 1989). For the host governments refugees can be a cheap labour source and at the same time can wreak environmental, economic or social havoc. The repatriation and reintegration of refugees strain home governments but also provide a potential labour force and focus for redevelopment.

Reception

A refugee must develop some *a priori* means of assessing the reliability of an information source. This may be the perceived competence of the source (Shibutani, 1966), or the length of time that he or she has been known, for example. Where possible, the refugee will consider information from a number of sources: clearly a high degree of correspondence of information from different sources will be important.

Refugees may develop a new agenda of priorities in exile (Zetter, 1988). For example several Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan became foci for a resurgence of Islamic fundamentalism. Daley (1991) discussed the transformation of gender roles which may occur as a result of displacement in the context of Burundian refugees in Tanzania. There may be a difference of priorities between first generation refugees and later generations born in exile, particularly if refugee children are educated in the language and customs of the place of asylum. It follows that the subjective evaluation of what is relevant information and who is a reliable source may change over time.

Clearly, the unit of reception can vary from the individual, through the household (nuclear or extended family) to the community. The definitions of terms such as household and community are fraught with difficulties, particularly in the African context (Guyer, 1986; Hill, 1972; Hill, 1975; O'Brien and Danal, 1975); on the other hand the adoption of the individual approach exclusively precludes the tracing out of networks of interdependence. The units of analysis adopted both methodologically and analytically in this thesis are explicated in the following chapter. For the repatriation information system, the important point to make is that the receipt, evaluation and use of information can be expected to vary according to the unit of analysis.

Flows of information

The flows of information in the system have quantitative and qualitative attributes. Quantitative features are morphological criteria which describe the pattern of the flows, including density and range. Qualitative features describe the nature of the information itself, especially accuracy, frequency and directedness.

In the study of social networks, density of information flows compares to the concept of completeness in graph theory; in other words it describes the extent to which links which can exist actually do (Barnes, 1969). Information flows also have a range. In normal migration situations a 'bridge' of information develops between a migrant and his or her home area. It is articulated by remittances or periodic return, and is often activated by potential migrants to find accommodation or a job before they migrate. In refugee situations the development and range of 'bridges' is circumscribed by the limited access which agents have to both home areas and refugees in exile.

Accuracy is related to a series of biases (Chambers, 1980*b*) which may occur when an agent is collecting information. These are the bias of using particular contacts in the home area; seasonal biases which mean that information has a limited temporal applicability; and biases of access which mean that information will have a limited spatial applicability. Frequency of access determines the opportunities for refugees to update their information. Directedness refers to the degree to which information targets both a specific home area and specific individuals in exile. In many cases information will be of a general nature at a regional as opposed to specifically local scale, and be targeted at no particular individual.

3.6. Conclusion

In this chapter the theoretical model upon which the empirical work detailed in the following chapters is based has been developed. In the first section, foundations in the existing literature upon which a model could be based were explored. In response to a number of weaknesses in existing theoretical reflection in refugee studies, the systems approach has been adopted from migration studies. Drawing upon this approach, a '*systems model of a refugee cycle*' has been developed. Attention has then been focused upon understanding when and why repatriation takes place in the refugee cycle, in

response to the significant dearth of theoretical and empirical examination of repatriation. Throughout the cycle, it was suggested that information forms an important feedback which can encourage or discourage movement, and it has been suggested that potential repatriates, like other potential return migrants, base a decision whether to return upon a comparison of conditions in exile and conditions at home. It follows that the receipt and evaluation of information from home are central to the process of return, and in the final section, a '*model of a repatriation information system*' has been formulated.

In the next chapter, the methodology developed in order to test this model in the field, and the framework of analysis designed in order to elaborate upon it, are examined.

Chapter 4 Methodological Framework

4.1. Introduction

In the previous chapter, a '*model of a repatriation information system*' was developed. In this chapter, the methods used to translate this theoretical model into a workable means of collecting and interpreting information are set out. First, the methodology is related to the research questions raised by the model. Second, the variety of methods adopted, and the way in which they were integrated into a coherent field strategy, are described. Third, the research design is developed. Fourth, the operationalisation of the field strategy and research design are explained. Finally, the framework for analysis of the information gathered in the field is described.

4.2. Methodological rationale

The logic of this methodological framework was to provide a means of answering the research questions raised by the '*model of a repatriation information system*'. As is described in the following section, these questions necessitated multiple strategies. One problem with the adoption of multiple strategies, however, is their integration into a coherent whole which relates to the research questions. The set of multiple strategies chosen minimised such problems of integration, while maximising the various benefits which can be gained from the use of multiple strategies. Two other problems are nevertheless inherent in the use of any set of multiple strategies, namely the complexity of the operationalisation of a number of strategies, and the development of a framework of analysis which can combine them.

A theme which pervaded all these steps of the field methodology was the need to marry quantitative and qualitative approaches. The '*model of a repatriation information system*' combines on the one hand the individual refugee and personal agent, with on the other more impersonal institutional agents. The contrast between studying the two is the need to achieve the trust of the former, with his or her often traumatic experience and vulnerable circumstances in exile, and perhaps the more dispassionate study of the latter. This contrast invites the use of qualitative and quantitative approaches respectively, both

during data collection and also during data analysis.

4.3. Field strategy

The '*model of a repatriation information system*' necessitates the use of multiple field strategies for three principal reasons. First, the model includes two different sets of actors, namely receivers of information, and agents who convey information to them. In order to elaborate properly the refugee information system, both these sets of actors need to be incorporated¹.

Second, the processes of receipt, evaluation and use of information are likely to vary at the levels of the individual, household and community. Therefore each of these units of analysis must be considered.

Third, the model necessitates both descriptive and explanatory research. The former is necessary in order to identify *patterns* in the information system, for example the sorts of agents (personal or institutional) most regularly used. The latter is necessary in order to understand *processes* in the system, for example why particular agents are preferred.

The danger of adopting multiple field strategies is the loss of integration, such that results from the various strategies are not complementary. In the first part of this section, the range of field strategies suitable for testing the repatriation information system is considered. Then, methods of integration of multiple field strategies are explored. Finally, the integrated field strategy adopted for this research is outlined.

4.3.1. Multiple strategies in field research

Many social scientists have adopted multiple strategies (Burgess, 1984), also referred to as combined operations (Stacey, 1969) or mixed strategies (Douglas, 1976), in order to overcome some of the problems associated with studies relying upon a single theory, method, set of data or investigator.

¹ As is explained later in this chapter, it was decided from the outset of this research that logistical restrictions would preclude cross-border research in Mozambique. Given more funding, more time and better access to Mozambique, this research might also have incorporated the transmitters of information in Mozambique.

A categorisation of the principal varieties of multiple strategies normally used was provided by Denzin (1970). For the categories he used the term 'triangulation', borrowed from psychological reports, and identified four types, namely: data triangulation (subdivided into time, space and person triangulation); investigator triangulation, theory triangulation, and methodological triangulation (subdivided into 'within method' and 'between method' triangulation).

The use of any of these types of multiple strategies in relation to a single project runs the risk of a lack of coherence. It is important, therefore, to consider methods of integrating multiple field strategies.

4.2.2. From multiple strategies to integration

There are both substantive and theoretical difficulties in the integration of multiple strategies in a single project, which are now discussed in turn.

Substantive difficulties

The substantive difficulties of integration emerge from questions like: 'What kinds of method are relevant on which occasion?' 'What kinds of information are relevant?' 'How can the 'goodness' of different methods for different purposes be evaluated?' (Burgess, 1984).

Zelditch (1962) evaluated methods of investigation according to efficiency and informational adequacy in terms of gathering different kinds of data (Table 4.1.).

Table 4.1 Methods of obtaining information

Information types	Quantitative (e.g. surveys, enumerations)	Qualitative (e.g. participant observation)	Interviewing informants
Frequency distributions	Prototype and best form	Usually inadequate and inefficient	Often but not always inadequate, if adequate it is efficient
Incidents, histories	Not adequate by itself, not efficient	Prototype and best form	Adequate with precautions and efficient
Institutionalised norms and statuses	Adequate but inefficient	Adequate but inefficient except for unverballed norms	Most efficient and best form

source: Zelditch (1962)

Zelditch's point is twofold. First, certain field methods are most appropriate in certain circumstances. Second, no single method alone is sufficient to gather the full array of information types, rather a variety of methods should be used complementarily. To Zelditch's categorisation of methods could be added that of observation, either participant or non-participant. While not necessarily useful alone, this can provide vital contextual information which complements the other information types (Whyte, 1984).

Sieber (1973) considered the integration of quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. He maintained that qualitative data are an essential complement to quantitative surveys:

'First, the *theoretical structure* that guides the analysis can be derived wholly or largely from qualitative fieldwork. Secondly...certain of the survey results can be *validated*, or at least given persuasive plausibility, by recourse to observations and informant interviews... Thirdly, statistical relationships can be *interpreted* by reference to field observations. Fourthly, the selection of survey items for the *construction of indices* can be based on field observations. Fifthly, *external validation* of statistical constructs is afforded by comparison with observational scales. Sixthly, *case studies* that illustrate statistical and historical types are supplied by field protocols; and finally, provocative but puzzling replies to the questionnaires can be *clarified* by resort to field notes.' (p.1345).

As a corollary, Sieber observed that surveys can contribute to the collection of qualitative data by: identifying individuals who can be studied in depth; identifying representative and unrepresentative cases; and in terms of data analysis by: correcting the holistic fallacy that all aspects of a situation are congruent; demonstrating the generality of a single observation; assisting in the verification of observations, and casting light upon field observations.

Theoretical difficulties

Mitchell (1983) has written the seminal piece on one of the principal theoretical stumbling blocks of method integration; that is how to marry in terms of analysis a quantitative survey of a large population with a qualitative set of case-studies of a smaller sample from that population.

He asserted that the validity of the case study, unlike the survey, lies not with its 'representativeness' of a wider population, that is 'statistical inference', but with the cogency of the interpretation of the material presented, that is 'logical inference'. The cases chosen are therefore neither 'typical', in the statistical sense of an 'average' household or person, nor restricted in their significance to the particular case. Rather, they 'illustrate aspects of social process and...demonstrate certain theoretical principles.' (Whatmore, 1991, p.63).

4.3.3. Towards an integrated field strategy

A range of field strategies was adopted in testing the repatriation information system in the field. Each strategy was necessitated by the research questions, and each served a different but necessary purpose. At the same time, the particular range chosen also allowed the achievement of integration. The various strategies and their integration in terms of the model being tested are described here, while the research design and fieldwork details are considered in the following sections.

The fieldwork incorporated four refugee settlements, two in each of two areas, namely Chiumbangame and Kalanje settlements in Mangochi District, and Mgolosera and Jappie settlements in Nkhata Bay District (for settlement profiles see Chapter 5). In each, the following five strategies were adopted: community profiles; household surveys; informant interviews; agent interviews, and non-participant observation. As the discussion below emphasises, the assorted strategies formed a coherent whole. Partly this was achieved by following a strict chronological order, such that findings from one strategy informed the next.

Community profiles

In each sample area, community profiles were constructed by focal interviews with a range of representatives of the refugee population, the local administrative authorities and NGO s active in each area. Drawing upon Zelditch's (1962) evaluation of methods of investigation according to efficiency and informational adequacy (Table 4.1), these informant interviews were considered the most efficient method by which to reveal background information which provided a context for the research. Thus, community profiles elicited information concerning the history and administration of the settlements;

demographic details of the refugee populations; and underlying themes such as patterns of conflict and co-operation between the refugee and local populations, and within the refugee populations.

Household surveys

Household surveys were designed to incorporate the three levels of analysis described in Denzin's (1970) category of 'person triangulation', namely the individual, household and collective levels. They were also designed to incorporate both quantitative and qualitative methods of investigation. These different methods served different purposes and revealed different sorts of information (Zelditch, 1962), and were therefore chosen according to the type of information being sought. Thus structured interviews at the individual, head of household level sought broadly descriptive information, while semi-structured interviews at the household and collective levels sought more in-depth information.

Nevertheless, the range of methods adopted during the household surveys was integrated. A strict hierarchy was adopted, whereby individual, then household, then collective interviews were carried out in that order. As Sieber (1973) had observed, the quantitative data contributed to the collection of the qualitative data. First, in-field analysis of the quantitative data focused attention upon key areas which demanded further in-depth information. Second, the analysis identified suitable households for follow-up, in-depth studies.

Informant interviewing

Informant interviewing served two purposes. The first, as is explained in detail in a later section, was to compensate for poor response rates from women and during collective discussion groups. Thus community women's leaders and a variety of individuals who represented the refugee community at various collective levels were interviewed. In serving this purpose, the informant interviews addressed those levels of analysis which the household surveys had failed to, and were therefore clearly integrated with those surveys.

The second purpose was to gain an insight into those issues which remained unclear even

after the household surveys had been completed. As is discussed in a later section, it is very difficult for a researcher to gain the full confidence of his or her respondents, particularly in the case of a politically vulnerable population such as the displaced. The informant interviews therefore served sometimes to provide answers which had not been forthcoming from the other research methods; sometimes simply to emphasise that certain issues were too sensitive to pursue, and sometimes to verify information I had been given. In this respect, they complemented the household surveys.

Agent Interviews

The repatriation information system necessitated the incorporation of agents into the field strategy. Agent interviews were semi-structured. These interviews were conducted after the head of household stage of the household surveys. This is because the agents to be interviewed, and the main topics to be broached during the interviews, were identified during the structured interviews. Thereafter, the agent interviews were conducted simultaneously with the other field strategies. The semi-structured nature of both the agent interviews and the other interviews occurring meant that one could inform the other, and be adapted if necessary. In this respect, the agent interviews were integrated with the other elements of the field strategy.

Non-participant observation

Throughout the field period three separate, on-going sets of field notes were maintained. In these, observations and comments which did not emerge from any of the formal field strategies, but which were felt to be of interest or relevance, were recorded. The three sets of notes were substantive, methodological and analytic field notes (Burgess, 1984). The purpose of each set of notes is described in a later section. The relevant point to make here is that during the analysis of data, the field notes have often served to inform or place into context vagaries or inconsistencies.

4.2.4. Commentary

The discussion above has described the five principal field strategies adopted during this research. These various approaches were necessitated by the research questions raised by the '*model of a repatriation information system*', and at the same time integrated to form a coherent whole. The field strategies can be considered to be substantively, theoretically

and analytically integrated. First, different strategies were used according to their efficiency in obtaining the different types of information necessary to test the model of a repatriation information system. These types of information included frequency distributions, incidents and histories, and institutionalised norms (Zelditch, 1962). They also included descriptive and in-depth data. Second, the quantitative survey, applied according to a structured random sampling design as described in the next section, was valid in terms of 'statistical inference', whilst the qualitative interviews were valid in terms of 'logical inference'. Both types of strategy were therefore inherently theoretically valid (Mitchell, 1983), but also complementary. Third, the different strategies were analytically integrated because they were conducted hierarchically and cumulatively, such that the analysis of the results of one informed the structure of the next.

4.4. Research design

Research design involves the choice of sample population or populations involved in a study, telescoping from the country or countries involved, through the choice of sample areas, to the choice of respondents. It is usually based upon the analytical framework for research, thus whether the aim is to compare two different places at whatever scale, two different people or sets of people and so on. The choice of the study areas in this research, from the country of Malawi through the chosen districts to the particular refugee settlements, and then the choice of respondents from those study areas, is explained below in terms of an 'iterative' analytical framework.

4.4.1. Country of study

The '*model of a repatriation information system*' outlined in Chapter 3 offers a dual opportunity for research in more than one country. First, the model could be tested in two different displacement situations, and comparisons drawn. Second, the model invites cross-border research, such that transmitters of information in the country of origin could be incorporated with receivers in the country of asylum, and with agents who cross the border between the two. It was decided from the outset of this research, however, that the opportunities for such international research were restricted, specifically by time and cost. It was felt that the in-depth research necessary in order to test the model might be compromised by international research such that the repatriation information system might not be properly understood before it was used as a basis of cross-border or

comparative research.

The case of Mozambican refugees was decided upon for some of the reasons given in Chapter 1, namely the characteristics of being a refugee population so large as to deserve far greater research, yet at the same time a refugee population which was attracting increasing academic attention which provided secondary material for my research.

Of the countries in which Mozambicans have been externally displaced, Malawi seemed a good choice for two reasons. First, it hosted (and still hosts) by far the largest number of Mozambicans, with the greatest variety of displacement experiences. Second, at the time of commencement of this research, it was a significantly under-researched refugee population, while at the same time the work particularly of Wilson (e.g. Wilson and Nunes, 1991) and Ager (e.g. Ager *et.al.*, 1991) provided at least a basis of secondary material².

4.4.2. Study areas

The various sorts of research design usually adopted are: the case-study, which asks the question 'What is happening in place A?'; the longitudinal study which asks 'Has there been a change in place A?'; the comparison which asks 'Are A and B different', and the longitudinal comparison which asks 'Are A and B different with regard to change through time?'. Obviously, the choice of research design therefore determines how many study sites are selected, and whether they are visited more than once.

In arriving at my research design, I chose not to adopt explicitly any of the above designs. As is demonstrated in the later empirical chapters, there is no doubt that the repatriation information system does vary over space and through time, such that either comparative or longitudinal studies, or a combination of the two, would have been valid research designs. However, in testing the model, my research design was designed to describe and elaborate as fully as possible upon the patterns and processes of the

² It is worth noting that since the commencement of this thesis, there has been a significant increase in the research base on Mozambican refugees in Malawi, specifically associated with the *International Conference on First Country of Asylum and Development Aid*, convened by York University (Canada) and the Government of Malawi in 1992. One also presumes that the more relaxed political environment which is an expected outcome of the defeat of the one party system in the Malawi referendum (14 June 1993), may facilitate a better research environment and therefore increased research activity.

repatriation information system. It was felt that a research design specifically developed in accordance with a spatial or temporal analytical framework might subsume non-spatial or non-temporal characteristics of the system. One way in which this can happen is for the researcher to presume that differences observed are due to the research design chosen, in other words are accounted for by space or time, when in fact a host of other variables may be responsible or at least contributory.

Instead, the research design chosen corresponded closest to the case study. However, more than one study area was chosen. Such a research design could be described as iterative. The purpose of testing the model in four different places was not comparison, rather it was to allow for the greatest number of variables to be considered in testing the model. The point is that space was not presumed, nor often proved, to be necessarily important in explaining variations between the study sites.

This notion of an iterative research design, whereby the same model is tested over and over again in as many different contexts as possible, determined the choice of the two districts of Mangochi and Nkhata Bay. For example, the predominant tribe and religion in each differs from that in the other. The two are also geographically discrete: Mangochi shares a border with Mozambique, while Nkhata Bay is on the other side of Lake Malawi from Mozambique. The design also determined the choice of refugee settlements within the two districts. In Mangochi there are a total of three settlements, and in Nkhata Bay four. The choice in each district was of the two determined to be most obviously different. Hence, for example, one settlement in each district was closed to new arrivals and generally hosted refugees who had arrived some four years ago, while the other in each was still open, and generally hosted a newer refugee population. The choice of study areas and settlements therefore reflected an iterative research design, by introducing as many variables as possible, without biasing beforehand those which would be used to account for variation³.

The above comments notwithstanding, it is worth mentioning that the majority of

³ Political restrictions in Malawi, as discussed in a later section, precluded the inclusion in this research of self-settled refugees outside recognised refugee settlements. An extension of the logic of the iterative research design would have been to include such 'spontaneous' settlements.

refugees in all four settlements and in both study areas originated from the Province of Niassa. As the district within Niassa from which the majority in each study area differed, and as the variation between districts in Niassa in terms of the experience of war past and present are so different (see Chapter 5), this choice was felt not to interfere with the principle of an iterative research design. Nevertheless, the decision was intentionally to address the lacuna in research in and on Mozambique which virtually ignores the northern-most Provinces of Niassa and Cabo Delgado (Wilson, 1992a).

4.4.3. Sample populations

While the agent and informant interviews were primarily on an availability basis, a sampling procedure had to be arrived at for the structured household surveys.

The basis of my sampling procedure was random sampling. However, each settlement was organised, for administration purposes, into blocks of roughly equal size. Plots had been allocated chronologically and by block, such that the earliest arrivals in each camp were in Block 1, and later arrivals in higher order blocks. I initially presumed that this process would mean that the introduction of blocks into the sampling procedure would allow the introduction of time in exile as a variable. However, during the construction of community profiles in each settlement, it became clear that the majority of refugees in each camp had arrived within a very short time span. Nevertheless, the profiles did reveal that the each block generally housed refugees from the same village. Partly this was because many villages arrived *en masse*, but partly it was because of an informal exchanging of plots so that people from the same village could live close to one another. This meant that the introduction of blocks into my sampling procedure was still relevant, as it allowed the introduction as a variable of village of origin.

The sampling procedure therefore adopted was a structured random sampling procedure, whereby a certain number of households were drawn randomly from each block.

4.4.4. Conclusion

In this section, it has been shown how the analytical framework derived from the need to test the '*model of a repatriation information system*', and how it determined the research design adopted. As the analytical framework decided upon was to test the model

in the context of as many variables as possible, the research design adopted was iterative. After the decision that the research should be in only one country, and the choice of Mozambican refugees in Malawi, the iterative research design dictated to a large extent the choice of study areas and sample populations.

In the following section, the details of the operationalisation of the field strategy described in the first section, in the context of the research design described in this section, are considered.

4.5. Fieldwork operationalisation

The fieldwork can be considered to have developed in a cumulative manner: a pilot visit informed the '*model of a repatriation information system*' and the development of a pilot questionnaire; the pilot questionnaire informed the structured interviews actually carried out, and these in turn informed the semi-structured interviews subsequently conducted. The steps involved in the fieldwork, and relevant details, are described in Appendix II.

There were, however, a number of problems encountered during the fieldwork operationalisation. These problems and the manner in which they were addressed are the focus in this section.

4.5.1. Problems encountered

Five main problems emerged during the fieldwork, broadly relating to: political restrictions upon my research and the respondents; levels of confidence between myself and the respondents; verification; poor response rates from women and during collective interviews; the use of interpreters, and the ethics of fieldwork. These problems are discussed in turn.

Political restrictions

Political restrictions operated at two levels, firstly upon the research which I was able to undertake, and secondly upon the freedom of expression of the respondents.

Malawi is renowned for its restrictive political environment. To an extent, this environment restricted the logistics of my research, as I had to wait for over nine months

before receiving research clearance. It also restricted the research design adopted, because, as mentioned above, it was highly unlikely that clearance would have been forthcoming for research amongst the 'spontaneously' settled refugees in Malawi. It also restricted the fieldwork. My interview schedules, for example, were closely examined in the Office of the District Commissioner before they were used. Furthermore, the impression of myself and fellow researchers in Malawi past and present, was of a close, if informal, scrutiny of fieldwork. Even if this politically restrictive environment is not obvious, the potential for its occurrence still places the researcher in a difficult ethical position. For example, I did not want to place my respondents into a compromising position by asking them to answer sensitive questions. Hence there were questions which could not be asked. Despite the vetting of my interview schedules, however, there were still questions which most respondents were unwilling to answer because of their political sensitivity, particularly questions which in any way implicated the Government of Malawi.

However, the nature of the '*model of a repatriation information system*' is not overtly political, and in my opinion restrictions upon research in Malawi have not adversely affected my ability to test the model there.

Levels of confidence

It is difficult for an outsider to gain the confidence of any group, especially an economically dependent and politically vulnerable group such as refugees. It would seem likely that a fair proportion of my respondents were not convinced by my introductory comments concerning my non-partisan position, nor by my guarantees of confidentiality. I do feel that certain strategies, such as the preliminary meeting, and working with interpreters from the refugee populations, went some way towards overcoming this lack of trust. Security restrictions meant that I could not live in the camps; clearly also the length of time I could spend in the field was also restricted, and perhaps these two factors restricted the extent to which the refugees' trust could be properly earned.

The inherent problem with such a situation is that the researcher can develop an equal mistrust of respondents, believing their responses to be appropriate as opposed to necessarily accurate. This is a bias in the data which really is inevitable, and has to be

accounted for during analysis. Thus, throughout the following empirical chapters, I note those responses which seem implausible. The only satisfactory means of overcoming this problem is by verification of responses from another source.

Verification

Unfortunately, verification also proved to be a problem during fieldwork, to the extent that there were often discrepancies over basic data between respondents and the registration records, which had seemed the most obvious source of verification. This problem is perhaps not unexpected in the African context (Peil *et.al.*, 1982). The registration records presented the following information for each household: names, ages, and dates of birth of all members; their relationship to one another; village of origin; date of registration, and the head of household. Discrepancies seems to be accounted for by the following reasons: polygamy; double registration; the re-uniting of families; re-marriage; the arrival of new members who could not register in the two closed camps, and in several cases women with husbands registered, and the person who registers was automatically recorded as the head of household.

My conclusion was that the registration records were inaccurate, and so there was no source of verification for even the most basic demographic data. While there was no means of verifying individual or household characteristics, informant interviews did provide a means of verifying norms and statuses identified during the household survey.

Response rates

Perhaps the single most important problem experienced during fieldwork was the bias away from female heads of household, and female reticence during semi-structured interviews. As explained in Appendix II, it is presumed that the reluctance of women to speak with me was a function of my own sex, and that of my interpreters, who were all male. Given greater resources, the first improvement of my fieldwork which I would propose would have been the employment of a female research assistant. While interviews with community women's leaders provided at least an insight into the role of gender in the repatriation information system, this was by no means comprehensive. My only option has been to address this bias explicitly, and to acknowledge that future research amongst women must take place before the repatriation information system is

fully understood.

It is also acknowledged in Appendix II that collective interviews were not always successful. However, I am of the opinion that interviews with the various representatives of communities in Mozambique and Malawi provided a good substitute in terms of the repatriation information system. As is explained in a later chapter, this was basically because there was very little inter-household interaction in the information system, and so the failure of collective interviews was not a vital omission.

Interpreters

The most obvious problem of working with interpreters was that I was unable to speak directly with respondents, and had to rely upon the translation of the interpreters. A natural consequence is that nuances of language may be missed. This problem was compounded by the inappropriateness of the use of tape recorders during the fieldwork, so that literal translations could not be sought by later translation. This has implications for analysis, and specifically qualitative analysis, as discussed in the next section.

Ethical problems

The ethical dilemmas encountered during and after fieldwork normally operate at three levels (Whyte, 1984). The first concerns the relationship between the researcher and his or her sponsors. During my fieldwork, the most obvious translation of this relationship, as discussed above, was the political restrictions placed upon my research by the Malawi Government. As explained above, these restrictions are not considered to have been necessarily detrimental to my thesis. However, there is certainly information which I have gathered which should not be published if the trust placed in me by the Malawi Government, by granting me research clearance, is to be respected, and is not therefore included in this thesis.

The second level of ethical dilemma concerns the relationship between researcher and respondents. Common problems at this level include deception of respondents or the invasion of privacy (Mitchell and Draper, 1982), by the use, for example, of covert methods (Wilson, 1992*b*). Neither was necessary for my research, and both were explicitly avoided by publicity of my research goals and my guarantee of confidentiality

respectively. The one ethical dilemma which I did face was a concern not to interview 'vulnerable' respondents (Punch, 1986). There were certainly some potential respondents, such as RENAMO supporters or criminals from Mozambique, who might not have been able to answer my questions at all truthfully for fear of reprisals. Where possible, with the help of my interpreters, I avoided interviewing such respondents, even though they might have been sources of valuable information.

The third level of dilemma which can occur concerns the relationship between the researcher and his or her collaborators. A dilemma at this level did arise as a result of the use of interpreters. In some cases interpreters, by virtue of their association with me, themselves seemed to lose the confidence of the respondents. Another dilemma concerned the payment of interpreters. I based the hourly rate upon that paid by the local NGOs to employees from the refugee population.

4.5.2. Commentary

In this section, the problems encountered during fieldwork have been described. There is no doubt that certain problems were insurmountable, and have implications for the analysis of data and the testing of the '*model of a repatriation information system*'. It is my opinion that in such circumstances the researcher can do no more than explicitly acknowledge biases, and bear them in mind throughout the analysis and presentation of results.

4.6. Framework for analysis

4.6.1. Rationale

Just as the multiple field strategies and research design chosen for this study were necessitated by the research questions, so was the framework of analysis. As the research design decided upon was iterative, this framework does not have to concern itself with comparison. Instead, it has three different aims.

The first was to combine the contrasting elements of on the one hand refugees and personal agents, and on the other impersonal institutional agents in the repatriation information system. Broadly, the data on the two invited qualitative and quantitative analysis respectively, however a degree of quantitative analysis was also necessitated in

application to the individual refugees in order to group them into categories.

The second was the need to address the varying levels of the individual, the household and the community. For methodological purposes, the household was given a strictly spatial definition, in other words the members of a household interviewed were those who lived within a single home in the refugee settlements. For analytical purposes, however, it is recognised that this spatial unit may not necessarily correspond with the actual decision-making unit. This situation arose because household membership in exile often does not reflect the pre-flight household. It presents an inherent problem in the analysis of household decision-making.

The third aim was to provide a means for description as well as explanation.

As a result of these aims, a two-tier framework for analysis has been adopted. It consists of the complementary levels of a quantitative, descriptive level and a qualitative, more explanatory level.

4.6.2. Quantitative analysis

The purpose of this level of analysis has been to provide a descriptive account of patterns in the repatriation information system. This includes basic profile data, and descriptive data concerning the receipt, and to a lesser extent the evaluation and use of information. The analysis used has focused upon basic frequency distributions.

The empirical contribution of this analysis is threefold. First, to describe the main features of the repatriation information system, and thus to actually test whether the model, and its predication of agents who convey information from home to exile, is accurate. Second, to reveal descriptive data concerning the extent of the repatriation information system, for example what percentage of respondents received any information at all, which means of receipt information were most frequent and so on. Third, to complement the more qualitative data analysis, by placing it into an empirical context, and also by providing indicators of some of the important processes in the system which stand to be elaborated upon.

4.6.3. Qualitative analysis

This level of analysis looks in greater depth at a limited number of case studies and attempts an explanatory analysis of some of the processes in the refugee information system. As already discussed, the selection of the case studies is based on the principle of logical as opposed to statistical inference (Mitchell, 1983).

In conducting this analysis, the methodology of qualitative data analysis has been adopted (Strauss, 1987). This methodology is usually carried out on the transcripts of interviews or open-ended questionnaires. Although I used both these methods of data collection, transcripts of full interviews containing *verbatim* responses are not available. This is because I could not use tape recorders during the interviews, and relied upon interpreters who clearly did not translate every response *verbatim*. My field notes therefore contain the translations given to me by my interpreters, which I am nevertheless confident are close to the actual responses. Even though, for the sake of clarity, the excerpts presented in later chapters are in the first person, it is stressed that they do not necessarily represent *verbatim* responses. Nevertheless, they are equally valid for application of the methods of qualitative analysis.

Qualitative data analysis can take two approaches: either the consideration of whole transcripts, or the consideration of partial transcripts which are contextualised where necessary. I have adopted the latter approach. The method proceeds along the following lines:

(i) the analyst asks 'generative questions' of the data i.e. the transcript is analysed line by line and questions such as 'Why is he/she using that word?', 'How does this relate to what I know?', 'Why doesn't this conform?' and so on are asked; in other words issues are created from the data;

(ii) 'axial' coding is developed to categorise the sorts of issues created from the data; these are open ended codes, and

(iii) the process of selective coding then takes place, whereby those issues identified as important to the analysis are focused upon, and from these codes the important processes

are identified and analysed.

Parallel to this process, the analyst keeps 'theoretical' memos of ideas which arise during the analysis.

4.7. Conclusion

In this chapter, the methodological framework adopted in testing the '*model of a repatriation information system*' in the field, and then analysing the data collected, has been explained. The research questions raised in testing the model necessitated the incorporation of quantitative and qualitative approaches. As a result, a variety of field methods were adopted, and integrated into a coherent field strategy. This strategy was actioned in the context of a broadly iterative research design. The operationalisation of the fieldwork involved a cumulative learning process in the field, whereby problems which arose had to be dealt with as efficiently as possible. The framework for the analysis of this information is two-tiered, incorporating an extensive and intensive level.

The following two chapters present the bulk of the information derived from the quantitative methods and analysis. The next chapter provides a profile of the sample populations, including basic demographic details, patterns of flight and return and so on, placed in historical context. That following presents descriptive data on the repatriation information system, and especially upon patterns of information receipt. The subsequent two chapters focus upon some of the processes in the system, including the evaluation and use of information, and present data largely derived from the qualitative methods and analysis.

Chapter 5 Historical Profile

5.1. Introduction

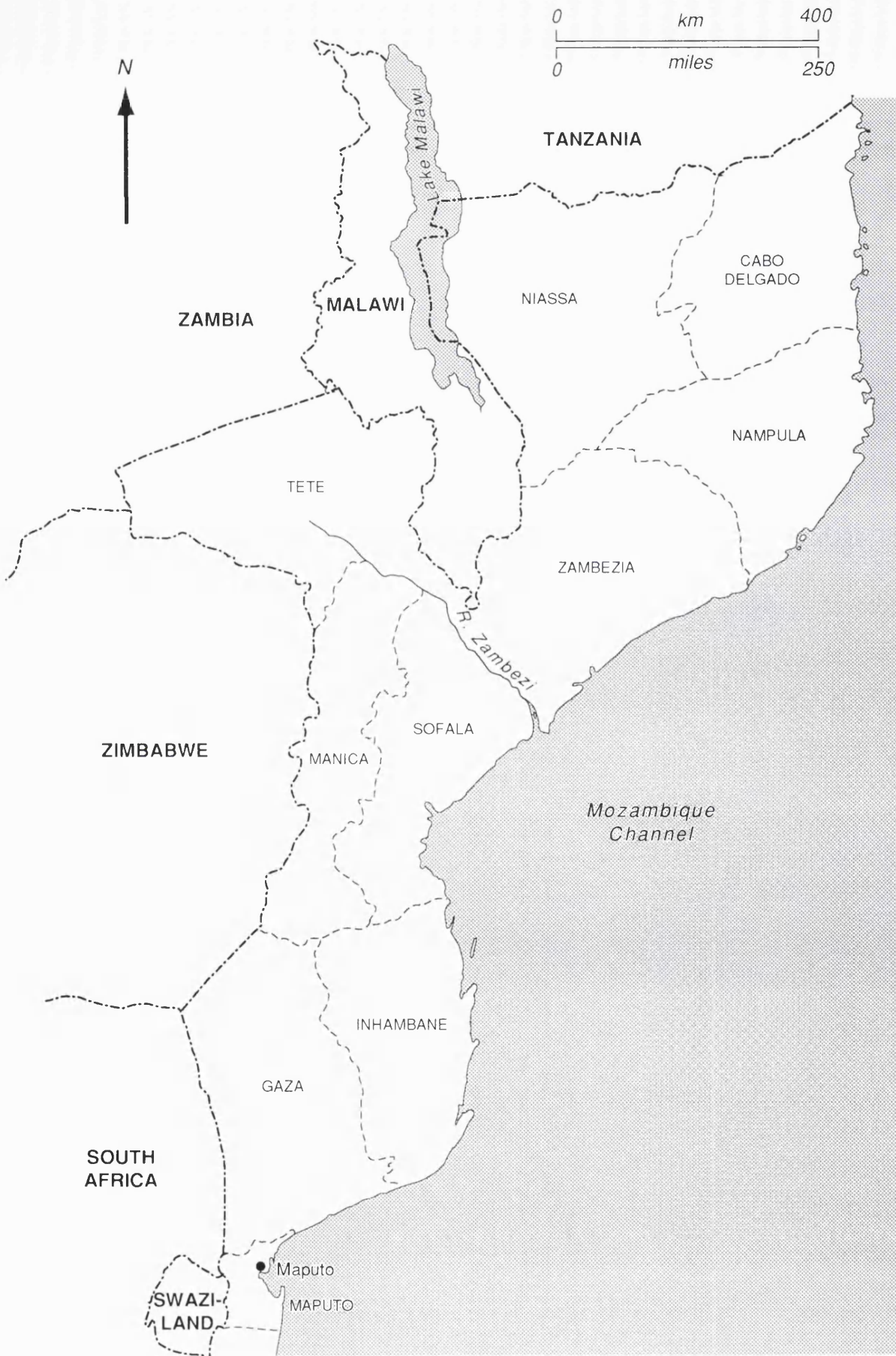
The purpose of this chapter is to provide an historical background to the refugee populations from which my sample households were drawn, and to demonstrate that the recent flight occurred in a long-term context of population displacement, forced and voluntary. This theme is pursued via the sequence of pre-flight life in Mozambique, flight from Mozambique, settlement in Malawi and repatriation experience. It is placed within the broader context of the refugee experience in Mozambique and Malawi as a whole. Throughout the discussion the question of scale is paramount. It is a notable characteristic that at all stages of the sequence described above the experience of Mozambicans from different areas has varied.

5.2. Pre-flight background

The history of Mozambique is the subject of many scholarly works, and is very complex. Two of the many themes which can be identified in these histories, and which are considered relevant in providing a brief historical context for contemporary patterns of flight from and return to Mozambique, are migration and geographical differentiation. Attention here is particularly focused upon the Province of Niassa (Figure 5.1.), which was the Province of origin of the vast majority of my respondents, and the above comments notwithstanding, it is worth noting that this particular province is virtually unstudied.

Since the 18th Century, by which period the Portuguese had gained sufficient military control in Mozambique to control trade, the populations of Mozambique have been subject to numerous waves of migration, both forced and voluntary and internal and external. Perhaps the first recorded of such migrations were those related with the slave trade. By the turn of the 19th Century higher profits were to be made from the expanding slave trade in Eastern Africa than from ivory and gold which had previously dominated trade in Portuguese Mozambique (Kibreab, 1985). It is estimated that by the 1820's, some 30,000 slaves per year were being exported from Mozambique (Alpen, 1982). By

Figure 5.1 A Provincial Map of Mozambique



the end of the century British anti-slavery patrols had succeeded in reducing the slave trade significantly. With fewer slaves and less exports from ivory, trade in Mozambique shifted to agricultural products.

However, the Portuguese had capital sufficient only to exploit Mozambique at a minimal level, and as a result leased land and people in Mozambique to foreign capitalists. By 1891 one-third of the country was leased to two chartered companies: the Mozambique Company took present-day Manica and Sofala Provinces, while the Niassa Company leased Niassa and Cabo Delgado (Vail and White, 1980). Forced labour was introduced, along with a head tax. These highly unpopular regulations created two waves of migration: firstly, the chartered companies re-located workers within their huge chartered areas (Vail and White, 1978); secondly, many Mozambicans escaped to Malawi (White, 1989). The advent of the chartered companies also coincided with the appearance of large-scale mining in South Africa and Southern Rhodesia. By the time Salazar came to power in Portugal in 1926, some 500,000 Mozambicans were working outside the country (First, 1983).

Salazar tried to make more effective use of Portugal's colonies. The Niassa Company charter was not renewed in 1928, and *prazos* (land grants) were ended in 1930. However with 500,000 men working abroad, and weak Portuguese capital demanding more cheap labour, the only alternative was to increase the exploitation of labour. The new forced labour scheme (*chibalo*), saw huge proportions of the remaining population relocated to work on plantations or infrastructural projects (da Silva, 1992). Portugal's exploitation continued throughout their presence as colonial power, and it was against this backdrop that FRELIMO was founded in 1962.

Between 1964, when FRELIMO launched its initial forays into Mozambique, until 25 June 1975 when Independence was won, uncounted thousands of Mozambicans fled, to Malawi and Tanzania, as refugees from the war. Population relocation also continued under FRELIMO rule, even before the contemporary flight. One cause was FRELIMO's villagisation programme. This programme emerged from a socialist doctrine which saw communal villages as the backbone of rural development and involved concentrating the dispersed rural population in to communal settlements. Since Independence, 1350

communal villages have been created, involving 1.8 million inhabitants, or 14% of the total population (Hanlon, 1990). A second cause was FRELIMO's 're-education camps'. These were basically detention centres for political opponents rounded up principally in the urban centres. Estimates of detainees in these camps vary wildly, from 10,000 to 300,000 (Finnegan, 1992).

The impact of all of these historical trends has varied across Mozambique. Only between 1941 and 1974 was Mozambique governed by the Portuguese as a single administrative unit with a national economy; and since 1975 FRELIMO have never had the capital, infrastructure or 'breathing-space' to apply their policies nationwide.

Patterns of migration have played an important role in shaping the characteristics of economy and society in Niassa Province. Slave traders found an ally in the dominant Yao tribe. Between them, they largely de-populated present day Niassa and Cabo Delgado Provinces (Finnegan, 1992). Many Yao themselves then fled to Malawi when confronted with the forced labour regulations and head tax imposed by the Niassa Company (Boeder, 1984). Indeed, the absolute shortage of population available for exploitation by the Niassa Company is in part explanation for the demise of its charter 13 years before that of the charter of the Mozambique Company. Under Salazar, Niassa and Cabo Delgado were basically ignored, and left to become economic backwaters. Indeed responsibility for education and health in northern Niassa was assumed by the Anglican mission in Messumba and the Roman Catholic mission in Cobue (Paul, 1975).

FRELIMO began its assault on Mozambique from bases in Tanzania, and thus had arrived in the two northern provinces of Niassa and Cabo Delgado by 1965 (Paul, 1975), and by 1966 was describing the provinces as 'liberated areas' (Museveni, 1972). This description is probably a misnomer: Paul (1975) provided eye-witness accounts of atrocities committed by both FRELIMO and Portuguese troops between 1964 and 1967. By July 1965 the whole of northern Niassa was deserted, the population having fled to Malawi and Tanzania. Thus flight from Niassa to Malawi was not a new phenomenon in recent decades.

While the lack of development since Independence in other provinces might be

considered a function of the weakness of FRELIMO (O'Meara, 1991; Saul, 1991; Wuyts, 1985; Young, 1988), compounded of course by the war, in the northern provinces underdevelopment has largely been a result of their marginalisation by FRELIMO¹. They are the provinces most untouched by economic restructuring under the Ten-Year Plan and Economic Recovery programme: there has been no new infrastructure built there since Independence, and high profile social policies such as health care and the 'emancipation' of women (Kruks and Wisner, 1984) have similarly hardly been introduced. In some areas in Niassa FRELIMO has imposed superficial changes upon the social organisation of communities, electing its own village chairmen to replace traditional village chiefs, nevertheless the population of the Province remains largely non-politicised. Perhaps the only significant impact which FRELIMO did have was the creation of one of Mozambique's largest 're-education camps' (as well as several others) in Niassa.

Nevertheless, the population of Niassa was largely rural, with people inhabiting the following typology of villages: traditional villages; communal villages created to house workers on state farms; villages built to house repatriates from Tanzania and Malawi who returned after Independence; converted '*aldeamentos*' (fortified villages created by the Portuguese to keep peasants away from the influence of FRELIMO); 're-education camps', and the Messumba mission at Cobue, which covered some 35 hectares during the 1960 s, and was described by visitors as a town (Paul, 1975).

The vast majority of villages had no more than 100 houses (perhaps 500 people). The economy was almost entirely subsistence, although surplus was sold in local District Centres, or to AGRICOM, the state marketing corporation. Some were administered by traditional chiefs, some by FRELIMO's village chairmen, and in some both existed. Where the latter occurred, the role of the chief was traditional, for example to oversee ceremonies and settle local disputes, and the role of the chairman was official, for example to collect taxes. This administrative system was greatly complicated by the relationships and division of responsibility between sub-chiefs, local chiefs and paramount chiefs.

¹ There is no documentation of the impact of FRELIMO's post-Independence policies in Niassa available, and so the following brief summary is based upon my own observations and interviews with refugees in Malawi and in Mozambique.

5.3. Flight from Mozambique

The protraction of the war in Mozambique has indexed a sophistication in analyses of the causes of the war and its effects on patterns of flight.

The war has variously been described as a war of external aggression prosecuted by South Africa (Isaacman, 1988), and a civil war (Hoile, 1991). Hard though it is to be objective about the causes of war, the truth is perhaps more complex. RENAMO was created in Rhodesia in 1976, its task to spy on guerillas of the Zimbabwe African National Union (ZANU) being sheltered by the new FRELIMO government in Mozambique (Finnegan, 1992). Following Zimbabwean Independence in 1980, RENAMO headquarters were transferred to South Africa. The purposes for doing so are debated, but there is no doubt that at least until the Nkomati Accord in 1984, South Africa backed a campaign of destabilisation through destruction by RENAMO in Mozambique (Winter, 1981). Whether or not South African support continued after 1984, RENAMO developed an internal dynamic divorced from external support (Hall, 1990; Hall, 1991; Vines, 1991; Young, 1990).

Initial studies understood the phenomenon of displacement as the 'human' face of this war (Cammack, 1986; Gersony, 1988; Knight, 1988; Magaia, 1988; Quan, 1987). Some sought to examine the cause of displacement in a wider political-economic context (Adam, 1991; Ibeanu, 1990). However, more detailed case studies have stressed the need to distinguish analytically between underlying causes and immediate precipitants in understanding the causes of displacement. Often flight from Mozambique was precipitated by the collapse of the local economy and/or drought, for example. Such studies also emphasised that the causes of displacement varied through time and between areas in Mozambique (Cisternino, 1987; Finnegan, 1992; Wilson and Nunes, 1991), and that the process was mediated by variables such as the varying allegiance of some people with RENAMO (Geffray and Pederson, 1988; Roesch, 1992); human rights abuses by FRELIMO soldiers not just RENAMO soldiers (Africa Watch, 1992); local 'cults of violence and counter-violence' (Wilson, 1992c) and the resurgence of local neo-traditional authorities (Vines, 1991).

While there have been some very detailed studies of the local configurations of war and patterns and processes of displacement in other provinces such as Nampula (Geffray and Pederson, 1988); Gaza (Roesch, 1991); Tete (Wilson and Shumba, 1991; Adam, 1991) and Zambezia (Wilson, 1991; Wilson, 1992*d*), there have been none in Niassa to date. The following observations are therefore largely based upon my interviews with refugees from Niassa and the security reports held by MSF (Holland) in Cuamba, Niassa.

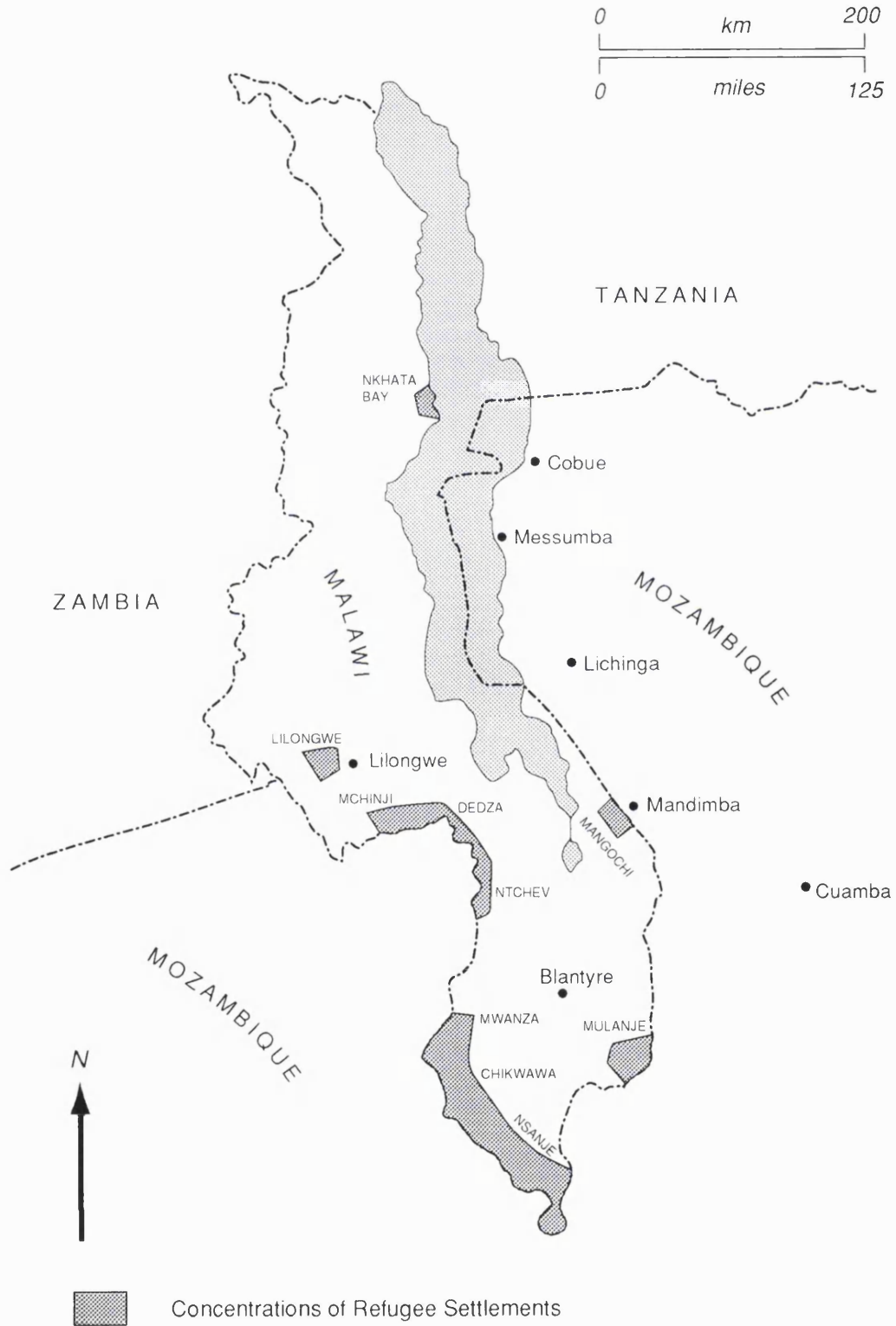
Vines (1991), adopting Gersony's (1988) categorisation of RENAMO influenced areas of tax areas, control areas and destruction areas, described Niassa as a tax area. Tax areas were in zones with a scarce, and generally dispersed population in territory marginal to RENAMO interests. RENAMO demanded of these populations a tax on food or labour in return for leaving the population otherwise alone and in peace. Tax areas did not receive any reciprocity from RENAMO in the form of aid or alternative services, except the guarantee of not being violently treated. As a result, between 1979 and 1984 there were no chronicled attacks in Niassa, and between 1985 and 1990 no more than 20 (Vines, 1991).

From refugee accounts I have formed the following brief chronology of events in Niassa. A RENAMO unit of perhaps 100 entered southern Niassa from Zambezia in early 1987. On 13 July 1987 a major offensive upon the border town of Mandimba was launched. It was repelled by FRELIMO forces based in Cuamba and Lichinga. The unit then apparently divided, some troops returning South, others pushing North. On 21 September 1991 there was another repelled attack, this time on the coastal town of Cobue (Figure 5.2. shows these locations).

These seem to have been the only two organised attacks which have occurred in the Province. During their advances upon these two towns, RENAMO camped in outlying villages, raiding food and taking porters to carry it. There appear to have been few atrocities perpetrated by these forces, who seem to have been quite well disciplined. The majority of my respondents lived in villages close to the two towns, and fled either upon the arrival of RENAMO in their villages or in the towns, or in anticipation.

From 1989 conflicts were restricted to skirmishes between the FRELIMO troops

Figure 5.2 The Distribution of Refugees in Malawi



stationed in the area and small roving bands of RENAMO soldiers. These bands appear to have broken away from central control, as by 1989 RENAMO was concentrating its efforts in Zambezia. A much higher rate of atrocities occurred under these bands, and were experienced by those refugees who have fled Niassa since 1989. The following refugee account, from Kalanje, is a typical story:

'My village wasn't actually attacked. I was on the way to visit some relatives with my wife and children when we were caught by RENAMO. They killed my wife and three children in front of me, there and then...I had to work for them for six months, carrying luggage and firewood...during the six months they attacked at least five villages. They burnt houses and took possessions and women to cook for them...I don't know where the villages were, we only walked by night. I do know that we crossed seven rivers...There were only eight soldiers...They didn't have radios and never contacted other soldiers, although when I escaped they did say they were on their way to meet another group of soldiers...We were preparing food for the soldiers one night. They sent me in to the bush to collect firewood, and I ran' (K:11)

During 1991 these opportunistic attacks continued, although at low frequency. By 1992 attacks had become functional. For example the only district centre in Niassa continually attacked was Metarica, which was the only district with a food surplus from the 1991-1992 harvest.

In many cases, these more recent events were no longer attributable to RENAMO. In some cases break-away groups were active. But increasingly *bandidos armados* (armed bandits) and also break-away FRELIMO troops, responding to the shortage of food and wages in Niassa, looted under the cover of RENAMO. One refugee told me that it was very difficult to distinguish between RENAMO and *bandidos armados*: they wore the same clothes and carried the same weapons. However RENAMO never recruited troops in Niassa, so the RENAMO troops spoke different dialects.

As a result of this local configuration of conflict, several waves of flight occurred from Niassa. The principal waves were from the south in response to the attack on Mandimba, and from the north from the attack on Cobue. These account for the majority of Niassan refugees. Since 1989 the influx decreased as people fled small-scale local attacks. The low intensity and low frequency of recent attacks also engendered opportunities for

return.

Before flight, Niassa was the least populated Province of Mozambique, with a population density of only some six persons per square kilometre. According to the 1980 census, Niassa had some 500,000 inhabitants. In 1990 the Government of Mozambique estimated a total population, including refugees and internal displacees from the Province, of 681,000. This represents a 2.5% population increase per year on the 1980 census.

In 1990 it was estimated that some 36,000 Niassans were refugees in Malawi. On the basis of my visit to the various camps in which the majority of refugees were from Niassa, I would estimate that by 1992 the figure had increased to approximately 45,000. There are also an unquantified number of Niassans in Tanzania: the Tanzanian Government's 1987 estimate of 72,000 refugees, the majority of whom were from Niassa and Cabo Delgado, also included those who had never repatriated following Independence. According to these figures there were perhaps as many as 100,000 refugees from Niassa in 1992. In August 1992 it was estimated by the Government of Mozambique that some 240,000 Niassans were internally displaced. It is not clear whether the internally displaced were still in Niassa, nor whether the Province housed internally displaced persons from other Provinces. The implication of these figures is that at least half of the population of Niassa remained in the Province during the war.

5.4. Settlement in Malawi

The refugee influx into Malawi started in earnest in 1985. The peak flow occurred in 1988 by which time refugees were arriving at the rate of 20,000 per month. This had reduced to 16,500 per month by 1989. While the influx dwindled between 1989 and 1992, it increased sharply at the end of 1992 and in 1993, largely on account of the drought which has stricken central Mozambique in particular. As of June 1991, the Government of Malawi estimated that there were some 930,000 refugees in the country. The actual figure is reckoned by most NGOs and the UNHCR to be well over one million.

Figure 5.2. shows that the refugees were concentrated in the border regions of Nsanje, Chikwawa, Mwanza, Mulanje, Thyolo, Mangochi, Machinga, Ntcheu, Dedza, Lilongwe,

Mchinji and Nkhata Bay. Within these districts, the refugees could be broadly categorised into those who were self-settled (and therefore usually unregistered), those registered as refugees but self-sufficient, those surviving on a combination of aid and self-sufficiency, and the totally dependent who tended to be elderly or orphans. Due to exigencies of space, settlements tended to be grafted onto Malawian settlements and there was a high degree of interaction between the refugees and host population.

It was not until April 1988 that agreement was reached for a UNHCR Branch Office in Malawi, and not until the Government of Malawi passed the Refugee Act on 8 May 1989 that the present system of managing the refugees replaced the previous *ad hoc* arrangements which largely relied upon the good will of the Malawian people. Under the present institutional framework, the refugees are locally the responsibility of District Commissioners and nationally the responsibility of the Office of the President and Cabinet². The UNHCR had Branch Offices in Lilongwe and Blantyre, and assumed the role of overall co-ordinator of the NGO's.

The refugees soon became a burden on the Government and people of Malawi. Social and economic friction arose as some refugees accepted employment on estates at wages lower than the prevailing minimum wage, for example. More recently friction was accentuated as the Malawian population suffered the consequences of drought, and its own food supplies became less regular than those of the refugees. Probably the most serious effect of the refugees has been environmental. Deforestation has had a devastating impact in such vulnerable areas as Mount Mulanje and the Lower Shire Valley. In 1988 it was estimated that the average consumption of firewood per refugee/day was 1.5 kg. (World Bank Industry and Energy Department, 1988).

The settlements in which this study occurred were in the Mangochi and Nkhata Bay districts (Figure 5.2.). In Mangochi there were three camps: Chiumbangame, Kalanje and Mwawa. My samples in that district came from the first two. In Nkhata Bay there were four camps: Mgolosera, Jappie, Singo I and Singo II. My samples in that district came from the first two. Details of the four settlements in this study are contained in Appendix

² Before 1988 the Ministry of Health had national authority.

III.

5.5. Repatriation to date

In the context of the deleterious effect which the concentration and numbers of refugees have had at various levels in Malawi, attention by the end of 1980s was turned to a long-term solution. Of the three durable solutions for refugees (Stein, 1986), only repatriation appeared to be viable. Local integration was precluded to a large extent in Malawi by a general shortage of fertile land for agriculture (OAU/ILO, 1989), and resettlement in either another African country or a more-developed nation still was unlikely. Therefore a Tripartite Commission consisting of the Governments of Malawi and Mozambique and the UNHCR was established in 1989 to design and administer an institutional framework for repatriation. An extensive Repatriation Operations Plan was produced (UN/Government of Mozambique, 1990). This plan achieved little success, and was shelved, mainly due to lack of funds, in favour of smaller scale local initiatives. Even these had little impact.

The Government of Mozambique estimated that in 1989 only 8,000 refugees repatriated within the institutional framework, as compared to as many as 200,000 unofficially. An important explanation for the difference is that the official programmes targeted 'safe areas' for return, mostly on the Indian Ocean coast. However the vast majority of refugees were from inland, and were unwilling to become internally displaced in Mozambique. In general repatriations before the Peace Accord had the following three characteristics: the majority of movements were unofficial, and organised according to refugee initiatives; in many cases return movements were not permanent and there was a flux of flight and return often according to the seasonal prerogatives of farming, and the scale of repatriation movements varied between areas and over time.

The Government of Mozambique estimated that as of the end of December 1989, 40,117 refugees had returned to the Province of Niassa, 33,440 of these under UNHCR assistance. Such precise figures are dubious, as is the suggestion that the majority of returnees repatriated under official assistance. Certainly between 1989 and the Peace Accord, there had been no official repatriation from any of the four settlements involved in this study, although there was a considerable amount of unofficial return. This is to

be expected as after 1991 RENAMO officially abandoned Niassa as a fighting front, and skirmishes became localised, low intensity and low frequency occurrences.

Since the Peace Accord and Ceasefire, it is estimated that perhaps 30% of the refugees, roughly 300,000 people, have repatriated from Malawi, although the volume of repatriation has varied enormously between areas in Malawi (Bonga and Wilson, 1993). Of this total, OXFAM has estimated that over 50,000 refugees have repatriated to the Provinces of Tete and Niassa.

5.6. Conclusion

In this section, an historical background of the refugee populations from which my sample was drawn has been presented. Through the themes of pre-flight Mozambique, flight from Mozambique, settlement in Malawi and repatriation to date, attention has focused on Mozambique and the experience of Mozambican refugees in general to the Province of Niassa and its refugees. In the following chapter attention is turned to the characteristics and experiences of the respondents in my sample, and their sources of information.

Chapter 6 The Respondents and their Information Networks

6.1. Introduction

The last chapter provided an historical context to the sample population in this study, who were settled in the Districts of Mangochi and Nkhata Bay, and mostly originated from the Province of Niassa. In this chapter attention is focused still further upon the respondents drawn from those populations for this study.

First, a portrait of the sample population is provided. The portrait is concerned mainly with the demographic structure of the respondents and their families. Much of the information is tabulated, and not discussed in great detail. Besides providing a background profile, the section is intended to stress that, despite certain similarities between the respondents in terms of the historical context of flight and settlement as described in the preceding chapter, individual circumstances, and the way people reacted to and coped with flight and exile, were very different. This is important because it is via their subjective experiences that refugees' repatriation information systems are mediated. This notion of a differentiation between refugees is an important theme in this chapter.

Second, the chapter turns to the nature of the respondents' information networks. By definition, the '*model of a repatriation information system*' was spatially unspecific, meaning that the location of transmitters or receivers was not specified beyond the country of origin and country of asylum respectively. The second section of this chapter elaborates the geography of my respondents' information networks, focusing upon their areas of origin and intended destination areas, the degree to which the two coincided, and the degree to which either coincided with the location of information transmitters. In the third section, the way in which information was received by the respondents is described and discussed. This section confirms the basic premise of the model, which was that information is conveyed between transmitters at home and receivers in exile via some agency, be it personal or institutional agents, or by means of personal visits.

6.2. A portrait of the sample population

6.2.1. First language

The respondents' first language provided an indication of their 'tribal' identity, and, by extension in this case but not necessarily others, of their religion. Every respondent in the Mangochi District spoke Yao as a first language, while all but two in Nkhata Bay spoke Nyanja as a first language. Yao and Nyanja are both tribal groupings, and whilst the Niassan Yao are predominantly Muslim, the Niassan Nyanja are generally Anglican (converted under the influence of the Messumba mission since 1899). However, it is generally not useful to categorise the respondents according to such tribal, religious or linguistic identities, as different people expressed varying degrees of affiliation to the various identities. Nevertheless, two points are worth making in terms of understanding repatriation. First, the Niassan Yao are generally patrilineal whilst the Niassan Nyanja are matrilineal. Where refugees married in exile, this distinction had implications for the destination to which they intended to return. Second, while the refugees in Mangochi shared a common first language with the majority of the local Malawian population, those in Nkhata Bay did not, as the Malawian population there are also Yao and not Nyanja speakers. The sharing of some type of identity with the local population can have important implications for the integration of refugees into their host communities, and their eventual propensity to repatriate.

6.2.2. Age

Table 6.1. Distribution of respondents by age group

Age	Chiumbangame		Kalanje		Mgolosera		Jappie		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
<20	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
21-30	8	16	9	36	4	16	4	16	25	20
31-40	22	44	8	32	3	12	6	24	39	31.2
41-50	10	20	4	16	5	20	4	16	23	18.4
51-60	5	10	3	12	6	24	5	20	19	15.2
>60	5	10	1	4	7	28	6	24	19	15.2
Total	50	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	125	100

As indicated in Table 6.1. the ages of heads of household were distributed fairly evenly over all the age groups except the under-20 category. This age distribution is in contrast

to the dominant view that African refugee populations have a youthful age composition, and that heads of household are also normally young¹. It is argued that older members of the community are left behind during flight due to physical unfitness, or may be less willing to uproot themselves even when a situation is threatening (Bulcha, 1989). However, local variations in who fled Mozambique and when, as discussed in the preceding chapter, were accounted for by a complexity of factors, not just age. The age distribution found in my study principally reflects the fact that most respondents lived close to the border in Mozambique and thus did not have to travel far to reach exile, thus the lack of flight sorted by age.

6.2.3. Gender

Table 6.2. Distribution of respondents by gender

Gender	Chiumbangame		Kalanje		Mgolosera		Jappie		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Male	44	88	22	88	20	80	16	64	102	81.6
Female	6	12	3	12	5	20	9	36	23	18.4
Total	50	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	125	100

Another common assumption is that sex ratios are highly disproportionate in most African refugee populations (Kibreab, 1991). It is argued that there is in general an absence of adult men, because it is they who, on the whole, are conscripted, imprisoned, killed, or stay behind to tend economic assets. In Chapter 4 I explained that my sample was biased away from female heads of households, therefore Table 6.2. cannot be taken to represent a random sample of heads of household by gender. Nevertheless my general observations during fieldwork were that there were approximately equal numbers of adult men and women in each camp. Niassa Province was never used by either combatant as a recruiting ground (no respondents from Niassa were soldiers), and as entire villages often relocated *en masse*, it would seem that the sex ratios in the camps broadly paralleled the sex ratios in Niassa before flight.

¹ Several authors have stated this finding, and it has recently been repeated in Report ECA/POP/TP/91/6[2.3(ii)]: Guidelines on the Methods of Evaluating the Socio-Economic and Demographic Consequences of Refugees in African Countries, by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, November 1991

6.2.4. Marital status

Despite the male bias during the head of household survey, 18%² of the respondent households were headed by females. As Table 6.3. indicates, 13% of the respondents had been widowed, and although the categories in the Table address both male and female heads of household, fourteen of the sixteen widowed respondents were female. Twelve of the sixteen lost their spouses during attacks, two spouses had died in exile, and two had died long ago. Only 4% of respondents were unmarried, and this is unsurprising given that all respondents were over-20, and marriage usually occurs in the teens according to both Yao and Nyanja traditions. Three respondents in total, all in the Mangochi District, lived in polygamous relationships.

Table 6.3. Distribution of respondents by marital status

Marital Status	Chiumbangame		Kalanje		Mgolosera		Jappie		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Unmarried	0	0	0	0	3	12	2	8	5	4
Married	40	80	20	80	19	76	15	60	94	75.2
Separated/ Divorced	1	2	0	0	1	4	2	8	4	3.2
Widowed	6	12	3	12	2	8	5	20	16	12.8
Spouse Missing	3	6	2	8	0	0	1	4	6	4.8
Total	50	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	125	100

6.2.5. Household type

Table 6.4. (overpage) gives some indication of the degree of family disintegration which had occurred during and in some cases after flight. 21% of households consisted of single parent families, single people or unrelated adults. While nuclear families constituted 60% of the sample, in eight of the 75 cases the male head of household was absent, working on Malawian estates or in Blantyre or Lilongwe.

In contrast to the society of origin, 19% of extended families seems low. It is particularly striking that no respondent in Kalanje lived in an extended family. The disparity can be partly accounted for by the different definitions of household

² In the text in this discussion, all percentages are rounded up or down to the nearest whole integer.

Table 6.4. Distribution of respondents by household type

Household Type	Chiumbangame		Kalanje		Mgolosera		Jappie		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Single/ Group of Individuals	1	2	2	8	2	8	5	20	10	8
Nuclear	32	64	20	80	12	48	11	44	75	60
Extended *	10	20	0	0	9	36	5	20	24	19.2
One Parent & Child/ren	7	14	3	12	2	8	4	16	16	12.8
Total	50	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	125	100

* Families with members from 3 generations

used in the home society and under the assistance regime in Malawi. While a married couple in Niassa may live with their children in their own separate home, this home will usually be in a closed compound with the wife's parents in the case of the matrilineal Yao, and the husband's in the case of the patrilineal Nyanja. In the refugee settlement this structure of a family compound was often replicated, but for the purpose of registration and distribution, and in this study, each separate house was considered a household.

6.2.6. Children

Table 6.5. Distribution of sample households by number of children

No.of Children	Chiumbangame		Kalanje		Mgolosera		Jappie		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
None	1	2	9	36	3	12	5	20	18	14.4
1-2	12	24	12	48	6	24	6	24	36	28.8
3-4	20	40	4	16	5	20	5	20	34	27.2
5+	17	34	0	0	11	44	9	36	37	29.6
Total	50	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	125	100

Upon visiting any one of the four settlements in which I worked, one was always struck by the large number of children. Although there were schools in each settlement, headmasters reported very high rates of truancy. Table 6.5. demonstrates that in respect of the number of small children present, my sample did exemplify the assumption that refugee communities in Africa are dominated numerically by children. 30% of respondents had five or more children. This fact is not a departure from what would be

expected in home society. Certainly in Niassa Province, where the population consists predominantly of peasant farmers, where few children are educated, and where there is a high rate of infant mortality, a large number of children represents a sensible economic strategy. Of the 107 households with children, 42 had had children in exile. The rate of infant survival seemed to be higher in exile than in Mozambique.

6.2.7. Residential background

Table 6.6a Distribution of respondents by residential background in Mangochi District only

Residential Background*	Chiumbangame		Kalanje		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Only Rural	39	78	22	88	61	81.3
Rural & Urban	11	22	2	8	13	17.3
Only Urban	0	0	1	4	1	1.3
Total	50	100	25	100	75	100

* residence defined as presence for >6 months

Table 6.6b Distribution of respondents by residential background in Nkhata Bay District only

Residential Background*	Mgolosera		Jappie		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Only Rural	10	40	17	68	27	54
Rural & Urban	15	60	7	28	22	44
Only Urban	0	0	1	4	1	2
Total	25	100	25	100	50	100

* residence defined as presence for >6 months

81% of respondents in Mangochi District had only ever lived in rural areas (Table 6.6a). Of the 17% who had lived in both rural and urban areas, most had been migrant labourers in Malawi or Zimbabwe. A much higher proportion - 44% - of respondents in Nkhata Bay District had experienced both rural and urban backgrounds (Table 6.6b). Again the urban experiences were predominantly outside Mozambique, as labourers or refugees up to 1976 in Tanzania.

6.2.8. Occupational profiles: comparisons between the past and present

As is depicted in Tables 6.7a and b (overpage), the categories of respondents' present jobs broadly matched their previous occupational background.

Table 6.7a Occupational Status of Respondents in Mangochi District before and after Flight (%)

Occupation	Chiumbangame		Kalanje	
	previous	present	previous	present
Peasant Farming	60	6	56	4
Estate Labourer	4	0	8	16
Petty Trade: carpenter, tailor, blacksmith etc.	10	24	4	8
Semi- Professional: clerical jobs, teaching etc.	2	0	0	0
Student	2	4	8	0
Construction & Factory Work	2	2	4	0
Domestic Work	2	0	8	0
Military	0	0	0	0
Food Seller	2	0	0	4
Housewife	16	12	12	12
Unemployed	0	26	0	56
Total	100	100	100	100

Table 6.7b Occupational Status of Respondents in Nkhata Bay District before and after Flight (%)

Occupation	Mgolosera		Jappie	
	previous	present	previous	present
Peasant Farming	52	20	72	24
Estate Labourer	0	4	0	0
Petty Trade: carpenter, tailor, blacksmith etc.	20	12	8	20
Semi- Professional: clerical jobs, teaching etc.	4	4	4	8
Student	4	0	4	0
Construction & Factory Work	0	0	0	0
Domestic Work	4	0	0	0
Guard	0	0	0	0
Military	0	4	0	0
Food Seller	0	0	4	0
Housewife	16	12	8	16
Unemployed	0	32	0	16
Total	100	100	100	100

The tables present a condensed picture of the occupational structure, which requires elaboration. All but five respondents had tended plots of land in Niassa, and in that case the vast majority could be described as peasant farmers. However, between 30% and 50% of respondents in each camp had additional occupations at home. In some cases these were seasonal, practised between May, when maize is picked, and October, when it is sown again; in some cases respondents were freed from agriculture because kin members took their responsibilities, and in some cases these were secondary occupations used as a survival strategy during shortages. The occupation of 'Housewife' should not be underestimated. A housewife's day both at home and in exile started as early as 4 a.m. when firewood and water were collected. The day was spent cooking, tending the garden farm and caring for children, and often did not end until 10 p.m.

The most striking comparisons are the decrease in the number of peasant farmers, and the increase in the number of unemployed. In Nkhata Bay, the total number of refugees was much lower than in Mangochi, and the pressures on land less. Consequently more refugees had their own plots and fewer were unemployed there.

In the other categories, the trend displayed is a shift from formal occupation to casual wage employment. This in general engendered a shift from relative material well-being to poverty. The low incomes generated were normally used to complement rations and sustain a basic life. In a few cases, notably that of an albino shopkeeper in Mgolosera, refugees professed a higher level of material well-being than had been enjoyed at home. This observation must be placed in context: material well-being for the vast majority in Niassa had always been at a low level.

Occupation is also an indicator of status, and this became apparent from the attitudes of the majority towards those refugees who were successful in business, or had been chosen for training by or to assist the NGO's. Five respondents fell into this latter category.

The type of jobs that refugees are at liberty to perform, and the degree to which they are successful, can serve as an indicator of their absorption into both the economic and social stream of the host society. It is also a fundamental condition which would be compared to the prospective condition at home before repatriation. In general I found a surprisingly

high degree of economic activity amongst the refugees. In Mangochi both economic and social absorption was eased by the tribal similarities of the refugees and hosts. In Nkhata Bay there was less social interaction, and economic activity was engendered more by NGO policies than by interaction with the local population. Nevertheless, with the exception of the Mgolosera shopkeeper, no respondent felt that in the long term return to Mozambique would not permit at least equal material well-being and status as had been achieved in exile. Most respondents had such economic expectations about return.

6.2.9. Patterns of Flight

For the purposes of Tables 6.8a and b I have adopted Kunz's (1973) differentiation between acute and anticipatory flight. The former occurs when there has been first-hand experience of conflict, the latter when conflict is expected and escaped in advance. In every case, flight to the Mangochi District was in response to or in the path of the RENAMO attack on Mandimba town and the surrounding villages on 13 July 1987. Similarly flight to Nkhata Bay was related to the 21 September 1989 attack on Cobue town and surrounds.

Table 6.8a Distribution of respondents in Mangochi District by reason for flight

Reason for Flight	Chiumbangame		Kalanje		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Acute	27	54	21	84	48	64
Anticipatory	20	40	3	12	23	30.6
Other	3	6	1	4	4	5.3
Total	50	100	25	100	75	100

Table 6.8b Distribution of respondents in Nkhata Bay District by reason for flight

Reason for Flight	Mgolosera		Jappie		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Acute	13	52	11	44	24	48
Anticipatory	12	48	12	48	24	48
Other	0	0	2	8	2	5
Total	25	100	25	100	50	100

Kunz's categorisation, however, does not allow a proper elaboration of the patterns of flight. Respondents in both Districts, despite usually fleeing the same incident, in fact

arrived in four broad chronological stages with the last arriving about a year after the attack³. The first arrivals were normally those who fled in anticipation; the second those who fled in response to the attacks; the third were either anticipatory of acute refugees who had faced intervening obstacles during flight (Kunz, 1981), and the fourth people who did not flee the attacks but came later, normally in response to hardship in order to join kin already in exile. Often different members of the same household had arrived at different times. As new arrivals were predicted in the '*model of a repatriation information system*' to be important agents of information from home areas, what these broad stages of arrival meant were that over the first year after the flight-precipitating attacks, new arrivals were entering the refugee settlements bringing information. What it also meant is that after about a year, information sources for a lot of people dried up. The patterns of flight therefore have very important implications for the evolution of information networks, as is discussed in detail in Chapter 8.

6.3. The geography of repatriation information networks

Individual repatriation information networks have a specific geography. The four elements of this geography are the location of the receiver; the location of the transmitter; the area of origin of the receiver, and the intended destination of the receiver. The proximity of both the transmitter, but more especially the receiver to the border, might be expected to be crucial in the initiation and maintenance of information networks. However, there may be a discordance within this geography. First, as modelled by Alvarez (1967) and explained in Chapter 3, it cannot be assumed that the potential repatriate necessarily wishes to return to his or her area of origin. Second, the transmitter may not be located in, or may not have access to, the prospective destination.

In assessing the age structure of heads of household as depicted in Table 6.1., it was observed that flight had generally not been age-selective, and supposed that this fact spoke to the proximity of the respondents' areas of origin. All of my respondents fled from Niassa, and mostly from Districts within that Province which bordered Malawi or the Lake. As the refugee settlements in both Mangochi and Nkhata Bay were on the

³ In none of the camps did registration records show the date of arrival of the refugees. Often the respondents themselves could not give even the year of their arrival either. Comments concerning dates of arrival are therefore based on general trends which I constructed from the limited information available, as opposed to accurate data.

border or lakeside respectively, the respondents were located very close to their areas of origin. Most respondents in Mangochi stated that their areas of origin were no more than a days walk away, while most respondents in Nkhata Bay had lived on the opposite shores of the Lake.

In fact the large majority of respondents were also born in Niassa Province. Table 6.9 shows the distribution of Mangochi respondents born in Niassa Province by district of birth, while Figure 6.1 is a District map of Niassa. Of the five respondents in Chiungame not born in Niassa Province, two were born in Nampula Province, one was born in Zimbabwe and one in Tanzania. All but nine of the respondents in Nkhata Bay were born in Niassa, and all of them in the District of Lago (this information is thus not tabulated). One respondent in Mgolesera was born in Zimbabwe. Of eight respondents in Jappie not included, five were relocatees (discussed in Appendix II) born in Tete Province, one was born in Manica Province, one was born in Zambia and one in Tanzania.

Table 6.9. Distribution of respondents in Mangochi District by district of birth: for the Province of Niassa only

District of Birth	Chiungame		Kalanje		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Mandimba	35	70	8	32	43	61.4
Maua	2	4	1	4	3	4.3
Majune	7	14	0	0	7	10
Cuamba	1	2	0	0	1	1.4
N'Gauma	0	0	10	40	10	14.3
Lichinga	0	0	6	24	6	8.6
Total	45	90	25	100	70	100

However, it cannot be assumed that the respondents necessarily wished to return to their places of birth⁴. First, obviously in the case of those born outside Mozambique, but also

⁴ It should be said that respondents in Mangochi generally did not speak of *specific* locations in describing either their birth places, areas of origin or prospective destinations. While individual villages in Niassa did have names, reference was normally made to an area in which there were several villages. The areas were usually named after local features. Thus many respondents told me they were born in Liwenga, but Liwenga is actually a mountain around which there were eight villages. Similarly Pantimo was not a village, but a lemon tree around which seven villages were located. Thus if a respondent was born in Malulu (a river), and was planning to return to Malulu, it did not necessarily mean that he or she would return to

Figure 6.1 A District Map of the Province of Niassa, Mozambique



in other cases, many respondents had not fled from their places of birth. Tables 6.10a and b show that, by camp, between 20% and 54% of respondents had previous experience of internal migration. What this means is that upon flight at least a proportion of respondents were not living in their places of birth, and even of those who were, a proportion had also lived in other places. There were also a proportion of the respondents with experience of international migration who had returned to live in places other than their birth places.

Table 6.10a Distribution of respondents in Mangochi District by previous experience of migration

Previous Experience of Migration*	Chiumbangame		Kalanje		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Internal	27	54	10	40	37	49.3
International	6	12	2	8	8	10.6
None	17	34	13	52	30	40
Total	50	100	25	100	75	100

* migration defined as being in another location for >6 months

Table 6.10b Distribution of respondents in Nkhata Bay District by previous experience of migration

Previous Experience of Migration*	Mgolosera		Jappié		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Internal	5	20	6	24	11	22
International	18	72	15	60	33	66
None	2	8	4	16	6	12
Total	25	100	25	100	50	100

* migration defined as being in another location for >6 months

Previous experience of migration is therefore one way in which the choice of a prospective destination which is not the area of origin might be mediated. Some respondents planned to take the opportunity to return to their places of birth, others to go to places where they had lived previously. Another means of mediation resulted from the step-wise manner in which many respondents fled, bringing them into contact as it did with other areas. As Tables 6.11a and b show, some 34% of respondents spent over

the same village, but to the same area. (White, 1989, found the same practice among Yao speakers in Malawi: Magomero was a hillock around which several villages with individual names were built). In contrast, the Nyanja speakers in Nkhata Bay did refer to specific villages.

two months in places other than their areas of origin before arriving in the refugee settlements.

Table 6.11a Distribution of respondents in Mangochi District by pattern of flight

Patterns of Flight*	Chiumbangame		Kalanje		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Direct	43	86	9	36	52	69.3
Via Mozambique	6	12	0	0	6	8
Via Malawi	1	2	15	60	16	21.3
Via Both	0	0	1	4	1	1.3
Total	50	100	25	100	75	100

* all intervening stops for >2 months counted

Table 6.11b Distribution of respondents in Nkhata Bay District by pattern of flight

Patterns of Flight*	Mgolosera		Jappie		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Direct	19	76	11	44	30	60
Via Mozambique	3	12	2	8	5	10
Via Malawi	2	8	12	48	14	28
Via Both	1	4	0	0	1	2
Total	25	100	25	100	50	100

* all intervening stops for >2 months counted

Another important mediating effect upon the choice of destination was marriage in exile. Several of my respondents had married or were planning to marry people from other areas in Mozambique⁵. The choice of new destination in such cases was determined by whether patrilineality or matrilineality was practised, and broadly differed between Mangochi and Nkhata Bay respectively.

Particularly when they have predominantly rural backgrounds, habitation in high density effectively semi-urban environments in exile can have the effect of 'urbanizing' a refugee population (Zetter, 1988), making urban destinations popular. However this process had generally not occurred amongst my sample population. Of the 13 respondents in

⁵ Although not the case for any of my respondents, I was informed in Chiumbangame that 73 refugees had married Malawians, of whom 51 had already left the refugee settlements to live in local villages, some of the remaining planned to do so at a later date, and some planned to take their spouses home to Mozambique.

Mangochi who intended to return to a different destination (see Tables 6.12a and b), only one planned to go to either Maputo or Beira, and one planned to live in the town of Mandimba. None of the 10 respondents in the same category in Nkhata Bay were considering an urban destination.

Table 6.12a Intended destinations of those respondents in Mangochi District who intended to return to Mozambique

Intended Destination	Chiumbangame		Kalanje		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Same as Before	44	88	16	64	60	80
Different	6	12	7	28	13	17.3
Don't Know	0	0	2	8	2	2.6
Total	50	100	25	100	75	100

Table 6.12b Intended destinations of those respondents in Nkhata Bay District who intended to return to Mozambique*

Intended Destination	Mgolosera		Jappie		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
Same as Before	18	85.7	17	77.3	35	81.4
Different	2	9.5	1	4.5	3	7.0
Don't Know	1	4.8	4	18.2	5	11.6
Total	21	100	22	100	43	100

* While all the respondents in Mangochi planned to return to Mozambique eventually, seven in Nkhata Bay did not. Of these, three planned to live in Malawi, one in Zimbabwe, one in Zambia and two were undecided.

The choice of prospective destinations other than the area of origin was therefore mediated by a number of factors, including previous experience of migration, patterns of flight, marriage in exile and to a lesser extent 'urbanization' in exile. It is very important that 7% of respondents in Nkhata Bay, and more strikingly 17% in Mangochi planned to return to areas other than those from which they had fled. Such movements will have important implications for plans being made in Mozambique for return and re-integration.

The geography of repatriation information networks is further complicated by the fact that transmitters of information upon which the decision whether to repatriate is based, may not be in the area of destination. Discordance can arise either because the transmitter has moved internally, or because the potential repatriate has chosen a destination other

than the area of origin where kin still remain, or both. Tables 6.13a and b show the distribution of respondents' kin for those who had kin in Mozambique. They also show whether the kin had never come to Malawi or had since repatriated.

Table 6.13a Distribution of kin in Mozambique of respondents by camp in Mangochi District

Distribution of Kin	Chiumbangame		Kalanje		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
<u>Location</u>						
Destination in Mozambique	8	25	6	42.9	14	30.4
Elsewhere in Mozambique	20	62.5	8	57.1	28	60.9
Unknown in Mozambique	4	12.5	0	0	4	8.7
Total	32	100	14	100	46	100
<u>Reason</u>						
Repatriation	19	59.4	3	21.4	22	47.8
Never Came	13	40.6	11	78.6	24	52.2
Total	32	100	14	100	46	100

Table 6.13b Distribution of kin in Mozambique of respondents by camp in Nkhata Bay District

Distribution of Kin	Mgolosera		Jappie		Total	
	n	%	n	%	n	%
<u>Location</u>						
Destination in Mozambique	5	31.25	13	86.6	18	58.1
Elsewhere in Mozambique	11	68.75	2	13.3	13	41.9
Unknown in Mozambique	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	16	100	15	100	31	100
<u>Reason</u>						
Repatriation	2	12.5	0	0	2	6.5
Never Came	14	87.5	15	100	29	93.5
Total	16	100	15	100	31	100

It is important to note that in each settlement, over 50% of respondents had kin living in Mozambique. In Mangochi 30% of respondents, and in Nkhata Bay 58% had kin

abiding in the locality to which the respondent planned to return. As will be discussed below, kin were the primary transmitters of information. There was therefore a very important distinction between those with and without information transmitters in Mozambique, and also between those with transmitters in the intended destination area and those with kin in other areas. This distinction will be shown in Chapter 8 to have evolved over time in exile, and is crucial in understanding why repatriation occurs for different people at different times. The patterns of flight, both of the respondents and transmitters, will be shown to underpin the evolution of repatriation information networks. Tables 6.13a and b illustrate the fact that a significant proportion of respondents had kin who lived with them previously but never fled Mozambique. They also illustrate the notion of a refugee flux. Although little repatriation from these districts in Malawi was official, return movements nevertheless still occurred. This was particularly so in Mangochi District, where 47% of respondents had kin who fled to Malawi and had since repatriated (the process of return was logistically harder from Nkhata Bay, as returnees had to cross Lake Malawi, and this may account for the low degree of repatriation from this area).

Despite the complexity of the geography of repatriation information networks, they had still been initiated and maintained by many respondents. In the next section, the process of information receipt is discussed, and it is shown how the distances between transmitters and receivers were bridged.

6.4. The receipt of information

It may be worth briefly recapping on the structure of the '*model of the repatriation information system*', as posited in Chapter 3. The two correspondents in the system are the transmitter of information in the country of origin and the receiver in the country of exile. Information is communicated between the two by three methods: the transmitter can visit the receiver, the receiver can visit the transmitter, or an agent can carry the information between the two. Information itself is also considered an element in the system: it has its own characteristics of quantity, i.e. frequency and speed, and quality, i.e. relevance and accuracy. On a *prima facie* basis it is the flows of information which link the transmitter, agent and receiver in the system. However, there can be other relationships between the three. The nature of these relationships can effect how

information is evaluated by the receiver; for example, he or she may be more trusting of information which has come from a transmitter who is a relative, and if it has been communicated via an agent who is known. There are also relationships between the elements of the system and the external environment. Tables 6.14 to 6.19 (following pages) summarise the quantitative elements of the information system. The following discussion refers to them.

6.4.1. Information receivers

As my interviews were with household heads, it follows that the receivers identified in my study were these heads. This belies the actual situation. In fact a chain of communication was often established amongst kin in exile, whereby one person received information, and circulated it amongst others. The position of my respondents in this circulation chain varied considerably.

Clearly sometimes other household members received information from their own sources (for instance where a spouse's relatives lived in different locations). As a result, the evaluation of information can vary between household members such that a collective decision may not be reached. This aspect is discussed in the next chapter.

6.4.2. Information transmitters

In Chapter 3 it was supposed that social networks which existed before flight may play an important role in repatriation information systems. Social networks as they existed in Niassa seem to have operated at two levels, namely the kinship level and the village level. The kinship network did not operate within the confines of the village: often kin lived in different localities. The distribution of kin was normally determined by marriage (and the pattern varied between matrilineal and patrilineal societies) and labour migration. The village network was organised by and centred upon the Village Chief. Both networks had been to an extent maintained or re-established, and delineated the information system. In the majority of cases, and for all means of information communication, the transmitter was identified as a kin member. In a few, the transmitter was identified as a Village Chief or Sub-Chief who had remained in Mozambique. Social responsibilities seemed to have been divided at these two levels and there was no notion of a social neighbourhood which perhaps accounted for why a friend or neighbour was never

Table 6.14 Details of Return Visits by Respondents by Camp

Details	Chiumbangame	Kalanje	Mgolosera	Jappie
<u>Frequency</u>				
0	44	24	20	23
1-5	6	1	5	1
5+	0	0	0	1
<u>Timing</u>				
<6 months ago	3	0	1	1
>6 months ago	3	1	4	1
<u>Reason</u>				
Seek Kin	1	0	0	0
Visit kin	4	1	1	1
Economic	0	0	2	1
Attend Funeral	1	0	2	0
<u>Place Visited</u>				
Destination	2	0	4	0
Other	4	1	0	2

Table 6.15 Details of Visits by Respondents' Kin by Camp

Details	Chiumbangame	Kalanje	Mgolosera	Jappie
<u>Frequency</u>				
0	33	16	16	20
1-5	15	8	7	5
5+	2	1	2	0
<u>Timing</u>				
<6 months ago	14	7	3	2
>6 months ago	3	2	6	3
<u>Reason</u>				
Visit kin	16	9	5	4
Economic	0	0	4	1
Attend Funeral	1	0	0	0
<u>Visiting From</u>				
Destination	8	5	4	3
Other	9	4	5	2

Table 6.16 Details of Letters Received by Respondents by Camp

Details	Chiumbangame	Kalarje	Mgolosera	Jappie
<u>Frequency</u>				
0	45	20	17	13
1-5	4	5	5	7
5+	1	0	3	5
<u>Timing</u>				
<6 months ago	3	5	7	8
>6 months ago	2	0	1	4
<u>Sent From</u>				
Destination	2	1	1	4
Other	3	4	7	8
<u>Agent</u>				
Visitor from Mozambique	3	1	3	8
Refugee Trader	1	0	0	3
Mozambican Trader	1	1	4	0
Red Cross	0	1	1	0
G.P.O.	0	2	0	1

Table 6.17 Details of Letters Sent by Respondents by Camp

Details	Chiumbangame	Kalanje	Mgolosera	Jappie
<u>Frequency</u>				
0	47	22	16	16
1-5	3	3	6	6
5+	0	0	3	3
<u>Timing</u>				
<6 months ago	3	3	8	5
>6 months ago	0	0	1	4
<u>Sent To</u>				
Destination	1	1	0	2
Other	2	2	9	7
<u>Agent</u>				
Visitor from Mozambique	0	0	1	5
Refugee Trader	1	0	2	4
Mozambican Trader	1	0	4	0
Red Cross	1	3	2	0
G.P.O.	0	0	0	0

Table 6.18 Details of Messages Received by Respondents by Camp

Details	Chiumbangame	Kalanje	Mgolosera	Jappie
<u>Frequency</u>				
0	41	17	8	20
1-5	3	3	11	3
5+	6	4	6	2
<u>Timing</u>				
<6 months ago	6	7	12	5
>6 months ago	3	0	5	0
<u>Received From</u>				
Destination	5	4	4	5
Other	4	3	13	0
<u>Agent</u>				
Visitor from Mozambique	6	6	10	5
Refugee Trader	2	1	5	0
Mozambican Trader	0	0	2	0
Radio Mozambique	1	0	0	0

Table 6.19 Details of Messages Sent by Respondents by Camp

	Chiumbangame	Kalanje	Mgolosera	Jappie
<u>Frequency</u>				
0	42	20	18	22
1-5	2	3	5	2
5+	6	2	2	1
<u>Timing</u>				
<6 months ago	6	5	7	3
>6 months ago	2	0	0	0
<u>Sent To</u>				
Destination	4	3	3	3
Other	4	2	4	0
<u>Agent</u>				
Visitor from Mozambique	5	3	5	3
Refugee Trader	3	2	2	0
Mozambican Trader	0	0	0	0
Radio Mozambique	0	0	0	0

identified as the transmitter.

The series of tables summarise the location of the transmitter at the time of information transmission. In the case of visits (Tables 6.14 and 6.15) there was a reasonably even spread between transmitters located in the future place of destination and those located in other areas in Mozambique. In the cases of communication by letters and messages (Tables 6.16 and 6.17), the majority of transmitters were located in areas other than the intended destination. The latter form of communication was often adopted when visits were not feasible, usually because the transmitter was living away from the border, and the fact that most of these transmitters were not located in destination areas is an indication that many respondents planned to return to their areas of origin which were located close to the border.

The notions that different levels of social networks and the spatial distribution of transmitters are both important variables have been introduced. A third variable is that of time. In some cases transmitters had changed location over time, and thus changed the spatial delineation of the information system. Alternatively, via mechanisms such as marriage or divorce in exile, the number of transmitters available to a respondent had in cases significantly increased and decreased.

6.4.3. Visits

As Table 6.14 indicates, the number of respondents who had returned to Mozambique for a temporary visit varied between 12% in Chiumbangame, 4% in Kalanje, 20% in Mgolosera and 8% in Jappie. These figures are surprising. Access to Mozambique was much easier from the Mangochi settlements, located some two kilometres from the border, than from the Nkhata Bay settlements, located some seven hours travelling time across Lake Malawi. Time was not the only factor involved. Whereas it was feasible for most to walk to the border in Mangochi, crossing Lake Malawi was quite expensive: 4 kwacha on the steamer to Likoma Island, then 3 kwacha on a chartered fishing boat from the island to the Mozambican coast. A third factor was the logistics of the border crossing. While most women refugees in Mangochi collecting firewood in Mozambique simply crossed the unmanned borders, those respondents who returned for longer than five days all went via official border crossings, dealing first with Malawian customs

officials at Chiponde, then Mozambican customs officials at Mandimba. In Chiponde they were required to submit their registration cards for collection upon return, and in Mandimba they were required to register with the police. It would have been easier for refugees to avoid official border crossings, and it is often assumed that refugees avoid official control where possible (Wilson and Nunes, 1991); however in Mangochi the border areas were heavily mined, and this was the reason usually given to explain the official crossings. The lengthy logistics involved (refugees were often kept waiting for a day and night on both sides of the border), may explain the low frequency of return visits.

In all four camps, 50% or more of return visits occurred over six months before the interview date. This broadly corresponds with a change of attitude by the Governments of Malawi and Mozambique and UNHCR towards the subject of refugee mobility across the border. Throughout 1992 the camps of Chiumbangame and Kalanje were subject to armed attacks. This was a new departure. Sixteen incidents in all were chronicled upto the end of 1992 (Tanner, 1992). It is certain that one incident involved FRELIMO troops from Mandimba. The others, it is suspected, involved bandits from both Malawi and Mozambique, and in one case bandits from both countries working together. The Government of Malawi was keen to infer that the responsibility for the insecurity lay with bandits from Mozambique being informed by returning refugee sympathizers. While Mangochi was the only refugee-supporting area in Malawi which experienced such incidents, their occurrence there resulted in the development of an opinion amongst UNHCR officials that border areas hosting refugees in Malawi were unstable. One means of stabilisation was to clamp down on cross border movement.

It can be seen that in Mangochi the most common reason for return was to visit kin. In one case a young male respondent had returned repeatedly to search for his mother and two sisters who were kidnapped by forces which he identified as RENAMO during the journey to Malawi. In another case a respondent returned to attend the funeral of a relative. These examples underline the notion that the kinship social network had been or was being re-established. Unlike patterns of short-term returns observed in other areas in Malawi (Wilson and Nunes, 1991), respondents in Mangochi did not cross the border on a seasonal basis to tend assets in Mozambique. However, in Nkhata Bay the most

common reason for return was economic. In each case respondents returned to fish and then brought the fish back to Malawi for sale. The shallow waters off the Mozambican shore of Lake Malawi are far more fertile than the over-fished waters off Malawi.

Table 6.15 clearly indicates that it was easier to control the cross-border movement of the refugee population than the population in Mozambique. Despite institutional efforts, more respondents had been visited by kin, more frequently and more recently than is the case in the other direction. In all the camps, the dominant reason for visits was to visit kin, although again in Nkhata Bay a significant proportion came to sell fish in Malawi. Whereas the three respondents who returned for economic reasons did not make contact with kin, in the case of all visitors contact had been made.

6.4.4. Agents

Tables 6.16 and 6.17 show details of letters and messages sent to the respondents, Tables 6.18 and 6.19 show the same details for letters and messages sent by them.

The number of institutional agents involved was low. Only two respondents in total had received letters via the Malawi Red Cross Tracing Scheme. Six had however sent letters via this agent. This Tracing Scheme was established to pass written messages between refugees in Malawi and kin at home. Often the tracing agents accepted letters to kin who were of unknown location in Mozambique. Naturally this meant that the scheme had a low success rate, which explained the general perception amongst my respondents that the Tracing Scheme was inefficient. Once contact was made between kin, personal sources were perceived as more reliable. All the letters in my study which passed through the Tracing Scheme were from refugees or kin in Mozambique who did not know one another's respective locations. Clearly in two cases the refugee was located. However none of the six respondents who had sent letters had yet received replies.

Only three respondents in total had received letters via the Post Office. In each case the letters originated from kin in Mozambique, but were posted in Malawi by visitors from Mozambique. The Postmaster in Namwera (the town closest to both camps in Mangochi District) told me that about 30 letters per month in 1992 were received at the Post Office addressed to refugees in one of the three camps in the area. The Postmaster in Nkhata

Bay told me in September 1992 that only six letters for refugees had been received during the year. Envelopes and stamps were relatively expensive, and the Post Office in Malawi was perceived by Mozambicans (and Malawians) as inefficient; these factors would explain why no respondent had sent a letter via the Post Office.

One respondent, in Chiumbangame, had received a message from his parents during a Radio Mozambique (AIM) broadcast. The Provincial AIM office in Lichinga, Niassa, used to invite Mozambicans to write in with messages for relatives believed to be in Malawi, for broadcast on Saturday mornings. These broadcasts had ceased by the time of my arrival. Radios were owned by 24% of respondents. Ownership was not, however, an issue, as the radios were usually placed on the steps outside houses and turned to high volume. Neighbours would gather around the radio during news broadcasts, although the largest crowds were always drawn by football matches. It is clear that the broad outline of events in Mozambique were spread by word of mouth from the radio. The programmes normally heard were from AIM (Portuguese), the BBC World Service (Portuguese) and South Africa (Chewa). These programmes provided only rare reference to the districts of origin of the refugees. In the cases of all my respondents, and for the majority of cases which I saw, the radio sets had been brought from Mozambique. Their brand name was Xirico, and they were amongst the refugees' most prized possessions.

No respondent in my study had had access to Mozambican newspapers or newsmagazines such as *'Tempo'*. These publications were not available in Malawi. In any case there is a high level of illiteracy amongst the rural population of Niassa, although the professed level of literacy amongst my respondents was surprisingly high: 35 of 125 respondents, i.e. 28%. The only newspapers available in Malawi were in English, contained no reference to Mozambique, and were effectively means of propaganda.

The number of personal agents involved in the respondents' information networks was higher. It has been stated that one reason was that the refugees on the whole perceived institutional agents as inefficient; another is that with the exception of the defunct AIM broadcasts, no institutional agent carried messages as opposed to letters. While 24% of respondents had received letters, 31% had received messages, all but one carried by

personal agents and passed by word of mouth. The agents involved were visitors from Mozambique, traders from Mozambique, and refugee traders.

In most cases, visitors from Mozambique were friends or neighbours of the kin of respondents in Mozambique, who had been asked by those kin to pass on a message. Usually the visitor had their own kin in the same camp in Malawi, and passed the message on during a visit to the camp, although in some cases the visitor had come to Malawi for an entirely different purpose and came to the camp specifically to pass on the message. In all the camps, for both letters and messages sent in both directions, visitors were the most frequently used agents. Most respondents who received a letter or message from a visitor sent one back with the same agent. These were not, therefore, paid agents.

The use of Mozambican traders as agents was more common in Nkhata Bay than Mangochi. The only cross-border trade which occurred in the latter, with the exception of convoys carrying goods (mostly relief goods) between Lichinga and Blantyre, was in salt. There was (and still is) a tremendous shortage of salt in Mangochi District. This trade was controlled by large franchises, the largest owned by a Portuguese Mozambican living in Cuamba (Niassa), and thus there was little scope for individual traders to operate, thus little reason to cross the border from Mozambique to Malawi. In Nkhata Bay there had been a tradition of Mozambican fishermen crossing the Lake to sell fish. Since the majority of respondents in this District had been subsistence fishermen in Mozambique, mostly within the same locality, many traders had been used in the past to sell surplus fish, and were known to both the respondents and their kin.

Refugee traders were used as agents in both districts. In Nkhata Bay they were again fishermen, who crossed the Lake to fish the fertile waters off Mozambique then returned to sell the fish in the camps. Refugee traders in Mangochi operated according to a seasonal pattern. They sought employment on the local tobacco estates during the harvest seasons, then spent their incomes on goods available in Malawi but in short supply in Mozambique. They listed these as: sugar, shoes, plastic plates and cigarettes. In Mozambique the goods were sold, usually in the district market in Mandimba and occasionally in the provincial market in Lichinga, and goods in demand amongst both

refugees and the local Malawian population brought back. These included: clothes, plastic dinner sets, flasks and radios. The refugee traders with whom I spoke reported that they often took letters or messages from friends in the camps to kin in Mozambique. At the height of the trading season, which starts about a month after the end of the tobacco harvest, it was estimated that some 100 refugee traders from the three camps in Mangochi District crossed the border each week. One trader said that he had crossed the border the week before the interview, taken seven messages and returned with 18. In line with institutional efforts to restrict mobility across the border, these trade flows were declining in number and frequency by the end of 1992.

In the discussion of possible agents in Chapter 3, it was expected that personal agents might also include 'refugee warriors', abortive repatriates and refugees who crossed the border in order to collect firewood. However, the intensity of fighting was always relatively low in Niassa Province, and the point was made above that the majority of refugees from the Province were innocent civilians and not fleeing combatants. While refugee warriors operated from camps in the Mulanje District in south east Malawi (Wilson and Nunes, 1991), I did not come across any in my study areas. Neither were there any more than one or two reports of abortive repatriates. Again, this phenomenon usually occurs when refugees return to areas which then become the scene of conflict once more. Finally, although the majority of refugees in the Mangochi camps were forced by the utter depletion of trees in Malawi to cross into the heavily mined border areas of Mozambique for firewood, few ventured deeper than a few hundred yards in to Mozambique, and thus did not make contact with information transmitters.

I had also expected the Governments of both Malawi and Mozambique, opposition groups in both countries including RENAMO, and the UNHCR to be involved as institutional agents. However, with the exception of a visit by the Governor of Mandimba District to Chiumbangame in July 1989, none of these institutions were involved in passing on information about Mozambique to these refugees.

6.4.5. Characteristics of the information flows

The quantitative characteristics of information flows were identified in Chapter 3 as frequency and speed. The former determines the opportunities for receivers to update their information; the latter in part determines whether the information is out-of-date upon receipt.

The frequency of information transmission to the receiver clearly differed according to the means of transmission used. Messages were received more frequently and more recently than letters. This pattern underlines the fact that messages were easier to transmit than letters. It is not surprising that the speed of information transmission was also related to the means of transmission and the agent. In the case of both the Post Office and the Red Cross Tracing Scheme, a letter from Mangochi District to Niassa Province, some 15 kilometres away by road, was transported from the refugee settlements to Mangochi by truck, from Mangochi to Blantyre by bus, from Blantyre to Maputo by air, from Maputo to Lichinga by air, then from Lichinga to the destination by road. Exactly the same route applied in reverse. In contrast personal agents crossed the border overland. As they usually came from close to the border in Mozambique, the time between the transmission of information by the transmitter and its arrival with the Receiver was only a few days. The three respondents who returned to attend funerals (Table 6.15), for example, were all notified of the funeral arrangements by personal agents. However, the quality of the information flows means that the speed of transmission is not the only determinant of whether information received is out of date.

The qualitative characteristics of information were identified as relevance and accuracy. The predominant content of all information received was the condition of kin. The range of information within this broad category included: salutations and news about the health or location of kin members; news of social functions (marriages, funerals, circumcision ceremonies); requests for assistance, and requests for the respondent to come home. Often messages and letters included several of the above. There was little specific information on the local security situation. This is because, as explained above, conflict in Niassa Province had been of low frequency and low intensity since the two attacks on the District Centres of Mandimba and Cobue, and so few of the information transmitters had recently experienced any conflict. Furthermore it seems that few of the transmitters

had information about any conflicts which had occurred in the Province. As discussed in detail in Chapter 7, it was information about kin, not information about security, which was of most relevance to the respondents. It is probably fair to say that even before the Peace Accord the majority could have returned safely. The more important issue in their minds was social and especially economic re-integration, particularly in the long-term. As it is via kinship networks that traditional survival strategies can be resurrected and used to facilitate re-integration, information about kin was of paramount relevance.

In this context, accuracy was perhaps a less important issue than it might be. Were a potential repatriate seeking a secure zone within a region of conflict, then accurate, up-to-date information would be essential. Where the location and welfare of kin is of more relevance to his or her decision, accuracy and up-to-datedness of information become less important.

6.4.6. Concluding comments

Tables 6.14 to 6.19 do not present an aggregate measure of the information system. In total, 28% of respondents in Chiumbange, 40% in Kalanje, 64% in Mgolosera and 52% in Jappie had received information from kin in Mozambique. This represents a remarkably well developed information system. Referring back to Tables 6.14a and b, this means that only 19 of the 73 respondents who had kin in a known location in Mozambique had not had any contact with them.

In the majority of cases, at least two of the three means of information transmission identified (i.e. visits to Mozambique, visits from Mozambique and transmission of letters or messages via agents), was used by each respondent involved in the information system. This introduces the notion discussed in Chapter 8, that respondents cultivated contacts and that the information system matured over time.

It has also been seen that the majority of information was either received from a personal source, or that where it was from an institutional source it was usually written by the transmitter of information. This means that on the whole receivers believed the information which they received. The evaluation of the information was made easier by the fact that it contained news of kin, which information is perhaps less open to alteration

or exaggeration than news about security, for example. These more qualitative aspects of the information system are discussed in the following two chapters.

6.5. Conclusion

In the first section of this chapter, a portrait of my respondents was provided. The aim of this portrait was to demonstrate that even though the respondents may have shared certain similarities such as the historical context to flight and the circumstances of their settlement in Malawi, as portrayed in Chapter 5, they had coped with their circumstances in different ways, for example as portrayed by patterns of flight and return, or marriage in exile. This is important for it is via individual characteristics, experiences and aspirations that the repatriation information system is mediated.

The second and third sections provided an analysis of the geography of the respondents' repatriation information networks, and of information receipt. Again, the theme of differentiation between different refugees, on the basis of their information networks, was shown to be important. A number of other interesting notions were raised by the analysis, but not fully elaborated. This demonstrates a general weakness of quantitative analysis: that it can often not reveal the processes which underlie patterns identified.

In the following chapters, a more intensive, qualitative analysis is adopted in order to explore some of these processes. In the next chapter, the process of information evaluation by respondents is explored. In Chapter 8, the dynamics of the repatriation information system are analysed in order to understand how the system changes over time; which dynamic reveals why different people decide to repatriate at different times.

Chapter 7 The Evaluation and Use of Information

7.1. Introduction

In the last chapter the respondents' information transmitters and agents were described, and the theme of differentiation between refugees on the basis of information receipt introduced. It is now necessary to discuss how the respondents evaluated and used their received information.

This chapter can be considered to be in two parts. In the first part, an evaluation framework which allows for the incorporation of both objective and subjective elements of the individual evaluation process is designed and applied. The framework provides a means for analysis of my interviews, to understand how individual respondents evaluated information. It is shown that the key characteristics of information in this evaluation process were its perceived reliability, and its content.

In the second part, the analysis turns to the way in which the individual evaluation of information was translated into the use of that information in decision-making. This translation is shown to be mediated by two factors. First, different refugees had different levels of return motivation. Second, decision-making often did not occur at the individual level, which meant that different and sometimes competing individual evaluations were often pooled in a collective decision-making process.

The overriding theme in this chapter is complexity. The evaluation process, motivations and the extent to which the decision-making process was a joint effort, are shown to vary greatly between respondents. While certain trends are identified, these do not detract from the overwhelming picture of complexity. Nevertheless, at the same time the analysis does point to some degree of order within this complexity. This theme of order is identified in this chapter, but developed more fully in the next.

7.2. An evaluation framework

Evaluation is essentially a behavioural process and is thus by definition difficult to conceptualise. Explanations of behavioural processes are usually probabilistic as opposed to deterministic because human agency implies an element of choice and ensures that some degree of uncertainty is always present. The evaluation process is therefore highly subjective and individual, and basically unpredictable.

Nevertheless, if an attempt is to be made to understand how my respondents evaluated the information they received, a framework must be developed within which to structure the analysis. For this purpose, the evaluation process is conceived as consisting of two elements. One element is this subjective mental process, which effectively represents the 'How?' of evaluation. The other, perhaps more tangible element is the object, or the 'What?' of the evaluation process. An evaluation framework can be designed based on the objective element of the evaluation process, although it must allow for the subjective nature of evaluation.

In the context of this analysis, the object of evaluation is information about conditions in the country of origin. Given that information is being evaluated with an aim to base a decision whether to repatriate upon it, the two characteristics of information reliability and content can be expected to be central in the evaluation process. Information reliability relates to its quantity and quality, and information content to the relevance of the information. In the '*model of a repatriation information system*' it was asserted that refugees must develop some *a priori* means of assessing the reliability of information. The components of this assessment were expected to include an assessment of the reliability of the information transmitter, agent and the information itself. Meanwhile, that content also figures in the evaluation process is clear, as different people will place different values upon different information contents, largely depending upon their priorities.

Nevertheless evaluation is still a highly subjective process and it follows that the outcome of the evaluation even of the same information will vary between individuals. Bearing this in mind, the following two sections focus upon the characteristics of information reliability and content to identify trends in the evaluation process.

7.3. Evaluating the reliability of information

The perceived reliability of transmitters, agents and information itself by my respondents are discussed here in turn, although as the discussion reveals, there were certain links between the three elements. As Table 7.1. shows, the evaluation of each element tended to centre upon certain of their own characteristics, but also in some cases certain of the characteristics of the other elements.

Table 7.1. Multivariate factors assessed in arriving at an evaluation of the reliability of information

Components	Variables		
Reliability of Transmitters	Relationship with the transmitter	Information content	Agent used to convey the information
Reliability of Agents	Relationship with the agent	Perceived efficiency of the agent	Perceived trustworthiness of the agent
Reliability of Information	Accuracy (spatial and temporal)	Frequency	Verification

7.3.1. The reliability of transmitters

Broadly, the perceived reliability of information transmitters depended upon four factors, namely: the relationship between the receiver and the transmitter; the perceived trustworthiness of the transmitter; the information content being transmitted, and the agent used to convey that information.

The point was made in the preceding chapter that all my respondents' information transmitters were kin, in other words personal transmitters. In arriving at an assessment of their reliability, it is interesting that a distinction was generally not made by respondents between close and distant relatives, nor between relatives according to whether they had lived in the same household as respondents in Mozambique. All relatives were therefore perceived as trustworthy transmitters of information.

Trust is of course a concept which carries many meanings, and it is important to realise that the trust placed in relatives seemed to be that they would honestly attempt to transmit reliable information, and not that they could necessarily be trusted to succeed. In contrast, respondents' perception of the potential trustworthiness of institutional transmitters varied. Often they were not trusted to make the honest effort to transmit

reliable information, but perhaps better trusted to succeed when information was transmitted.

In general, respondents perceived as more reliable the Government of Malawi than either party in Mozambique:

'The Government of Malawi will tell us when it is peaceful at home...we don't trust either side in Mozambique, but we trust the Government of Malawi which has received us openly and well' (K:7)

'I've heard of the Peace Talks in Rome, but don't trust anyone in Mozambique, neither FRELIMO nor RENAMO, because they're from whom I fled. I only trust the Malawi Government' (K:44)

The perceived unreliability of either side in Mozambique naturally varied according to the respondent's personal experience of either. One respondent had been captured by FRELIMO forces as she tried to flee Mozambique, and was forced to work for them. Understandably, she did not trust FRELIMO. Several had similar experiences at the hands of RENAMO troops, and were equally mistrustful of that side. Nevertheless, generally a distinction was not made between the two, which is a reminder of the basically non-partisan nature of the refugees from Niassa:

'When the Government in Mozambique tells me it is safe, I'll go home. It doesn't matter whether they're FRELIMO or RENAMO' (C:83)

In contrast, there were circumstances when personal transmitters were not trusted to succeed in transmitting reliable information. This occurred either when the information transmitted concerned places or issues about which the transmitter was not perceived as qualified to know, or when the agent who conveyed the information was not trusted. The two excerpts which follow are taken from two separate interviews. In both cases, the respondent had relatives who had returned to Mozambique from Malawi. In both cases the respondents were in receipt of frequent, up-to-date information transmitted by them and conveyed by reliable agents that conditions at home were safe. Yet in both cases, the respondents stated that they would not return until the end of the war:

'Even though my parents and sisters continually ask me to go back, I won't because I don't believe it's safe there' (C:68)

'My brother works in Mandimba boma [town], and lives in Liseyeta...but I won't go back because it is unsafe to return' (C:79)

Speaking abstractly, another respondent told me:

'I will return only when the Government tells me that the war is over...I wouldn't even go if my mother told me it was safe and asked me to go'
(K:15)

The perceived reliability of personal transmitters was therefore mediated by the content of the information being transmitted. Security was the best example of an issue about which most personal transmitters were not perceived as qualified to know. One reason was that they were in some cases not living in the intended destination areas of respondents, and thus were not perceived as knowledgeable about conditions in those areas. This was as a result of the discordance in the geography of some information networks discussed in the preceding chapter. Another reason was the fact that many respondents were concerned that security conditions might change quickly, such that information transmitted by whatever transmitter might be out-of-date by the time it was received.

The perceived reliability of transmitters was also mediated by the perceived reliability of the agent used to convey information. As shown in the preceding chapter, the majority of personal transmitters either visited or were visited, or used personal agents. There were only five examples where an institutional agent had conveyed information to a respondent from a relative at home. One respondent had heard a message from his relatives read on a Radio Mozambique broadcast; two respondents had received letters via the Post Office, and two respondents had received letters via the Malawi Red Cross Tracing Scheme. In the latter two examples, the letters received had been in the handwriting of a relative, and so their authenticity was not doubted. However three of the four respondents did express doubt as to whether all of the letters sent by their relatives via those sources had reached them. The respondent who heard the broadcast believed that the message had come from his parents, but doubted whether their actual words had been

loyally broadcast. Agents were therefore perceived to be in a position to be able to alter the information which they conveyed, and so their perceived reliability often proved central in an evaluation of the information received via them.

7.3.2. The reliability of agents

In general, respondents had more confidence in personal than institutional agents. This distinction seemed to relate to the perceived efficiency and trustworthiness of the agent.

In some cases institutional agents were simply perceived as inefficient:

'I send messages via businessmen who cross the Lake...the Post Office is no good: letters have to go via Lilongwe then Maputo, which takes too long. Its the same problem with the Malawi Red Cross' (M:13)

This respondent placed value upon the speed of information transmission and the up-to-datedness of information, which are indicators of how the efficiency of agents was gauged. Institutional agents were not able to carry letters or messages as quickly as personal agents, because unlike the latter they could not cross the border locally. Nevertheless, the value of institutional agents in certain circumstances was recognised:

'I sent a letter with the Red Cross who might be able to trace my mother. As soon as I make contact with her, I'll use traders to pass letters and messages' (C:117)

Institutional agents had a wider spatial coverage than most personal agents, and thus could be useful in locating relatives or passing letters to and from relatives in areas which were inaccessible, due to distance or insecurity, to personal agents or during return visits. Clearly access is another indicator of perceived efficiency. What is interesting is that the respondent planned to switch to a personal agent as soon as the institutional agent had served its purpose. This notion of sorting agents is an important one which will be returned to later in this chapter.

The general bias towards personal agents also related to their perceived trustworthiness. Institutional agents were usually less trusted to convey reliable information than personal

agents, generally because it was felt that they had reasons to distort information. A common attitude was that institutional agents might be spreading misinformation in order to satisfy their own agendas, which did not necessarily coincide with the interests of the refugees. For example, several respondents thought that earlier efforts by the Government of Mozambique to induce them to return had been with the aim of providing a population from which to conscript, and so any agent perceived to represent that Government could not be trusted, even if they were conveying information from a personal transmitter.

As the following excerpt from an interview with a camp chairman shows, however, sometimes it was not that institutional agents were mistrusted because of who they were or represented; rather it was because the information they conveyed contradicted information received from personal agents or gathered during personal experiences:

'About 4 years ago the Governor of Mandimba came to the camps and said that it was now safe to return to Mandimba. Hardly anyone went... It wasn't so much a case of what they believed as much as what they could see and hear for themselves' (C:136)

Harrell-Bond (1986) observed exactly the same process amongst Ugandan refugees in Southern Sudan, who could hear gunshots from across the border from their camps, and yet were being urged to repatriate by the authorities.

7.3.3. The reliability of information

Information has characteristics of both quality and quantity. Those which related to the perceived reliability of the information itself were respectively accuracy (spatial and temporal) and frequency; and the degree to which information could be verified.

Information clearly has a spatial scale, which relates to its accuracy. As shown in Chapter 6, several respondents had information transmitters who were not living in their intended destination areas. Furthermore, as movement between safe areas in Niassa was highly restricted, the majority of people in Niassa had little access to information about areas other than their immediate one. The respondent from whose interview the following excerpt comes had relied upon information from transmitters from one area about security in another, which had proved to be incorrect.

'People who came from Mandimba boma [town] told me Matelezi was safe now...I returned 3 times to visit my mother in Matelezi, in September 1990, November 1990 and April 1991. I haven't been back since because last time on my way there I was caught by RENAMO and badly beaten' (C:126)

What this excerpt also speaks to is the fact that information, especially concerning fluctuating conditions, can quickly lose its temporal accuracy. The up-to-datedness of information depends upon the speed of its conveyance. From which ever sort of transmitter or agent, respondents naturally had more faith in up-to-date information:

'I've only heard once, last year, from my sister. I don't know where she is today or even whether she is still alive' (C:131)

Clearly this respondent would not be able to base a decision to return upon such out-of-date information. Several respondents told me that before they returned with their families to Mozambique, they would return alone in order to check the up-to-datedness of their information about conditions there.

Where conditions were fluctuating, then an equally important characteristic was the frequency of information flows, which allowed respondents to keep in touch with developments at home:

'My daughter visits from Nakalonga [Mozambique] usually twice a month. She visited last week with her newborn son' (C:6)

'I heard about a year ago that my sister was sick...the last few times I heard about my sister she has been worse...I'm now worried about her because I haven't heard anything for a month now' (C:131)

A further check upon the accuracy of information was the process of verification which occurred either by cross-checking information from one source with that from another, as in the excerpt below, or by testing the validity of information by actually returning:

'My brother said in the letter that there had been no attacks on Ngofi...but I heard from a visitor that people were still hiding in shelters

on the lakeshore...I'm not sure what is true' (J:52)

Several respondents told me that they trusted the transmitters and agents involved in their personal information networks, and so verification was no longer an issue. Verification seemed to be especially important for those who doubted the veracity of their sources or transmitters. In those cases where transmitters or agents had been sorted such that those perceived as most reliable were used, verification was therefore less important.

Verification also tended to be of more importance when the information being evaluated was functional: where it was social, concerning a marriage or a birth, for example, verification was rarely felt necessary. This distinction between functional and social information networks is an important one which is developed later. What it means is that the other important characteristic of information, besides its perceived reliability, was its content.

7.4. The Content of information

One of the questions which I asked of all respondents was: "Do you think you should be assisted in getting information about Mozambique?". The vast majority, 117 of 125 respondents, replied in the affirmative. The follow-up question was: "What would you like to know about?". Table 8.2 below shows the categories within which the responses fell, and the frequencies with which each category was mentioned.

Table 7.2. Frequency distribution by category of information about Mozambique most highly desired

Category	Frequency
End of the War	95
Kin	82
Security	12
Economy	10
Other	8
Society	4

The table contains several initially surprising results. Perhaps the most surprising was the lack of value placed by most respondents upon information about security (as opposed

to the end of the war) at the time of the interview. This seems particularly surprising in the context of findings that the majority of repatriates globally in the past ten years have repatriated while conflict is still occurring in their countries of origin, by returning to local enclaves of security (Stein and Cuny, 1991). One of the few studies conducted on repatriation to Mozambique before the present one (Wilson, 1991), concurred with these findings even in the Mozambican context. Wilson conceived of repatriates identifying areas of peace in space and time and returning to them. Another surprising aspect was the low priority also given to information about economy and society. Although security might have been expected to rank as the highest priority upon return, it was also expected that local economic and social conditions in the area of destination would often figure in the evaluation of information concerning return (as in Figure 3.2.). Perhaps the least surprising results are the emphasis placed upon information about kin, and the low number of categories which were identified. The former speaks to the intense social networks which characterise both Yao and Nyanja communities, while the latter is a reminder of the material (but certainly not spiritual) simplicity of life for the majority in Niassa.

The perception of what constituted valuable information needs to be elaborated.

7.4.1. Information concerning economy and society

The apparently low value placed upon information about issues of economy and society did not usually reflect a reasonable level of knowledge about those issues already. The majority of respondents displayed a surprising lack of knowledge about either: very few could tell me the price of any commodity in Niassa at the time of the interview, and only about half knew of the drought in Mozambique and the crop failures in parts of Niassa. Similarly very few could inform me of any contemporary social issues, such as whether the Messumba mission was still operational or the extent to which any other social infrastructure such as schools or hospitals had escaped damage.

I have identified three broad reasons for the low level of interest in these sorts of information. First, it would have to be concluded that some of my respondents were to a certain extent naive. More than half of those respondents who had worked on estates in Niassa, for example, believed or assumed that those estates were still functional. This

was usually not the case. Several of those respondents who had sold surplus produce to AGRICOM expected to continue to do so upon return, and were unaware of the crisis which AGRICOM was facing in 1992. Almost every respondent assured me that land tenure would not be a problem upon return, and most felt certain that they would be able to reclaim their pre-flight plots. When I discussed this subject in further detail, none agreed with me that in their absence their land might have been appropriated by others.

Second, a few respondents displayed indifference towards such issues. The respondent from whose interview the following excerpt was taken typified this attitude:

'I don't know about conditions in Mozambique...why should I care? As I'm a refugee, I'll wait to be told what to do and where to go' (C:13)

For some, this indifference stemmed from a reliance upon a variety of institutions to provide assistance upon their return:

'I expect the Government of Mozambique to help me to get land, build a house...and to provide seeds and tools' (C:30)

The third, and most frequent reason appeared to be that for some respondents information about kin effectively cancelled out the need for information about economy or society. This is because a large number of respondents intended to negotiate the terms of their economic and social re-integration via kinship networks.

7.4.2. Information concerning kin

Most respondents valued information about their kin highly. This included their current locations, their livelihoods, and social or tribal events such as births, deaths and circumcisions. In the context of the intense familial and community social networks which existed in Niassa amongst both the Yao and Nyanja before flight, it is not surprising that such information was valued. The desire to maintain contact with family members could probably be described as natural in any case. However, the maintenance of social networks also entailed a more functional purpose.

The majority of respondents stated that they intended to return to Mozambique outside

the institutional assistance framework. The UNHCR Draft Repatriation Plan (1991) envisaged the transportation of refugees to transit centres in Mozambique, where basic essentials such as food, clothing, seeds and tools could be distributed before the transportation of the refugees to their final destinations. Many of my respondents, however, planned to return in the first instance to the areas where their kin were living. As stressed previously, the nature of the geography of information networks meant that this was not necessarily the respondents' final destinations, and therefore for those whose kin were internally displaced, an essential piece of information was their location:

'I'll go home to Likwakwa, but first I'll go via Nakalongo to pick up my sisters' (C:65)

The significance of kin was that it was via kinship networks that most respondents intended to negotiate the terms of their return and re-integration; kinship networks therefore represented support networks. As a result, it may be possible to distinguish between waves of returnees after the end of conflict according to the existence of social networks with kin at home (Koser, 1993*b*). Broadly, three waves may be conceptualised. The earliest returnees can be expected to be those who have kin in the country of origin and know their locations. The second wave can be expected to be those who have kin in unknown locations in the country of origin, who will take advantage of the end of conflict to return periodically until they are located, and then to return permanently. The final wave would be those either without kin, or who have not been able to locate kin, who may wait to participate in the institutional framework of return.

The logic of these distinctions is that most respondents intended to rely in the short term upon assistance from kin at home. However, this intention reflected the opinion amongst many respondents that kin still in Mozambique would be in a position to assist them, which might not be true in all cases:

'My brother can lend me land and give me seeds and tools upon return'
(K:74)

'My father is still running his fish business there...I'll be able to work for my father until I can afford my own seeds and tools' (M:48)

These intentions relied upon the resurrection or continuation of traditional reciprocity between family members. Discussions with village chiefs confirmed that this was a traditional survival strategy. Before flight, if a village faced hunger, individual households would first seek support from their kin in neighbouring areas, before turning to other strategies such as collecting wild food stuffs. As well as short-term survival, it was often felt that kin also held the key to longer-term economic re-integration:

'I don't think its possible that anyone has taken my land...but if they have, my brother can give me some of his land' (C:51)

It was generally believed that kinship networks could also be used to secure social re-integration. One of my respondents had married in exile a Mozambican woman from a village other than his natal village. According to the matrilineal tradition of the Yao, he intended to return with her to her natal village. The following excerpt was in response to my question about whether he thought he might face any problems going to a new village:

'Her [his wife's] relatives came to the wedding from Mozambique. They've already told the village chief that I'm coming, and I will be welcome' (C:104)

This excerpt speaks to a very important notion. For many respondents information networks, which had originally been used to discover about conditions at home, had effectively metamorphosed into social networks. A situation whereby relatives from Mozambique visited refugees in Malawi to attend social events or invite them home for social events there, hardly conforms to certain preconceptions about refugees and their circumstances. As is discussed in the following chapter, sometimes this geographical division of a family with part on either side of the border actually represented a family strategy, whereby the family as a whole was able to maintain two sources of livelihood. What this meant is that many, but by no means all the respondents, knew by the time of the interview that conditions in their destination areas were safe. For them, security had been subsumed as a priority by a new agenda of priorities (Zetter, 1988), the foremost of which was economic. This is why information concerning kin was often valued more highly than that concerning security.

7.4.3. Information concerning security and the end of the war

An important distinction emerged between the categories of 'security' and 'the end of the war'. It became quite clear during interviews that most respondents were not interested in the security situations in their destination areas at the time of the interview. Their priority was information about the end of the war, by which they meant a national ceasefire, not locally negotiated peace enclaves. This observation has an interesting implication for the argument, made in Chapter 2, that in understanding refugee flight an analytical distinction between the underlying cause and the immediate precipitant of flight needs to be made. Of course for some respondents the fear that insecurity in their areas of destination, while temporarily absent, might reappear while the war still continued, was great. However, for others the removal of the immediate precipitant of their flight was no longer a sufficient condition for their return. Their priorities had expanded to include economic, social and political stability, which conditions it was perceived might only be achieved by the end of the war.

Initially I assumed that the low interest in the current security situation reflected the fact that respondents did not intend to return until the end of the war when long term and lasting peace would be secured. Certainly several were too traumatised to run the risk of return during conflict. What became apparent, however, was that for many the end of the war in fact represented more than just security. In the cases of the respondents from whose interviews the following two excerpts are taken, both had reliable information that it was now safe in their areas of destination, yet were determined not to return until the end of the war:

'I'll return to Chia when the war ends [even though] my brother has sent two letters, the last was last week [which say] the situation is safe' (J:44)

'I'll return when the war finishes [although] I heard from my mother that there are no attacks any more' (J:46)

For such respondents, security was only one of a host of priorities for return, and it was felt that only the end of the war could provide an environment in which they might all be satisfied. One such additional priority was economic, and some respondents associated the end of the war with the provision of aid and assistance in Mozambique:

'I won't go until the Government gives me assurances of assistance...they won't do that until the end of the war' (C:71)

'As soon as its peaceful I'll go back because I'll get assistance...but if the Government doesn't help, I'll come back to Malawi' (C:122)

In fact for some the end of the war had been elevated to the status of a symbolic notion; it represented a panacea which would dispel all problems:

'Bandits only exist where there is no freedom: there'll be none after the peace' (J:15)

Another indication of this symbolic evaluation of the end of the war was the notion expressed by many that anyone could be trusted after the war, thus many respondents who had expressed distrust of institutional information transmitters during the war, said that they would nevertheless trust them once the war was over:

'When the Government in Mozambique tells me its safe, I'll go home. It doesn't matter whether they're FRELIMO or RENAMO' (C:83)

'At the end of the colonial war FRELIMO dropped leaflets out of aeroplanes over Tanzania to tell us it was safe. I'll believe the war's over when I see those leaflets again: it doesn't matter who drops them' (M:24)

In contrast, other respondents had a more realistic grasp of likely conditions in Mozambique following a ceasefire. Some recognised that the end of the war might not result in real peace:

'I don't know when the war will finish, but when it does I'll go back...I'm not convinced that the end of the war will bring safety' (K:58)

'Not only me, but the whole camp wants to return when the war ends. Bandits and mines don't worry me - we survived under the Portuguese, so we'll survive after the war' (C:8)

Others seemed unwilling to leave the relative material comfort of Malawi which they expected to still exist following the end of the war, but at the same time realised that this would be the time when they would be expected to leave:

'I'll go when the war finishes, because that's when the Government of Malawi will chase me out' (C:72)

This raises an important point which underlines certain of the constrictions which go hand-in-hand with refugee status. According to the '*model of a repatriation information system*', the decision whether to repatriate was based upon a comparison of conditions in exile and at home, and an assessment of the relative merits of the two. However, some respondents realised that even after the war in Mozambique, to stay in Malawi might well offer a more favourable opportunity for economic welfare; but equally realised that at that time their right to remain in exile might be withdrawn, so that the decision would be in effect taken from them. Of course it could be argued that if conditions in the country of origin become safe after the end of a war, then refugee status by definition becomes nullified. If those people in exile plan not to return basically because of the economic merits of remaining in exile, then perhaps they can be better described as economic migrants. This notion of the potential metamorphosis of refugees into another type of migrant is an important one to bear in mind.

7.5. From individual evaluation to the use of information

The last two sections have examined the way in which respondents evaluated information. The central characteristics of information in the evaluation process were identified as reliability and content. While the inherent unpredictability of the evaluation process means that it could certainly not be suggested that all my respondents evaluated information in the same way, the evaluation of reliability and content did tend to focus upon certain issues (Tables 7.1. and 7.2.). Nevertheless, the inherent complexity of the evaluation process should be remembered.

Further complexity is added by an analysis of the translation of the evaluation of information to its use in decision-making. First, it has to be recognised that different people will have different motivations to return whatever the reliability or content of their information. The use of information is mediated via the individual's motivation to return. Thus the case of some of the respondents quoted above who refused to even consider returning until the end of the war due to traumatisation, even when they were in receipt of reliable information that it was safe in their intended destination areas.

A further complication is added when it is realised that the decision to return is not always based on the individual's evaluation. Often return may be collective and result from a collective decision, or alternatively the return of only part of a family may nevertheless also result from a collective family decision. Therefore, in translating the individual evaluation of information into the use of that information in the decision whether to repatriate, it is also important to consider the interaction between different individuals in making that decision. As stressed in the preceding chapter, it is not only individual evaluations which might differ, but also individual information networks, as different members of the same household might be in receipt of different information from different transmitters and agents.

7.6. The use of information in decision-making

The purpose of this section is to elaborate upon the translation of individual evaluations of information, constructed as described above, to the use of that information in coming to a decision whether to repatriate.

First, attention is focused upon the issue of motivations. Motivation can be defined as an impulse to act, the action in this context being repatriation. Just like evaluation, motivation is a highly individual concept, varying as it does according to personal experience. Nevertheless, it may be possible to identify varying levels of motivations between certain categories of respondent. In the following section, the focus is upon whether there was any discernible difference in return motivation between men and women. This focus upon gender is not to deny that there may also be differences between other categories, derived on the basis of age or length of time in exile, for example. However the purpose is not to provide a comprehensive review of the return motivations of various categories, rather it is to demonstrate that motivations are an important variable in the repatriation information system.

Second, attention is turned to the various levels of interaction which occurred in the decision-making process, ranging from that of the individual, through the household to the community. The point is that decision-making is often not individual, and so involves the pooling of a variety of individual evaluations which may not be complementary.

7.6.1. Return motivations: the case of gender

Makanya (1992a) suggested that women and men may have different return motivations as a result of their different experiences of flight and exile: for example if women were more traumatised during flight, they may be less willing to return than men whatever their evaluation of received information, on the other hand if women are relatively worse-off in exile than they were at home, they might be more willing to return than men. In this section this supposition is examined as it applied to my sample populations (the discussion draws upon the limited interviews which I carried out amongst women, with women's leaders and during focus group studies, and is complemented by the more extensive findings of Ager *et al.*, 1991, who conducted a case study of refugee women in Malawi, and included as one of their study sites Chiumbangame).

There is little evidence that the conflict in Niassa and flight to Malawi affected women any differently from men in my sample populations. According to the experiences of my respondents and their relatives, both were murdered (as were children), both sexes were used for forced labour, and both lost their livelihoods. Significantly, I found no evidence to suggest that women had been subjected to rape during the conflict, although this may reflect a reluctance to tell me. Presumably female-headed households may have been more economically vulnerable to the effects of conflict than other household types, but this was not reflected in flight patterns: female-headed households tended to have fled at the same time as the rest of the village. Although in the case of several households certain members fled before others, this division was not necessarily based upon sex, rather those most vulnerable to the conflict were the first to flee.

When considering the experience of any group in exile, it is important to use as a benchmark their experiences before flight. If women are disadvantaged in exile, but were equally disadvantaged before flight, then it can be argued that refugee status *per se* has done nothing necessarily to disadvantage them. The question of whether exile has had different effects upon women economically, politically or socially in the context of my sample populations can be pursued briefly via the following topics: education and training; health and nutrition; patterns of economic production and work burden, and structures for representation.

Education and training

The Headmasters in all the schools of camps involved in my study reported that fewer girls than boys were enrolled, and that there was a higher rate of attrition amongst girls. These processes in part reflect the facts that Yao and Nyanja women marry when they are young (usually still in their teens), and that even before marriage they are expected to assume responsibilities in the household such as assisting with cooking and childcare. By presenting statistics on completed years of education before flight by gender, however, Ager *et al.* (1991) show that these trends reflect pre-flight trends. In all four camps there was also a much lower female rate of participation in training programmes than male. While the women's leader in Nkhata Bay told me that this trend reflected the access offered to women, the women's leader in Chiumbangame suggested that it reflected the fact that most women were not interested in the training programmes on offer. There were no comparable training programmes previously in Mozambique, so before flight and after flight participation rates by gender cannot be compared. However, it could be argued that if training programmes represent the opportunity to gain an income-generating skill, then the fact that at least some women had access to them is favourable in comparison to the position previously in Mozambique where income-generating activities were dominated by men.

Health and nutrition

According to the women's leaders and clinical officers in the four camps involved in my study, there were no indications of difference in health status or care between men and women. The clinical officers further reported that there was very little malnutrition in any camp, and so no discernible difference between men and women in terms of nutrition. Ager *et al.* (1991), however, observed that members of female-headed households did report a higher frequency of health problems. Other data show these families also had lower incomes and fewer assets in general than male-headed households. There are no data available to indicate conditions of health and nutrition before flight, although one Village Chief did inform me that rates of infant mortality were much less in exile. In Niassa single female parents were normally economically assisted by the Village Chief, and so the difference in terms of health and nutrition found between female and male headed households in exile by Ager *et al.* might not have occurred before flight.

Patterns of economic production and work burden

There was a general trend for refugee women to work longer hours than men, but, with the majority of their tasks spent in domestic household tasks, women's levels of income were generally lower. The lack of work opportunities, and specifically the lack of land available to refugees, provided many men with free time. There was little evidence of them using this time to assume any of the traditional 'female' responsibilities. At the same time, many women had assumed more responsibilities in exile in the absence of support from female members of the extended family who may have been separated during flight or in exile. I asked all the women and women's leaders I interviewed to list the typical responsibilities of men and women before and after flight, and all of them commented that in exile women did proportionally more work than they had at home. Also in Mozambique several women had the opportunity to create their own incomes, for example by making clay pots, while in exile there was very little evidence of female income-generation.

Structures of representation

None of the four camps involved in my study had, or had ever had, a female camp or even block chairperson. All of the women's leaders interviewed commented on the lack of representation for women. One leader told me:

'I went to see the camp chairman a few days ago to ask for permission for a women's meeting...but he ignored me as usual' (C:159)

That camp chairman told me:

'We had intended to appoint chairwomen, but we thought we would face three problems: husbands might be jealous of their independence and constant meetings with other men; husbands might speak through their wives, and how would the women do their own jobs such as cooking, house-keeping and childcare?' (C:153)

It is significant that this pattern does not reflect that in Mozambique. Women's leaders in both Mangochi and Nkhata Bay, who had lived in the districts of Mandimba and Lago in Mozambique respectively, could both name villages in their districts which had female chiefs before flight.

It is clear from this discussion that in different spheres, the experience of exile had differential impacts upon men and women. In education the trend did not differ from pre-flight trends; in training, and health and nutrition, women were arguably better off than they were before flight, and in patterns of economic production and work load and structures of representation women were probably worse off than they were before flight. These trends certainly present scope for women in some cases to have had different return motivations from men, because they perceived their lives in exile as better or worse than previously. However, the point to be stressed is that such a distinction is by no means conclusive: in many cases women did have the same return motivations as men, and in many other cases a difference in motivations was on the grounds of different distinctions.

If different people even within the same household have different return motivations, and therefore may evaluate information differently, then what needs to be elaborated is the degree to which individuals interacted in using their information in making a decision whether to return.

7.6.2. The interaction of individual evaluations

There are broadly three themes of importance in a consideration of the interaction of individual evaluations, namely: the extent to which they are pooled, the extent to which they are competing or complementary, and the extent to which the evaluation of certain people carries more weight than that of others in communal decision-making. The following discussion, which ranges from individual through household to community decision-making, highlights the variability which characterised the process of interaction during decision-making.

Of my respondents, six women and one man lived alone in a household. In Niassa, the livelihoods of single women were normally overseen by the Village Chief, on behalf of the community, while single men normally survived without assistance. In exile, however, three single women were effectively now outside a community. In one case this was because very few members of the community came to Malawi; in another because of processes of community disintegration (discussed below), and in one case a respondent claimed that her village in exile had rejected her because she had had a baby out of

wedlock (her husband had died during flight) and refused to identify the father for the Village Chief.

The single women seemed to evaluate information in two contrasting ways. These are demonstrated by the following two excerpts:

'I have aid and don't need assistance from anyone [else], so I'll decide alone when to go and where to go' (M:5)

'I am living like a child, waiting to be told what to do...I'll only go back when someone takes me' (C:20-21)

Aid had effectively made single women independent. Some were taking advantage of that independence to act individually: the camp chairman in Chiumbangame told me of one single woman who had returned to Mozambique to look for a new husband and had not consulted him in making that decision. Furthermore 18 women from Chiumbangame (but not included in my survey) had left the settlement and married Malawians. Such women clearly evaluated their options and acted individually. In contrast other single women, and the single man, told me that they would rely upon the community to make decisions about their futures. It would seem that they effectively did not evaluate information. Indeed one told me:

'I don't know how I would get information about home...and I don't care either' (C:64)

Such indifference rarely occurred where the individual was part of a household. The central factor in understanding the way in which household decisions were made seemed to be the balance of power between men and women, but there was also an important distinction between women according to their position in the household. In general, for example, women without husbands did not face the same restrictions within the household decision-making process as those with husbands. Apart from one instance, where a woman had left her husband in exile because he drank too much, there were no examples of women returning without their husbands. In contrast, several male respondents reported that their sisters, aunts or mothers, who no longer had husbands, had returned alone without other members of the household. Significantly, such incidents

did not tend to represent a breakdown of the family or result from disagreements:

'My two sisters came originally, but returned in the early years to Nakalongo...I don't know why they went back, neither was married...I'll return at the end of the war to Likwakwa, but I'll go via Nakalongo to pick up my sisters' (C:65)

From indicators such as patterns of previous return, therefore, it seems that while women may in many cases have evaluated information differently from men, and had different return motivations, where they were in exile with their husbands their evaluation often did not figure as highly as that of the husband in the decision-making process. Nevertheless one women's leader told me:

'In the family, each person has the right to speak - so women are involved in the plans. If she disagrees with the man, a woman will argue and put forward her own point of view. But in public forums, outside the house, women traditionally keep out of discussions' (J:59)

As this excerpt demonstrates, women were traditionally not usually involved in communal decision-making. This was not a hard-and-fast rule, as there were examples of female Village Chiefs in pre-flight Niassa. However, even in Mozambique there had been a general lack of representation, which was paralleled in exile. It can therefore be assumed that where communal evaluation of information did occur, women had little role.

I received a confusing array of contradictory responses to questions concerning individual and household identification with the chief and community, which suggested that while some people still identified with a communal structure in exile, far fewer felt that decision-making was in the realm of responsibility of that structure, and as a result there was little evidence of communal decision-making. This was principally because the decision to move has traditionally never been that of the Village Chief; his or her main responsibility being to remain with the majority of his or her people. The decision whether to move was traditionally the responsibility of the household, thus one respondent told me:

'Although we all lived together [in Mozambique], we made separate decisions over flight...we think differently' (K:43)

Households generally retained this traditional responsibility in exile. At the same time many Village Chiefs maintained their traditional responsibilities in exile, thus another respondent told me:

'I see the chief to discuss my problems...last week I and my neighbour were called before the chief to settle an argument...although I plan to return with the chief, if the chief wastes time I'll return with my family, and meet the chief there' (C:102)

One of these traditional responsibilities was to care for vulnerable people. Of course the definition of vulnerability varies enormously, but the category often included at home those people with no kin. As pointed out above, such people in exile had been effectively made independent by aid. However, where return was concerned, such people did rely upon their fellow villagers and Village Chief to make the decision to move:

'I will wait until the Chief tells me its safe to go' (C:105)

'I will follow the rest of my villagers when they go' (C:20)

These excerpts suggest that such respondents did not even plan to partake in the decision-making process, and therefore for most the degree to which their evaluations of conditions at home complemented those of others, and the weight these evaluations might carry, was not of relevance.

What this discussion has demonstrated is the variability of the degrees of interaction which my respondents experienced in using information in the decision-making process. While some individuals outside a household made decisions alone, others relied upon the Village Chief and community; similarly while some individuals within a household interacted with the other members, others did not. What the discussion has also suggested is that perhaps with the exception of women living with their husbands in exile, few individuals faced social restrictions if they decided to return to Mozambique: the point has been made that neither the return of individuals within a household or households

within a community was perceived by the collective as necessarily divisive or disruptive. From this observation, it might be assumed that the majority of those who wanted to repatriate might have gone home earlier than others.

7.7. Summary

In this chapter, the ways in which information was evaluated and used in the decision-making process by my respondents has been explored. In the first part, an evaluation framework was derived which combined both the subjective and objective elements of the individual evaluation process. It was suggested that an assessment of the reliability of information by the individual would focus upon the characteristics of reliability and content. While the evaluation of information reliability and content of course varied between respondents, it was shown in the case of each that there were certain common trends (Tables 7.1. and 7.2.).

In the second part of the chapter, attention was turned to understanding the translation of information evaluation into the use of that information in making the decision whether to return. It was suggested that one variable might be the return motivation of the receiver, and the case study of gender demonstrated how different people within the same community and even same household might have different return motivations as a result of their personal experiences of flight and exile. A further complication was recognised to be that the decision-making process is often not an individual one, and the issue of how individuals, and their different evaluations and motivations, interacted was then examined.

7.8. Conclusion

Above all, the theme of this chapter has been complexity: the evaluation and use of information is a complex process which varies between individuals according to a number of variables. In the context of this complexity, however, this chapter has also identified the potential for a certain degree of order.

First, the discussion about the evaluation of information showed that individuals evaluate information from certain transmitters or agents, and of certain contents, above that from

others; the critical factors being those depicted in Table 7.1. It follows that people will make the effort to evolve suitable information networks. Often of course this will not be possible, but in some cases amongst my respondents it was. What this speaks to is the notion that some information networks may mature through time.

Second, it was suggested that for some respondents, information concerning a host of other conditions had become as important as that concerning the precipitant of their flight; the most important factors being those depicted in Table 7.2. What this suggests is an evolution of priorities for some away from the precipitant factor alone to an incorporation of other priorities. Therefore, in some cases, respondents knew that conditions in their areas of destination were safe, but were not returning because their new priorities might not be satisfied by return. This led to the fascinating situation whereby some information networks had basically been transformed into social networks, with family members crossing the border to attend social functions.

Third, focusing upon the case study of gender, it was shown how women may develop higher return motivations than men, although it was pointed out that there can also be expected to be large variations in return motivations according to variables other than just gender. At the same time, it was suggested that in many cases social restrictions upon individuals acting upon their high return motivations were absent. What this suggests is that many of those with a high return motivation may have evaluated information favourably and returned home early, as opposed to those with lower return motivations who might wait in exile for better information upon which to base a decision. This speaks to the possibility of a process of sorting of refugees by motivation, whereby those with high return motivations return first. It also speaks of the possibility for an evolution of decision-making, whereby early returns are on the basis of individual decisions, while later returns are on the basis of collective decisions.

This notion of order within the repatriation information system is elaborated upon in the following chapter.

Chapter 8 The Dynamics of the Repatriation System

8.1. Introduction

It may at this juncture be worth briefly recapping on the repatriation information system as depicted in Chapter 3. It was envisaged that a potential repatriate bases a decision whether to return or not upon evaluation of information about conditions in the country of origin, and subsequently a comparison of conditions at home and conditions in exile. There are therefore three elements to the decision to repatriate: the information received; the evaluation and use of that information, and the decision-making process itself.

The focus in Chapter 6 was the receipt of information by my respondents. In Chapter 7 the evaluation and use of information was described and analysed. What is now needed is a consideration of the decision-making process.

If the theme of the last two chapters has been the complexity of the repatriation information system; in this chapter it is the identification of a degree of order in that system, as represented by the evolution of the various elements of the system. In the first two sections, the ways in which information networks and the evaluation process evolved in exile are considered. The understanding that both do evolve and change over time is central to an understanding that the decision-making process itself is dynamic. That is why repatriation occurs at different times in the refugee cycle for different people. The third section therefore shows how the decision-making process itself evolved over time.

The first three sections focus upon the individual, and draw upon interviews with individual respondents. In the last section the focus is placed upon the decision-making process at the household level.

8.2. The evolution of information networks

Discussions with my respondents concerning how their information networks had developed since their arrival in exile, indicated that individual and household information networks had matured over time. This maturing process was indexed by progress from

an initial situation where any available transmitter and agent were used to gain information, to a situation where transmitters and agents had been sorted according to their perceived reliability and value (see Table 7.1.). It was also indexed by refining the content, quantity and quality of information received, from a situation where any news was considered to one where only functional news was considered.

By virtue of the fact that the majority of respondents in each settlement arrived in exile within a few months of one another and thus their information networks evolved over the same time period, one can also conceive of the evolution of a system of collected information networks. This system tended from a state of maximum entropy (maximum disorder) to minimum entropy (order). Progress was from an initial situation shortly after arrival of a deluge of unsorted information filling an information vacuum, to a situation where the number of information networks had decreased, but the quantity and quality of those which remained had increased.

These processes were affected by, and sometimes had an effect upon, simultaneous developments including a changing security situation in the country of origin, patterns of flight and repatriation, and patterns of internal migration in both the country of origin and host country. The evolution of information networks therefore reminds us of the integrated nature of the various components depicted in the '*systems model of a refugee cycle*' depicted in Chapter 3 (see Figure 3.1.).

In the following section, a stage-by-stage consideration of the evolution of individual information networks and a collective information system, progressing from the immediate post-arrival period to the date of the interviews, is presented. The interaction between these processes and the other processes mentioned above is also analysed.

8.2.1. The information vacuum stage

Most respondents reported that immediately upon arrival in exile, there was effectively an information vacuum. The vacuum existed for three principal reasons. First, the initial concerns of most respondents, before that of seeking information about Mozambique, were with coping with the disorientation of exile and the logistics of registration, plot allocation and house construction. Second was the understandable reluctance of many to

even want to know about conditions in Mozambique while the momentum of movement was away from Mozambique.

A third reason was that flight patterns often meant that information was not immediately available. Many respondents arrived in small groups which had become separated from a larger group which originally fled the village of origin:

'RENAMO attacked Mtende by night...most of us fled that night, but we got lost in the bush in the darkness...my group arrived in Malawi first, and we waited for a few weeks to see if the rest would follow...most did'
(C:32)

For respondents such as the one from whose interview the above excerpt is taken, the immediate post-arrival period was spent in anticipation of the arrival of kin and friends who had become separated *en route*. Even when relatives did not flee Mozambique, most did nevertheless leave the village and hide in the surrounding countryside for a period of time:

'I came with my Grandmother...my parents and brother decided not to come...I don't know why...but they hid in the bush for several weeks until they were sure RENAMO had left the village' (C:68)

As a result of the initial physical dislocation of communities engendered by flight, most respondents apparently recognised the futility of efforts to find out information about their relatives or about conditions at home immediately.

The information vacuum which resulted from these three processes was quickly filled as co-villagers or people from neighbouring villages arrived, and relatives who had stayed in Mozambique began returning to their home villages. The following excerpt is from an interview with a Village Chief:

'Although we all fled together, many got lost on the way. I arrived with the first group. The others hadn't arrived after several months, and some of us thought that it must be safe to go back and started talking about going home. But the others arrived shortly afterwards, and they brought news of more fighting in the area. No-one went home' (C:136)

There were no examples where entire villages arrived at the same time, so many respondents reported a similar receipt of information from co-villagers who arrived after them. Another source of early information was new arrivals from respondents' neighbouring villagers, who brought information about the region, and who in some cases had passed through the respondents village *en route*:

'In the early days I used to hear about Chiponde from people who were fleeing the RENAMO attack in Chempwina and came through Chiponde'
(C:73)

Information also came from relatives who had stayed in Mozambique, and returned to their home villages after a period of hiding in the bush or temporarily living in a nearby village:

'When RENAMO attacked, we all fled. My mother and sister were in the bush collecting firewood at the time, and I couldn't find them, so I came alone. At first I was worried because I thought RENAMO might have captured them, but after about six months they sent a message with a trader to say they had returned and were safe' (C:67)

The above excerpt is unusual because the relatives were able to send a message with a trader. In fact most trade did not start until at least a year after the arrival of the majority of the refugees.

The majority of respondents received information during their first year in exile. This is in contrast to the minority who were still receiving information after four or five years at the time of the interviews. These initial, fledgling information networks had characteristics which were different from those of later networks.

The majority of early information networks did not conform to the '*model of a repatriation information system*' described and depicted in Chapter 3. That model envisaged a distinct transmitter, agent and receiver of information; the three interlinked by flows of information with quantitative and qualitative characteristics. In contrast, the information which most respondents received during their first year in exile had not been transmitted by a particular person or institution, nor was it directed towards any specific

receiver. Rather, the information was based on the observations of other fleeing refugees. Several respondents reported that at this stage unsubstantiated rumours based on the reports of new arrivals abounded. The information flows had neither the quantitative characteristics of density and range, nor the qualitative characteristic of directedness. The general impression was therefore one of a flood of unsorted, unspecific and undirected information filling the initial vacuum.

8.2.2. The drop-out stage

The distinct patterns of conflict in Niassa, and processes of flight, meant that after the initial stage during which the information vacuum was filled, there followed a stage of drop-out. During this stage many respondents stopped receiving information.

In several cases, as demonstrated in the excerpt below, whole villages relocated and no-one remained to act as a transmitter:

'I heard about Mitande in the first year because people were still arriving. Now there's no-one there...they're all here, so I haven't heard anything since then' (K:42)

In other cases, where there were people left to act as transmitters, the relatively rapid arrival of those fleeing meant that after a while there were no agents bringing information. As was shown in Tables 6.11a and b, some 65% of my respondents came directly to Malawi with less than a two month interval between flight and arrival in Malawi. Of the other 35%, few stayed in another location *en route* for more than six months before also coming to Malawi. This pattern reflects the general pattern of village flight, whereby most people from the same village had arrived in Malawi within a year of their dislocation. The effect of this process was that after about a year, there were very few new arrivals to bring information:

'I think there's still people in Nangapochi, but no-one has come from there since the first year, so I can't know for sure' (C:90)

This process of distinct waves of arrivals was engendered by the pattern of conflict in Niassa. As was discussed in Chapter 5, the vast majority of respondents in both

Mangochi and Nkhata Bay fled one specific attack in their home areas, namely the attacks on Mandimba and Cobue respectively. The low intensity of conflict apart from these attacks, meant that there were very few arrivals in either district at any other time.

The joint effects of these processes of conflict and flight was an erosion of information transmitters and agents for many respondents, which meant that their information networks effectively collapsed. As a result of the drop-out stage, three categories of respondents developed, the distinctions between them based upon information networks with relatives still in Mozambique.

The largest category (about 65% of survey respondents) became those without close relatives in Mozambique. In most cases this was because all of their close relatives had also come to Malawi, while several knew of the deaths of relatives who had stayed. The second largest category (some 30% of survey respondents), was those with relatives in a known location in Mozambique. In the third and smallest category were those who believed their relatives to be still alive and in Mozambique, but did not know their locations. The memberships of these categories were sometimes altered through time, but only slightly, in those cases where relatives repatriated to Mozambique, and where respondents successfully located relatives who had stayed at home.

The effect of the drop-out stage upon the overall system of information networks was, therefore, a reduction in the number of networks which existed. From this stage onwards, the maturing of the system involved a refinement of the quality of individual information networks where they still existed.

8.2.3. The sorting stage

The refinement of individual information networks involved a sorting of potential transmitters and agents, such that the most reliable of possible networks was maintained.

Several respondents had, by the time of the interview, been in contact with several relatives in Mozambique. For some, like the respondent from whose interview the excerpt below is taken, the range of possible transmitters was extended as relatives returned to Mozambique:

'After the first year my mother went back. She sent a message to say she had reached there safely, and now she sends messages often' (J:28)

For another, the same occurred when he successfully located his mother using the Red Cross Tracing Scheme. For several others, marriage in exile also had the effect of extending the range of transmitters.

Most of these respondents, however, only maintained regular contact with one of these relatives. In social network analysis, as described in Chapter 3, the extent to which contacts which can potentially exist actually do, is termed density. This was identified as one of the quantitative aspects of information flows. As discussed in the last chapter, respondents did not generally identify closer relatives as more trustworthy than distant relatives. Instead, a variety of other reasons were normally given for the maintenance of contacts with some relatives rather than others. Sometimes these relatives were the closest, sometimes they were more accessible, and sometimes they lived in the respondent's intended destination. The most important variable seemed to be the functionality of contact with the relative. The following excerpt demonstrates this principle:

'I write to my cousin in Mandimba regularly, but I haven't written to my parents in Cabo Delgado for several years...there's no point in contacting them until I go home and can visit them, but my cousin should be able to help me start a business in Mandimba' (C:13)

A second quantitative aspect of information flows was described as range. This aspect relates to the accessibility of the transmitter and receiver to one another. In some cases, this bridge was formed by visits to or from Mozambique. In others, it depended upon agents. The ability of agents to reach the respondent's selected transmitter was one of several aspects in the sorting of agents by respondents.

As military activity in both Mandimba and Lago districts in Niassa diminished rapidly following the principal attacks in each area, the number of possible information agents increased as cross-border trade routes which had traditionally existed were resurrected, and new trade based upon the refugee settlements commenced. Traders replaced new

arrivals as the principal agents of information. One refugee trader from Chiumbangame told me:

'I cross two, and sometimes three times a week. Last time I went was last week, and I took seven letters and brought back eighteen... There are at least a hundred traders like me in this camp... We've been crossing like this for about four years' (C:149)

As a result, by the time of their interviews, many respondents had sorted potential agents. I asked all the respondents: 'How would you go about finding out information about Mozambique?', and many were able to identify a specific agent who they would use. Several respondents had cultivated agents, by giving them gifts in return for contacting relatives in Mozambique.

One sorting process was the perceived reliability of the agent, as discussed in the last chapter. A significant trend, for example, was the discontinuation of contacts with institutional agents as soon as they had served their purpose. However personal agents were also differentiated, as this excerpt demonstrates:

'I used to send messages with other refugees who returned for trade, but often they didn't get as far as Cabo Delgado. About two years ago a man who lives near my parents in Cabo Delgado visited Mtaja [Malawi], and took back a message. Now he comes often to sell salt, and so I send all my messages with him' (C:36)

Thus the agent's range was another aspect in the sorting process. Nevertheless, agents had generally enjoyed a considerable range, as the border was permeable, and internal mobility in Niassa and Malawi to an extent engendered by the low intensity of the conflict and the lack of restriction upon movement within Malawi.

Through 1992, however, the number of agents available to respondents in Mangochi, and the agents' mobility, was decreasing in response to renewed military initiatives and Malawi Government responses to them. As discussed in Chapter 5, the security situation in the Mangochi camps deteriorated because of a spate of cross-border raids by soldiers of unclear allegiance. The Malawi Government reaction was to clamp down on cross-

border movement. One agent told me:

'I used to cross at Chiponde, where I got documents for the visit. Its difficult to cross now: there used to be a regular border crossing point there, but it's been closed now' (C:150)

These initiatives coincided with the planting of mines, apparently by both FRELIMO and RENAMO, along the Mozambican border, which further restricted the mobility of agents.

One told me:

'I used to cross at Mjawa, but I'm scared now because so many people have been injured by land mines there' (C:151)

These excerpts highlight the degree to which the information system is dependent upon security and political conditions in particular, in both the country of origin and host country. The recent limitations on movement in Mangochi notwithstanding, it is still a fair generalisation that by the time of my interviews, the information networks which did exist, and the system of networks as a whole, were in a mature stage.

8.2.4. The mature stage

Individual information networks showed three interesting characteristics in the mature stage, namely: functionality; bi-directionality, and a stepwise pattern. These are characteristics of a sophisticated information network, supported by sorted transmitters and agents.

Just as many respondents did not take advantage of every available transmitter or agent, neither did they take advantage of every opportunity to gain information or make contact in the mature stage. The excerpt below highlights this notion:

'I could go to see my father in Mozambique every day if I wanted, but there's no point. I've only been twice, first when he was ill, and again when there was a circumcision feast for a cousin' (K:62)

As suggested in the last chapter, information networks for many underlay social networks. The maintenance of these social networks was more important than the receipt

of information *per se*. This is shown by the fact that the collection of information was not the primary motive of many visits and messages:

'My brother is a FRELIMO soldier in Lichinga. He sent me two letters, asking for food and money' (M:38)

'My father wrote to me asking if I could send him some nets. I will send them when my brother next visits...He only visits when he has fish to sell' (C:101)

The clear implication is that for some, information networks had matured into a means of serving economic purposes and maintaining functional social networks.

In those cases where the communication of information was still the primary motive of information networks, the degree of bi-directionality of the networks meant that most respondents could control the quantity and quality, including accuracy and content, of information sent to them. With the exception of two, respondents who received messages or letters from Mozambique reported that they were able to send back information if they so wished. The implication is that they were in a position to request certain types of information. It is very important to bear in mind that many respondents had reliable information of a content which they considered relevant. The implication is that for many the reason not to return was not uncertainty about conditions at home, rather a dissatisfaction with those conditions. In some cases the conditions considered important might still be security, but in many others, as highlighted in the preceding chapter, some respondents' priorities for return had expanded to include other conditions.

Another characteristic of the maturity of information networks was the complexity of many. For example, several respondents reported a step-wise process in information dispersion between relatives both in Mozambique:

'My parents are in Mapichiti, and my brother in Mandimba. My parents sometimes send messages for me to my brother. My brother then sends them on with traders' (C:89)

and in Malawi:

'My brother works in Lilongwe. Whenever I hear from my parents, I send the message onto my brother' (C:109)

The implication is that in many cases information networks were sophisticated enough that both the transmitters and receivers could control the direction of information flows.

8.2.5. Summary

In this section, the evolution of information networks, at both the individual and collective levels, has been considered. This evolution is conceived of consisting of the following four stages: the information vacuum; drop-out; sorting, and mature stages. The important characteristic of the evolution of individual information networks was progress to a stage where the receiver and transmitter could exert a great deal of control over the characteristics of the information in the network. The evolution of the system of collective information networks was indexed by progress from a condition of maximum entropy towards one of minimum entropy. While the number of networks decreased, the quantity and quality of those which remained increased. The system was characterised by ordered, directed and sophisticated networks. At the same time that information networks evolved in exile, so too did individual processes of evaluation.

8.3. The evolution of evaluation frameworks

In Chapter 7 the evaluation framework was conceived of as a system in which the various characteristics of information reliability and information content are assessed and evaluated in a 'black box' which represents the thought processes of the individual.

Rather than enter a laborious consideration of how the evaluation of each component of information reliability and content may have changed over time, it may be useful to consider the evolution of evaluation frameworks by identifying two key indicators which can be used to chart changing evaluations and which were identified in the preceding chapter, namely motivations and priorities.

Motivation has been defined as an impulse to act, the action in the context of this thesis being return. In this section a distinction is drawn between reactive and proactive (Richmond, 1988) potential repatriates. These terms are understood as follows. Reactive

potential repatriates either place no importance upon aspects of information reliability, or do not evaluate information about conditions at home at all. This is because their impulse to return is a reaction against events in exile. In contrast, the impulse for proactive potential repatriates is a comparison of events in exile and in the country of origin. Proactive potential repatriates therefore do place value upon information reliability.

In the first part of this section, it is shown that a sorting process occurred amongst the refugee populations involved in this study whereby the reactive repatriates returned early during exile, leaving proactive potential repatriates behind. At the same time it is acknowledged that a change in conditions in the country of exile can be sufficient to make proactive potential repatriates return in reaction. In other words these are not hard-and-fast categories: in reality there is probably a continuum between absolutely reactive and absolutely proactive behaviour, somewhere along which continuum my different respondents lay. Nevertheless, as a result of this sorting process, all of my respondents can be thought of as proactive potential repatriates.

The second part of this section shows how the priorities of my respondents evolved over time. In the context of this thesis, priorities are those attributes of the country of origin, such as those modelled in the '*model of a repatriation information system*', which take precedence in a decision whether to return. My interviews revealed two significant characteristics about the priorities of the respondents. First, they varied considerably. This is unsurprising except when it is considered that all of my respondents purportedly had an overriding priority, that was security, to flee. The implication, which has been intimated in previous chapters, is that the priorities which make refugees flee are not necessarily the priorities which keep them in exile. This concept relates to the second characteristic of respondents' priorities, which was that they developed over time. For many, their priorities could be seen as originating from the particular circumstances of their experiences in exile.

8.3.1. Motivations

Richmond (1988) conceived of a continuum between the 'rational choice' behaviour of proactive migrants and the 'reactive' behaviour of reactive migrants:

Under certain conditions the decision to move may be after due consideration to all relevant information, rationally calculated to maximise net advantage, including both material and symbolic rewards. At the other extreme, the decision to move may be made in a state of panic facing a crisis situation which leaves few alternatives...(Richmond, 1988, p.17)

Although not explicitly, Stein and Cuny (1991) adopted this distinction between reactive and proactive movements in distinguishing their four stages of self-repatriation, namely: ricochet; community-alienated; secondary relocation-stimulated and mass repatriations. The first three are all types of reactive repatriation, in response to events in exile, and the latter are a form of proactive repatriation. Richmond (1993) identified a more sophisticated typology of reactive refugee movement, focusing upon political, economic, environmental, social and bio-psychological factors.

Several of my respondents reported that their relatives had returned to Mozambique in reaction to conditions in exile. All three types of reactive repatriation considered by Stein and Cuny (1991) were apparent. Several relatives had returned almost immediately upon arrival in 'ricochet' repatriation, in response to the strains, both material and spiritual, of the prospect of exile:

'My mother returned alone after only a month because she couldn't eat pigeon peas as relish, she was used to fish' (C:1)

'My grandmother returned in the first year. She was sick, and she wanted to die at home. She is dead now' (C:8)

One respondent reported the return of his brother as a result of 'community-alienation', although this was apparently a self-perceived as opposed to actual alienation from a community:

'My brother had been visiting [in Mozambique] from Cabo Delgado. When RENAMO attacked, he fled with us. But he wanted to return to his family in Cabo Delgado, so he went back after a few months' (K:33)

The Assistant District Relief Officer (ADRO) in Mangochi informed me that during 1992 there were several family repatriations in response to Government initiatives to relocate

new arrivals ('secondary relocation-stimulated' repatriation) in the Mangochi district, where the camps were all now closed.

Indeed, most of the repatriations which occurred within the first year of exile appear to have been reactive. For these repatriates, the decision to return can be considered high-risk, not least because information networks had not yet become sophisticated enough to provide reliable information. It was this information for which those refugees who stayed were waiting before arriving at a decision. However, it would be false to distinguish too firmly between reactive and proactive repatriates. While it is true to say that those who remained did so generally because they wanted reliable information about conditions in Mozambique before making a decision whether to return, there were several indications that if conditions changed in exile, they too might return without evaluating information. For example, after several attacks in Chiumbangame camp on consecutive nights, the camp chairman told me during an informal discussion:

'If this continues, I wouldn't be surprised to see people returning home'

Another example is demonstrated in the excerpt below:

'I suspect the Malawi Government may tell us to go home, even if its unsafe. In that case we'll go because we have to, but then come back if it's unsafe' (C:44)

An individual's motivations can therefore be seen to be dictated to a large extent by the terms of his or her conditions in exile. If these conditions change, then motivations may equally change. The evolution of motivations is therefore a dynamic process founded in the experience of the individual. In my opinion it is to the credit primarily of the Government and people of Malawi that conditions in exile had not become so hostile that reactive repatriation had occurred in the context of a hostile conditions in exile.

What this meant is that there had been a sorting process, whereby most refugees who had repatriated since the first year have done so proactively, in other words after a comparison of conditions at home and in exile. However, for many, this comparison had become mediated by a new set of priorities, such that the removal of the precipitant of

their flight was no longer alone a sufficient condition for return.

8.3.2. Priorities

I think it can be accepted that most of my respondents (although certainly not every refugee in Malawi) could be considered refugees as defined in the 1951 Convention. Their characteristics were discussed in Chapter 5, the salient one being that they fled due to a well-founded fear of | persecution . In that case it can be accepted that security was their overriding priority when fleeing. However, it cannot be assumed that security alone was equally their primary priority upon return.

If this were the case it would be relatively easy to develop a model describing the pattern of repatriation amongst the refugee populations from which my samples were drawn. After the first wave of reactive repatriation, subsequent repatriation could be expected to have occurred when proactive potential repatriates received reliable information that it was safe to return to their intended destinations. The remaining population either would have had reliable information that it was unsafe to return, or would not have had reliable information. The reasons that such a model is not applicable were intimated in Chapter 7, where it was shown on the one hand that many respondents did have reliable information that it was safe at home, but still had no intention to return yet, and on the other that several respondents were perfectly willing to return to unsafe conditions which represented an acceptable risk.

In fact, my respondents displayed a range of priorities, of which security was only one. They also included political, social and economic priorities, and are now discussed in turn. To a large extent, these priorities can be seen to be founded in the particular circumstances of individuals during flight and exile.

Security-related priorities

There is no doubt that for some security alone was still the overriding priority. In general, they were respondents who had been particularly traumatized by the experience of flight. Such respondents refused even to consider return to Mozambique until they could be guaranteed real security there; and this was the information content which they considered most valuable:

'I won't go home until I'm sure its safe and that there will be no more fighting. I don't know how I will find out, though. I think when the peace is signed, I may be chased out of Malawi and told to return. In that case, I'll go, but only because I'll have to...I'll come straight back if its unsafe there' (C:113)

Other respondents with the same priority included those who had had personal experience of the danger of return. Two examples have already been given in this and the last chapter, namely the respondent who was captured and beaten by RENAMO soldiers when returning from a visit to Mozambique and an abortive repatriate who had fled violence a second time.

Political priorities

Five respondents in Jappie camp, in Nkhata Bay, had been RENAMO soldiers. They all considered it unsafe to return to the areas in which they had been active. It is interesting that their fears were based not upon their treatment before flight, but rather by their reception by fellow refugees in exile. One respondent had left his two children in Mozambique, fleeing himself only because of the threats of FRELIMO soldiers. He had planned to return immediately after the soldiers left the vicinity. However, his reception by refugees in Malawi was so hostile that he had been forced to relocate within Malawi. The subsequent return to his area of origin by groups of the refugees who had initially repelled him, meant that by the time of the interview he was afraid to return. The soldiers said that before returning they would wait to see who won the war, and whether amnesties would be offered to ex-soldiers.

I was told by my interpreters that several other respondents, who had not volunteered the information themselves, were associated with RENAMO, and were equally unwilling to return until they had information about the treatment of RENAMO sympathisers.

There were certainly several other respondents who were not forthcoming with details about their reason for flight and their previous occupations, whom I suspect were also politically or militarily implicated with one or other side, and who dared not return for fear of reprisals.

Social priorities

Several respondents did not plan to return without their families or communities. These were respondents who felt that they would be reliant for support and subsistence during return to and reintegration in Mozambique upon their family or community, and included physically handicapped, elderly, sick, and widowed respondents. For them, the provision of a support network in Mozambique was their main priority upon return. The excerpts below are from interviews with a widow and a man injured in a mine explosion respectively:

'I'll go with the chief and the others, I can't go alone' (C:102)

'I can't walk, so I'll wait until my family takes me' (C:71)

An elderly lady told me:

'I'll go when my children take me. It's up to them to decide when...I'll go, even if it's still unsafe there' (C:27)

Several respondents displayed a similar degree of dependence, but had no family or community upon which to rely. They included the respondent described in Chapter 7, who had been rejected by her fellow villagers and chief because she had borne a child out of wedlock. She told me that she would return only when she could be sure of institutional support. Again, support upon return was her priority.

Economic priorities

The priorities along side security which applied to the majority of my respondents were of an economic nature. Many were aware that in the short-term at least, they would struggle to subsist upon return. They identified traditional survival strategies which could be resurrected upon return, such as reciprocity and collecting wild| foodstuffs , but were clearly unwilling to return to such conditions if the necessity could be avoided:

'I won't go until the Government gives me assurances of assistance'
(C:61)

'As soon as its peaceful I'll go back, but if I don't get Government

assistance I'll come back to Malawi' (C:74)

In fact economic as opposed to political conditions in the country of exile seemed to have the greatest potency as potential 'push' factors to cause my respondents to return reactively. Apparently as a result of a lack of correspondence between camp and UNHCR census figures, some 1350 individuals in Kalanje camp in Mangochi had not received rations between June and August 1992. The camp chairman told me informally:

'If they don't receive rations at the next distribution either, I think they'll start going home'

In the event, the rations were received, and as far as I know there was no repatriation.

Indeed Christensen (1985) has suggested that in some cases, the withdrawal or at least threat of withdrawal of food and economic aid may be the only method of assuring the return of refugees when the flight-generating element in their countries of origin is removed. Such a policy may well prove to be necessary in the context of certain Mozambican refugees in Malawi.

In conclusion, this discussion of the principal categories of priorities identified amongst my respondents has highlighted two essential points. The first is that the priorities of many respondents changed in exile, such that their priorities for return were no longer the priority for which they fled. The second is that their priorities could in no way be predicted. They were often founded in the particular circumstances of the individual during flight and exile.

8.3.3. Summary

In this section, the motivations and priorities of my respondents, and their development over time, have been discussed. It has been shown that as a result of the particular, non-hostile circumstances of the country of origin, a sorting process occurred whereby reactive repatriates had returned to Mozambique, leaving proactive repatriates. These latter based a decision whether to return or not upon a comparison of conditions in exile and conditions at home. However, their priorities, which were originally dominated by

security, had in many cases changed in exile.

As the decision-making process is based upon the receipt and evaluation of information, and as both of the latter have now been shown to evolve in exile, it follows that the decision-making process itself must be dynamic, and will probably evolve in exile too.

8.4. The evolution of decision-making

Decision-making by potential repatriates, as predicted in the '*model of a repatriation information system*', consists of a comparison of conditions in exile and conditions at home, based on the evaluation of information from home. It was expected that when the latter became favourable, then repatriation might be expected to occur.

In this chapter so far the ways in which both information networks and the evaluation process developed in exile have been discussed. This discussion has caused a realisation that the decision whether to return relies upon the coincidence of reliable information which addresses the potential repatriate's developing priorities. The decision-making process is therefore a dynamic process: information which arrives today may be of a better quality than information which arrived a year ago, and might have encouraged the potential repatriate to go home a year ago, but now that his or her priorities have changed, it may be no longer sufficient.

The decision-making process, just like information networks and the evaluation process, can be considered to evolve in exile. Here, its evolution is understood to be indexed by four elements:

- (a) a progression from a short-term to a longer-term perspective of exile by the potential repatriate;
- (b) a progression from a risk-taking to a risk-aversion or conservative strategy,
- (c) more household evaluation as opposed to individual evaluation, and

(d) an increase in inertia.

In the following section, three stages of decision-making are considered chronologically, progressing from high-risk through medium-risk to low-risk. The stages of decision-making are paralleled by stages of repatriation. While these stages were of course not universally applicable to my respondents, they may be considered to have applied generally.

8.4.1. High-risk decision-making

This stage corresponds to that of reactive repatriation as described above. In the first year of exile there were apparently many examples of repatriation by people reacting against conditions in exile:

'I have a step-mother. She came originally, but then returned after one month.' (C:41)

'I know of person who went in the first months. He didn't like exile, and he didn't like the relish - he wanted fish - so he just went one day.'
(M:24)

Such repatriations were not based upon the consideration of reliable information from the areas of destination, partly because in the first few months at least there were few people remaining in the areas of destination to transmit information. Indeed returns occurred while other refugees were arriving *en masse* in the camps, and can therefore clearly be seen as high-risk initiatives.

There were no examples of reactive repatriation involving entire families. Normally those involved were elderly relatives who decided alone to return, and often did so against the wishes of the rest of the family. One reactive repatriate, referred to above, returned because she was sick and wanted to die at home, for example. Her case highlights well the fact that these reactive returnees had a short-term perspective of exile. Malawi had been a place to go to escape immediate danger, but not a place to remain. For these repatriates one could not consider that there was any sense of inertia in exile.

8.4.2. Medium-risk decision-making

Several respondents had relatives who were willing to wait in exile at least until some information was received, but were eager to return as soon as possible nevertheless. Not surprisingly, most of these respondents simply could not understand why their relatives had risked going home:

'After two years some (of the villagers) went back: I don't know why.'
(C:46)

Most of these returnees appear to have had security in the short-term as their prime priority. An example quoted in the preceding chapter was an abortive repatriate who returned with his family because he was told it was now safe, but was forced to return to Malawi following a further attack on his home village. However, other returnees during this stage did already have priorities as well as security; for those cited in the excerpt below, they were clearly of an economic nature:

'Some [of the villagers] went back after two years. They went because they wanted to cultivate their own land.' (C:85)

Whatever the reason for return, the decisions of early returnees were still relatively risky, for two reasons. First, the quality and quantity of information upon which the decision was based was in most cases poor, and the second reason was the short-term instability and the longer-term unpredictability of conditions in the areas to which they were returning. These are now discussed in turn.

As demonstrated above, it was only in the second year of exile or thereabouts, that individual information networks began to attain any degree of accuracy and reliability. Most of those who returned within the first two years appear to have based their decisions upon generally unreliable and unverified information. The excerpt below is from an interview with a village chief:

'Some [villagers] have returned to Mozambique: approximately sixty. About four years ago the Governor of Mandimba came to the camps and said that it was now safe to return to Mandimba... Those who trusted him returned. For those who didn't go, it wasn't so much a case of what they

believed as much as what they could see and hear for themselves'
(C:136)

In this last sentence the chief was referring to the fact that the reports of new arrivals cast considerable doubt upon the claims of the Governor.

However, the risk involved was not only a reliance upon information of inadequate quantity, quality or content, it was also the life-style to which these early returnees were probably aware they were returning. The fact that new arrivals were still coming spoke to the fact that there were still skirmishes in the areas of origin a year after the main attacks. Similarly the absolute dereliction of economic and social infrastructure must have been apparent. It seems that most returnees were aware of such problems, but willing to run the gauntlet:

'My brother, two sisters and mother are now in Nykwanga [Mozambique]...There is still food at home and they'd rather cultivate in fear, occasionally running to the bush, than live in poverty in exile.'
(K:15)

Perhaps the greater risk, however, was the unpredictability of future conditions in the areas of origin for those who returned especially within a year or so of the initial attacks, by which time it cannot have been possible to predict developments. In contrast, those who stayed and developed good information networks were able to receive regular updates of conditions at home, such that a time-lapse impression of the development of conditions could be ascertained.

It is an impossible task to predict who will and who will not take a risk, but as the excerpts below demonstrate respectively, the degree of vulnerability to danger in Mozambique, and personal experience of that danger, were variables:

'My Grandmother came in 1987, then returned after a year. She's old enough not to be afraid - its only the young who are scared: boys are conscripted and women taken for work' (K:41)

'Those who went back did so because life is easier in some ways there: there's plenty of firewood, good food (we prefer pigeon peas as relish),

and its easier to get clothes there. The difference is that people like me had face-to-face contact, and are scared to return' (M:2)

Returnees in this middle stage can be considered as having a medium-term perspective upon exile. While they were willing to wait for at least some information before making a decision to return, they were unwilling to undergo an interminable exile while waiting for every possible threat to be removed.

There were more entire families involved in repatriation by this stage. By the end of this stage, those families, and those family members, who had high return motivations and were willing to risk return, had by and large done so. There remained a core of conservative potential repatriates with good reasons not to return until necessary. This last stage is one where an inertia in exile could be considered to have set in.

8.4.3. Low-risk decision-making

As this consideration of the evolution of decision-making has been chronological, all of my respondents fell into this last stage. It would certainly nevertheless be a crass generalisation to say that they all therefore displayed conservative decision-making strategies. In some cases respondents had not returned because they did not have good information networks or alternatively had not believed what they had heard:

'I would go today if I heard that it was peaceful' (K:12)

In other cases, examples of which were given in Section 9.3, respondents had good political and social reasons not to return. Nevertheless there were respondents who apparently were unwilling to return primarily because they would not take the risk, despite the fact that they were in receipt of reliable information which addressed their priorities. The excerpt below is taken from an interview with a respondent whose family had not only returned and were living reasonable life-styles in Mozambique, but were also asking him to join them at home:

'My sister and parents went back after two years...even though my sister and parents ask me to go back, I won't because I'm scared' (C:67-68)

Several other respondents had excellent information networks with relatives in Mozambique who were working and were safe, yet were unwilling to return until they could be guaranteed that all risk was removed:

'I'll only go when its completely safe...if the Government doesn't assist me, I'll come back' (C:9)

Such respondents had developed long-term perspectives of exile. In the excerpt below, the respondent admits that people were losing interest in the Peace Talks between FRELIMO and RENAMO:

'I've heard of the Peace Talks...they've been going on so long now people are losing interest. The Talks keep failing' (C:103)

Many respondents also displayed a certain degree of despondency and resignation:

'I hear about the Peace Talks on the radio, but they started a long time ago, and I'm losing faith' (C:70)

'The Peace Talks have been going on forever. My worry is that the people in Rome are not educated' (C:109)

Such attitudes seemed to be pervasive amongst entire households and not just individual members. The implication is that those family members who had the motivation to return even without other family members, had by this stage done so. Every respondent with whom I spoke who planned eventually to return, intended to do so with their families, either all at once, or in stages, but nevertheless as a result of a joint decision.

The implication of such case-studies is that for some respondents, inertia in exile had set in. Just as several respondents reported an unwillingness to uproot themselves from home, even in the face of imminent threat, it may be that refugees in situations of protracted exile can be expected to become equally unwilling to return. This may parallel the development of a 'dependency syndrome' (Harrell-Bond, 1986) amongst certain refugees, and also reminds one of the 'consolidation stage' identified by Scudder and Colson (1982).

8.4.4. Summary

In this section, the themes which arose from the discussions of the evolution of information networks and the development of motivations and priorities have been combined in a consideration of the evolution of decision-making. It has been posited that decision-making can be considered to have progressed through three broad stages, characterised by a shift from high-risk to conservative decision-making strategies. At all but perhaps the first stage of reactive repatriation, information was received and evaluated, and compared to priorities. However, the process of decision-making which was based upon the evaluation changed as respondents developed a longer-term perspective upon exile, and as inertia set in.

An interesting theme in this discussion has been the progress from individual to household actions, such that by the final, low-risk stage, it was posited that the return of household members, even if in stages, could be expected to be the result of a joint decision. This notion of decision-making at the household level is now discussed.

8.5. Household strategies

Broadly, there were three categories of household decision-making strategies. The largest category consisted of those households which had chosen to remain together in exile, and planned to return together when their joint priorities were considered satisfied. The second largest category consisted of those which had divided because individuals within the household had arrived at personal decisions to return. These included examples already cited such as when females returned with their husbands, or the elderly returned for broadly spiritual reasons. The third and smallest category consisted of those households which had divided, but had done so apparently for the purposes of serving a household strategy, which was normally economic. In these cases the decision to return was not an individual one, rather it was a household one by which certain individuals were elected to return. (It is worth mentioning that although this latter category seemed to be the smallest of the three amongst my respondents, more recent work by Bonga and Wilson, 1993, has found that this type of household strategy has accounted for a good proportion of repatriation which occurred immediately after the Peace Accord).

In this section I do not propose to devote any further discussion to either of the first two

categories of household decision-making. The first strategy is to be expected; it is not unusual and analysis would add little to our understanding of the repatriation information system. The second has already been discussed, in the context of the behaviour of the different sexes within the household in Chapter 7, and in the context of the development of personal motivations and priorities founded in the experience of the individual earlier in this chapter. Instead I propose to focus upon the third household strategy. It is the most unexpected, and as will be seen, its implications undermine several common conceptions of refugees, and add considerably to an understanding of the complexities of the repatriation information system.

In the first section, these latter household strategies are defined, drawing examples from my interviews, and the logic for the strategies examined. In the second section the implications of these household strategies for the repatriation information system, in terms of the receipt and evaluation of information and the decision whether to repatriate, are discussed.

It is worth mentioning that the discussion of this subject was particularly sensitive. Most respondents were acutely aware of the illegality of certain consequences of household strategies such as admitting new members to the closed camps and double registration. Many were also understandably loath to subscribe to the implications of my questions about this subject, which was clearly that it was no longer unsafe for them to return.

8.5.1. An analysis of household strategies

As shown in Tables 6.13a and b, 24 respondents in total reported that they had relatives who had fled with them, but had since returned to Mozambique. In several cases the sorts of reasons given for the division of families have been discussed in this and the last chapter. They included, for example, females returning with their husbands. Alternatively some respondents had particular reasons not to have returned with their families, including political priorities as discussed in the preceding section.

However, in a number of cases the reasons for the family division could not be explained in terms of individual evaluation within the household. In this section the notion of household strategies is discussed. It is posited that just as during flight several

respondents' families had divided, with the most vulnerable to the conflict coming to Malawi first, and the rest following later, it may be that a similar process was occurring during return. One of the most important reasons for this was economic.

The excerpts below suggest that some families had divided for reasons other than individual priorities. One respondent told me:

'Its an easy journey to join my parents and sister in Mozambique' (C:68)

When I asked him why, in that case, he had not yet repatriated, he declined to answer. Another respondent told me:

'The whole village fled. I have ten sons, all of whom came, and all of whom went back in close succession about two years ago.' (C:36-37)

When I asked this respondent why he had not returned with his sons, he told me:

'I haven't been back because the Government [of Malawi] tells me to stay here' (C:36-37)

This is an unlikely reason. The Government obviously did not restrict his sons from returning, neither, as far as I was aware, had they told anyone else that they must stay. It could be argued that the implication of the respondent's reply was that the Government, by their continued support of refugees, had indicated that he need not return yet. This idea tallies with responses from several other respondents, who insisted that they would not return until the last possible moment, in other words when they were expelled by the Malawi Government.

There were indeed sound reasons, primarily economic, for households to divide such that two homes, one in exile and one at home, were maintained. Such a strategy cannot be considered innovative amongst either the Yao or the Nyanja. One reason is that many adopted this strategy upon flight, with household members most vulnerable to the conflict fleeing first, and others following later, or staying at home. A second is that, according to the account of one village chief, the geographical division of a household between

villages was a preparation for a traditional survival strategy, such that if one area became infertile, reciprocity with or migration to the other area became a viable option.

Reciprocity and access appear to have been the main advantages of household divisions for my respondents. The excerpts below, for example, demonstrate the obvious advantage of having a household member in receipt of rations:

'My brother is a FRELIMO soldier in Lichinga. He sent me two letters, asking for food...I sent him food last month' (M:38)

'My mother has sent six letters, the last was last month. She asks for food, which I have sent back' (J:28)

The advantages of reciprocity in the reverse direction were most apparent in Nkhata Bay, where several respondents regularly crossed the Lake to obtain fish from relatives on the more fertile Mozambican shores. Clearly the maintenance of two homes provided a double opportunity for subsistence.

Family division also facilitated access for both sets of family members to trade. Although traditional cross-border trade routes were being resurrected in any case, to have a family member in the trading country facilitated easy access to trade goods and markets. It also provided a base from which to operate. The excerpts below demonstrate such trade networks:

'My relatives come over from Mozambique to buy soap, which they sell in Mozambique' (C:99)

'My cousin and brother-in-law come to visit...they buy fish there [in Mozambique] and come to sell it, so their visits depend upon the availability of fish' (M:10)

Access to various consumer items was clearly better in Malawi than in war-torn Mozambique:

'My sister is with her husband in Mtengula. They want to tailor. They're doing piece work at home, then they'll come here to buy a sewing machine, which I can get for them' (M:29)

'I've received two letters in total from my father [in Mozambique]. The last was one week ago, asking me to buy nets for his fish business. I'll send a message to my brother in Mandimba, who will come and collect them to take them to Namalamba' (C:101)

In the opposite direction, the most sought after resource from Mozambique was firewood.

In the longer term, the maintenance of two homes provided the opportunity for one or other set of family members to migrate to the home of the other if necessary. The ease with which household members came from Mozambique to the camps, and the large-scale occurrence of double registration (UNHCR, 1988) and increased household size after initial registration, implied that should conditions in Mozambique become unsafe, or should subsistence there become impossible, then family members would join their relatives in exile. In the opposite direction, the presence of family members at home would make social and economic re-integration easier for returnees, as demonstrated below:

'My six children have now returned to Chanika. I plan to live with my children when I return. They have enough land for me to have some of my own for cultivation' (C:48-49)

'I plan to return to Mjawa and to cultivate there. My sons are looking after my land' (C:37)

Three respondents planned to stay in Malawi after the end of the war. The one with relatives still in Mozambique intended to bring his family to live with him then. He was already in the process of negotiation with a Malawian local chief for land. For this family, the presence of a relative in Malawi would presumably make the immigration procedure easier.

The presence of household members in Mozambique with whom there was regular contact clearly has implications for the receipt and evaluation of information by the relatives in exile. It similarly has implications for the timing of the return of those relatives. These are the topics of the next section.

8.5.2. Implications of household strategies for the repatriation information system

The '*systems model of a refugee cycle*', as depicted in Chapter 3, conceived of a feedback system whereby information from the country of origin, when evaluated as being of sufficient quantity and quality, could encourage migration in the opposite direction. Household strategies present an apparent contradiction to this model: while they promote information networks, and provide information which is evaluated highly, they effectively discourage repatriation for at least some household members.

Household strategies of partial repatriation provide an excellent example of the progress of some respondents' information networks to a mature stage, as described in Section 9.2. above. A sorting of information transmitters tended to occur whereby returned relatives immediately became the most valued transmitters:

'I used to send messages with traders to my cousins...Since my brother returned, I haven't contacted them...but my brother visits regularly'
(C:45)

The logic behind this sorting was presumably that the returns of these relatives were not individually motivated; rather they were to serve the household purpose, and so there was little question of doubting the quality of information dispatched. For example, the relatives returned to the same areas of destination as the respondent, and knew to a good extent his or her interests in conditions there. Furthermore, the majority of returned relatives in such examples did not use agents, rather they visited Malawi personally. This presumably reflected the fact that they had not submitted their registration cards when returning to Mozambique, and thus enjoyed relatively easy access:

'My six children have returned to Chanika, but I stayed with my wife and two other children...My sons have visited three times...we don't send letters to one another' (C:49)

With the complications of untrustworthy transmitters or the transmission of irrelevant information removed, plus the absence of reliance upon agents, those respondents whose relatives had returned apparently as part of a household strategy enjoyed very well-developed information networks. Bi-directionality meant that the quantity and quality of

information received correlated closely to that required or requested by the receiver, and thus information received was evaluated highly.

Nevertheless, such respondents above all others tended to insist that they would not repatriate until they were effectively forced to, whatever information they received. When I asked one respondent, several of whose relatives had returned to Mozambique and were in regular contact with him, when he planned to return, he told me:

'I just sit and wait...I get up in the morning, find my goats, come back and go to sleep. The Government will come and tell me when to leave'
(C:66)

This presents a *prima facie* contradiction to the expectations generated by the '*model of a repatriation information system*', which are that upon receiving and evaluating positively information about conditions at home, potential repatriates can be expected to return. In fact this analysis of household strategies undermines one of the implicit assumptions of much of the literature concerning repatriation, which is that potential repatriates will return at the first opportunity when their priorities are satisfied.

The discussion in Section 9.3. above showed how my respondents' priorities had developed in exile, progressing from security-biased priorities to include economic, social and other priorities. The present analysis shows that the satisfaction of household strategies can be considered a further priority for some. This would explain the sometimes bewildering interviews during which respondents apparently had no interest in conditions in their intended destinations. Rather their information networks seemed to be almost purely social, encouraging such 'every day' activities as attending weddings and feasts:

'My brother, sister and father returned two years ago. I've visited them four times so far: once to attend a funeral; once just to pay a visit; once to give sugar at a feast, and once to visit a sick child...My father has visited me five times...he doesn't bring news, he just comes to visit'
(C:103)

The system of cross-border invitations to and attendance of social events was a

fascinating process to observe. It speaks very strongly to the need to qualify or re-define the conceptions which many have about refugees.

Unlike respondents with other priorities, such respondents were not awaiting, and in some cases not even seeking, positive information concerning their priorities before arriving at a decision whether to return; rather the satisfaction of their priorities was achieved by remaining in exile, and not repatriating for as long as possible. Nevertheless, I was convinced that most did intend to return to Mozambique, and that they were thus still potential repatriates:

'I'll go home when the time comes' (C:77)

8.5.3. Commentary

In this section, household strategies of dividing the household between two homes, one on either side of the border, have been described and analysed.

By focusing upon the household as opposed to the individual, it has been possible to elaborate upon the relationship between the evolution of information networks and changing priorities, and to understand that the decision whether to repatriate may not simply rely upon the coincidence of evolving information and priorities.

What is most interesting is that those respondents left in exile as part of a household strategy hardly conform to any notion, be it in legal terms or in every day parlance, of a refugee. It could be argued that to them the border has little relevance, and that by maintaining two homes, closely linked by social visits and economic reciprocity, they were acting out a traditional survival strategy. There is a case for arguing, for example, that some respondents in Nkhata Bay were simply living on the other side of a natural resource (Lake Malawi) from their relatives. The border had little meaning, however the strategy had obvious economic reason. Estimates by the Tanzanian Government in 1987 that up to 30,000 refugees from Niassa and Cabo Delgado never returned after the end of the Independence War in Mozambique in 1975, would inform this notion.

Such an observation calls for an alternative hypothesis to the repatriation information

system in explaining when the refugee cycle comes to an end, for at least some people. It could be argued that people such as those fulfilling household strategies, as well as others who were not returning because priorities other than the precipitant of flight would remain unsatisfied by return, can be better described as another sort of migrant than a refugee. In most cases, they can perhaps be thought of as economic migrants. Some of these people, as in the case of most of my respondents, can be expected to return eventually, others, as in the case of Mozambicans in Tanzania quoted above, cannot. In either case, they can be considered to have exited the refugee cycle before return. It is posited here that the metamorphosis of some refugees into another type of migrant is an alternative hypothesis for how the refugee cycle comes to an end for some refugees. This notion and its implications are elaborated upon in the following chapters.

8.6. Conclusion

In this chapter, the repatriation information system has been shown to be dynamic. To understand when repatriation occurs to end the refugee cycle, we have to understand how information networks evolve, how the process of evaluation of that information evolves, and how the combination of the two translates into the decision-making process. The fact that all three of these elements changed in exile, partly in isolation of and partly in accordance with the other elements, makes it very difficult to develop a predictive model of when repatriation will occur for the individual. Repatriation will not necessarily occur when the individual receives reliable information about security, for example, because his or her priorities may have changed such that security is not the most important priority. Neither will repatriation necessarily occur when the potential repatriate does receive reliable information concerning his or her priorities, because inertia in exile may have set in; alternatively he or she may wish to stay in exile in any case to satisfy a family strategy.

Perhaps the most interesting observation from this chapter is that in all the evolving processes studied here, there is a 'mature' stage at which the term refugee could hardly be applied to the respondents. Mature information networks, for example, in several cases underlay social networks, such that the pursuit of information upon which to base a decision whether to return became secondary to the passing of invitations or attendance of social events. Some priorities evolved such that the priority which caused the

respondent to flee was not that keeping him or her in exile. In the decision-making process, some respondents have developed a long-term perspective of exile, for whom inertia had set in such that they could not be expected to leave until the very last moment. Also, certain household strategies were being pursued which basically ignored the political reality of the boundary, and took advantage of the relatively secure supply of safety and subsistence in Malawi. It has been posited that the maturing of all these elements of the repatriation information system may have indexed the metamorphosis of some refugees into economic migrants.

In the context of the complexity of the repatriation information system identified in the previous two chapters, this chapter has therefore served to identify a degree of order, which is the evolution of the various elements of the system. The following chapter seeks to model when the refugee cycle comes to an end for different people. Such a model must seek to incorporate both the complexity and the order of the repatriation information system.

Chapter 9 Towards an Integrated Information Model of Repatriation

9.1. Introduction

The lodestar of this chapter is integration.

The aim of this thesis was described in Chapter 1 as the identification and analysis of how refugees in exile receive, evaluate and use information from home in the decision whether to repatriate. This process was theorised in the '*model of a repatriation information system*' in Chapter 3. The last three empirical chapters have pointed to a host of factors which are variables in this repatriation information system, as follows:

- (a) the individual experience of flight and exile and its mediation of the geography of information networks and the receipt of information (Chapter 6);
- (b) the evaluation of information and the way in which its use in making a decision whether to return is mediated by individual motivations and the interaction of individuals (Chapter 7), and
- (c) the evolution of information networks, motivations and priorities which together make the decision-making process a dynamic one (Chapter 9).

If the aim of this thesis is to be achieved, then these variables must be combined within a single framework. Such a framework is designed in this chapter (the '*integrated information model of repatriation*'). However, given the theoretical rationale of the thesis (Chapter 2), which was designed to elevate this case study to the status of a method of exposition of general applicability to other refugee situations, then this model should be shown to be of such general applicability. Furthermore, the model must also allow for the alternative hypothesis which was flagged at the end of the last chapter, which was

that some people may 'exit' the refugee cycle before repatriation, for whom return might more properly be described as return migration. In so doing, the model would incorporate the theme which was identified in Chapter 1 and developed in Chapter 2, and which has pervaded this thesis, of the blurring of the distinction between refugees and other types of migrant.

In the first part of this chapter, three themes which have been identified through the preceding chapters are discussed in order to inform the model, which is then depicted and described in the second part. After its presentation, the model is evaluated in terms of its validity in the context of my particular case study, but also its applicability to other refugee situations.

9.2. Thematic elements in the model

An important theme to emerge from Chapter 6 was that of *differentiation*. It was shown that the receipt of information was determined to a large extent by the geography of information networks. A discordance in the geography of some information networks, such that for whatever reason there was not a transmitter in or with access to the intended destination, resulted at the outset in a distinction between refugees based on the receipt or not of information concerning the intended destination. However, this differentiation itself could alter through time, as the geography of networks changed and some refugees started, and others ceased, to receive information. This changing differentiation contributes towards an overwhelming theme to emerge from the previous chapters which was that of *complexity*. This theme should always be borne in mind: repatriation is a very complicated process.

Partly the complexity of repatriation also relates to the evaluation of information. Evaluation as understood in Chapter 7 is a highly subjective and basically unpredictable process which therefore varies between individuals. The evaluation of information was shown to be related to its reliability and its content, and each of these aspects was shown to be complicated. Furthermore, the translation of individual evaluations into a use of information in the decision whether to repatriate was shown to be equally complex, occurring as it did at a variety of levels ranging from the individual through a range of collective levels, and varying as it did according to individual motivations.

In contrast to this complexity, a third theme which has been identified is that of *order*. To an extent, all of the variables in the repatriation information system, namely the receipt, evaluation and use of information in repatriation, can be considered to have evolved during exile. The basic logic to the evolution of each has been an increase in inertia, and the end-stage of each could be described as 'exile-oriented'. Thus information networks for some evolved into social networks which articulated normalised social relationships between refugees in exile and kin at home. Motivations also evolved from reactive to proactive; priorities evolved to include much more than the underlying cause of or precipitant to flight, and the decision-making process became progressively lower-risk and more collective. The suggestion was made at the end of the last chapter that this evolution could also be applied to the type of return undertaken by the refugee: repatriation giving way to return migration, and the refugee 'metamorphosing' into another type of migrant.

9.3. An integrated information model of repatriation

What is needed is a model which can incorporate the complexities and at the same time the order of the repatriation information system in explaining the decision whether to repatriate in terms of the receipt and evaluation of information. Such a model might be as is depicted in Figure 9.1.

The '*integrated information model of repatriation*' consists of three horizontal stages in each of which the type of return is the *outcome* and the four elements of information networks, priorities, motivation and decision-making its *associated conditions*.

There are both horizontal and vertical links in the model. The vertical links are evolutionary. As discussed above, the receipt, evaluation and use of information as well as the type of return can all be considered to evolve. To a large extent each evolves independently. This means that the horizontal links in the model are not causative; rather, they are associative. Thus, in the previous chapters it has been suggested that reactive repatriation, amongst my respondents at least, was normally associated with an information vacuum, a reactive motivation, a prioritisation of the precipitant of flight, and high-risk and individual decision-making. This association can be traced through all three stages. The reason the links are not causative is that the type of return can nevertheless

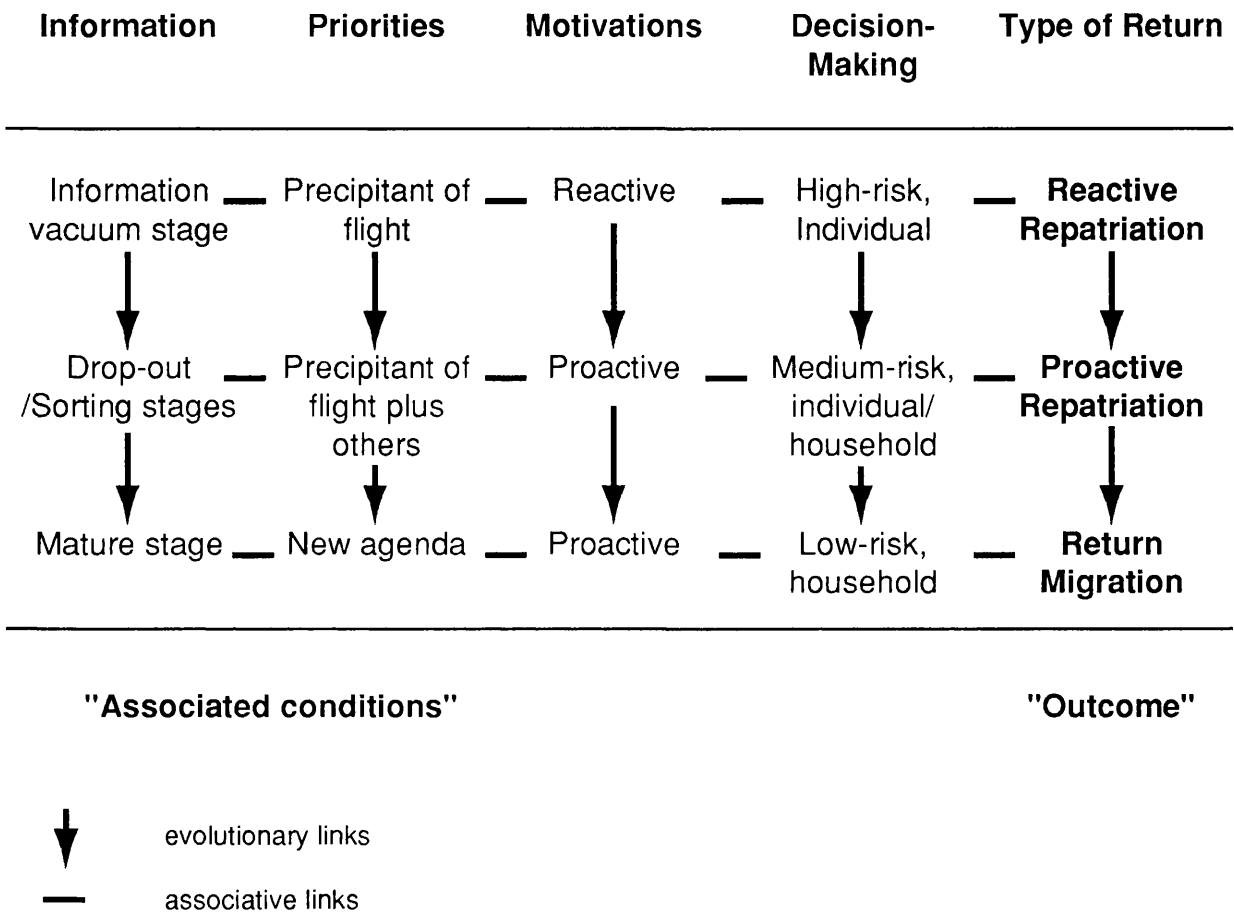


Figure 9.1. An integrated information model of repatriation

occur when only one of its four associates exists even if the other three do not. Thus, whatever the state of evolution of his or her information network, priorities, or decision-making, the motivation of a refugee facing harassment in exile will be reactive and he or she may be expected to return reactively. However, what is expected is that at least one of the associated conditions must exist to explain a type of repatriation. Thus return migration would not be expected given the four conditions associated with reactive repatriation in the model. Furthermore, each type of return is considered more likely to occur when more of its associated conditions coincide.

A refugee normally progresses along the evolutionary path of each of the associated conditions at a different rate. Furthermore, a refugee does not have to pass along the paths sequentially: there is no reason why a new arrival should not join kin with a mature stage information network already, and thus enter directly into that stage. Equally, a refugee can pass along the paths of the associates in either direction: there is no reason why an information source cannot cease to operate, for example, so that a refugee's mature stage information network is relegated to the status of the information vacuum stage. What these processes add up to is a decreased opportunity for the coincidence of associates in the same horizontal stage for any individual refugee, and therefore a decreased probability of return of whatever type. They also mean that different refugees can return in different ways at the same time, as their associates can coincide at different times.

Thus, while recognising a degree of order in the repatriation information system, the *'integrated information model of repatriation'* also incorporates the complexity which makes repatriation so difficult to predict for the individual and the differentiation which can occur between individuals at all stages. The model is now discussed in application to the circumstances of my respondents.

9.4. Information and repatriation: the case of Mozambican refugees in Malawi

Stage One 'Reactive Repatriation'

Stage One was the period of arrival of the majority of the refugees in my sample populations. This stage included the arrival of both anticipatory and acute refugees, and

some of those delayed due to intervening temporary stops. It lasted about a year.

Immediately upon arrival there was an information vacuum, accounted for partly by the fact that new arrivals had more pressing immediate concerns of adaptation than information about Mozambique, partly because potential transmitters and agents were not yet in place, and also because of the understandable reluctance to return immediately to conditions traumatic enough to have precipitated flight. This vacuum was quickly filled as relatives temporarily displaced within the country of origin returned home, and delayed arrivals from the home area arrived. The majority of refugees therefore received information about home at this stage, as the information vacuum was filled.

However, at this early stage, information was not generally evaluated as reliable or necessarily relevant, as both the quantitative and qualitative characteristics of the nascent information networks were poor. Those whose motivation to return was a reaction against conditions in exile may not have evaluated information from home in reaching their decision, while others awaited more reliable information before making a decision.

It follows that any decision to return made at this stage was high-risk, as there was so little information upon which to base that decision. Such a decision was made either by refugees reacting against exile, or by those with a very short-term perspective of exile, whose priority for return was simply the removal of the immediate precipitant of their flight. In both cases, decision-making at this stage was at the individual as opposed to household level.

Return at this stage was dominated by reactive repatriation, including the categories of 'community-alienated' and 'ricochet' returns (Stein and Cuny, 1991). These returnees generally remained at home once they had returned unless further flight was precipitated, and for them the refugee cycle was therefore quickly completed.

Stage Two 'Proactive Repatriation'

By this second stage, after the first year or so, and lasting perhaps two years, the vast majority of people who fled the initial cause of uprooting, and intended to leave the country of origin, had arrived in exile. New arrivals hereafter were no longer necessarily

fleeing insecurity, rather they may, for example, have been joining relatives in exile due to economic or social hardships in the country of origin.

The exhaustion of new arrivals spelt the erosion of information agents for many refugees. This was the drop-out stage in the evolution of information networks, during which a distinction between refugees occurred. The majority no longer had relatives in the country of origin and could not expect to receive information from a sufficiently reliable transmitter from now on. The second largest category was those with relatives in a known location in the country of origin, with whom contact had either been made already, or could be expected soon. It is the quality of the information networks of these refugees which evolved further. The smallest category was those who believed their relatives to be alive and in the country of origin, but did not know their locations. In rare cases, refugees in this category located and contacted their relatives, and thus joined the second category.

By this stage, almost all reactive repatriation had occurred. Further reactive returns could only be expected if conditions in the host country changed such as to create a 'push' effect. This was a possibility, which did not occur in the eventuality, for some refugees in Chiumbagame during the period of armed attacks on that settlement, and for those refugees in Kalanje who had not received their rations. Otherwise, the motivation to return of those who remained was a comparison of conditions at home and conditions in exile. The overriding priority of the majority was still that which caused them to flee, and thus in most cases insecurity. It is at this stage that Wilson's (1991) notion of refugees seeking areas of peace in space and time was salient.

The decision to return at this stage was medium-risk. This was firstly because in many cases information networks had not yet reached a satisfactory quality to provide accurate or frequent information about the home area. Secondly, as this was the stage of 'repatriation under conflict' (Cuny and Stein, 1991), both short-term and longer-term conditions in the country of origin remained unpredictable. The decision to return at this stage reflected a still short-term perspective upon exile. Decision-making occurred at a combination of the individual and the family level, although generally members of the family vulnerable to the conflict tended to stay in exile at least until returning family

members had confirmed the safety of conditions at home.

Repatriation at this stage was proactive, and involved those who had been able to ascertain that their destination areas were safe enough for return. This was the stage at which some abortive repatriation occurred, as some returnees based the decision to repatriate upon information about home which proved to be inaccurate or out-of-date upon return. Such abortive repatriates therefore re-entered the refugee cycle. Those who decided not to repatriate either belonged to the category without information networks, had insufficiently reliable information upon which to base a decision to return, or had reliable information that it was unsafe to return. Another category of stayees were those who did have reliable information that it was safe to return, but still did not do so because of new priorities. This category included those fulfilling family strategies.

Stage Three 'Return Migration'

By this stage there were no new arrivals fleeing the initial cause of uprooting. The refugees by this stage had been in exile for some four years or so. Where they existed, information networks had evolved to maturity. A good proportion of refugees had relatives who had by now returned to the country of origin, and therefore had a choice of information transmitters as a result. As cross-border trade had become at least partly normalised, and as new trade based upon the refugee settlements had arisen, many also had a choice of agents. The sorting of information transmitters and agents underpinned mature information networks, which were characterised by bi-directionality, which meant that some refugees were able to exert a large influence upon the content, quality and quantity of information received. By this stage there was also increased scope for cross-border visits for many. To a degree, information networks had transformed into social networks: information was largely functional, and often became a secondary purpose in otherwise social visits and exchanges.

The motivation of almost all the refugees at this stage to return was still the comparison of conditions at home and in exile. However, for many priorities had changed and economic, social and political priorities assumed as much importance as security-related priorities. In other words, while information quantity and quality for many was perfectly acceptable, it was now information content which was most important in the decision-

making process. A good proportion of refugees had reliable information that the root cause of their flight had now been removed, but still did not intend to return yet.

Decision-making by this stage was conservative. Some refugees considered it dangerous to return despite the fact that their relatives were now living safely at home and had asked them to return. Some such refugees were traumatised, others conceived of the end of war in the country of origin as a panacea.

At this stage there was less repatriation than at previous stages. A few potential repatriates for whom security was still a priority may have repatriated upon discovering that conditions at home were now safe. Similarly a few refugees with other priorities may have repatriated upon discovering that their priorities could be better satisfied by return. Some stayees continued to be those without information networks. There were very few with information networks who now remained because they did not have reliable information; rather they remained because a comparison of conditions at home and conditions in exile showed that their priorities could be better satisfied by staying. For many these priorities were not security, and in most cases they were economic. It was expected that no further repatriation would therefore occur until the rights of the refugees to remain were effectively removed. In many respects this stage represented the metamorphosis of at least some refugees into another type of migrant, and the transition of potential repatriation to potential return migration.

9.5. An evaluation of the model

In its application in the above section, the '*integrated information model of repatriation*' has been shown to be an appropriate framework for explaining the variety of repatriation experiences and plans observed amongst my sample population. However, in keeping with the theoretical rationale of this thesis, which maintained the importance of developing a framework which might be of applicability to refugee situations other than my particular case study, the model has to be evaluated in terms of its more general applicability.

The point was made at the beginning of this thesis that repatriation is a complex process which is not clearly understood. The observation was made that different people within

the same refugee population repatriate at different times, for different reasons and in different units. As a result, it was suggested that a focus upon refugee decision-making, as opposed to institutional policies, for example, might be an appropriate way of approaching and understanding repatriation.

As a result, the '*integrated information model of repatriation*' provides one means of understanding when and how the refugee cycle ends for different refugees. One way in which this is achieved is by the incorporation of the range of repatriation experiences within a single framework. This is important because such a range usually occurs within any single refugee population. Thus Stein and Cuny's (1991) four types of self-repatriation ('community alienated', 'ricochet', 'secondary relocation' and 'mass' self-repatriation) are allowed for. The various reactions to official repatriation schemes, namely participation, parallel self-repatriation and rejection by remaining in exile, are also included. Finally, in explaining the phenomenon that some refugees choose not to repatriate even after the removal of flight-inducing factors, an alternative means of exiting the refugee cycle is introduced, whereby refugees effectively metamorphose into another type of migrant.

Furthermore, the model recognises that for different people the coincidence of conditions which are associated with a type of repatriation occurs at different times. This allows the model to incorporate the phenomenon that different refugees repatriate at different times. At the same time the model understands that the different ranges of repatriation can co-exist, and occur at the same time within a single population. Finally, by understanding that decision-making can occur at the various levels of the individual, household and community, the model also allows for different units of return, including the return of only part of a household.

Therefore, a focus upon the decision-making of refugees has provided one means of understanding the complexity of the repatriation process. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that the receipt, evaluation and use of information in the decision whether to repatriate is only one part of the '*system of the refugee cycle*', and the potential mover only one of the three elements which also include the country of origin and the country of asylum. In other refugee situations, the characteristics of and interactions between all

three elements might be different from those observed in my case study.

A vital contextual feature in the formation and maintenance of information networks has been shown to be geography. In the case of my respondents, the vast majority were located very close to their destination areas which were just over the border, and that border was generally porous. Clearly in a situation such as that for many Mozambicans in Zambia, where refugees were relocated away from the border, or for those in Zimbabwe, where border crossings were restricted as a result of the sensitive security situation on the border, information networks may be undermined as a result of the lack of access for visitors or other agents and for return visits by the refugees. Nevertheless, the main result of such a geography is that the initiation of the evolutionary stages in the above model is delayed for most people. As a recent study by Makanya (1992*b*) has shown, for example, it is only after the Peace Accord that the information vacuum for most Mozambicans in Zimbabwe has begun to be filled, and most planned not to return until they had sufficient information upon which to base that decision.

Similarly, the pattern of flight has been shown to an important condition during the evolution of information networks. It is a particular feature of my sample populations that they generally fled a single event, and generally arrived in Malawi within a year of one another. Thus after about a year, new arrivals were stemmed, and the stage of information network drop-out occurred for many respondents. What this means is that my sample populations can generally be considered to belong to a single 'vintage' of flight (Kunz, 1973). The above model is basically designed for a single vintage, hence it spans from the arrival in exile of the first in the vintage to the exit from the refugee cycle, by whatever means, of the last. In many other refugee situations, patterns of flight and arrival are greatly complicated, with people in different stages of different vintages arriving together in the same settlement in exile. While making analysis much more complex, all this situation infact means is that different repatriation information systems would be superimposed upon one another.

It is also a peculiar feature of my sample populations that until 1992, and even then only in the camps of Mangochi District, decision-making occurred in an environment without external pressures. Wilson and Nunes (1991), for example, observed the harassment of

refugees especially by RENAMO troops in other Districts in Malawi. Nevertheless, such circumstances can still be incorporated in the above model. Where harassment is at its most extreme, 'reactive' repatriation might occur. If the harassment is sponsored by the government of the country of asylum, this becomes '*refoulement*'. However, as was observed in Chiumbangame where a number of armed attacks had occurred, and in Kalanje where a proportion of the population had not received their rations, in the context of less extreme external pressure 'proactive' repatriation can still be expected to occur. Both of these responses are incorporated in the model.

A final and vital contextual feature is the freedom and ability to repatriate when that decision is made. I heard of no examples amongst my sample populations of potential repatriates being stopped from returning. Furthermore, because the areas of destination of the majority of my respondents were close to the border upon which they were settled in exile, it is unlikely that return might be restricted by economic hardship, even for those in Nkhata Bay who had to cross Lake Malawi. Perhaps the most significant potential obstacle to return was for the physically handicapped, who would require some form of transportation. Where the freedom or ability to repatriate is restricted, such as for many Mozambican refugees currently in Tanzania who need to cross the unbridged River Rovuma in order to return (Wilson, 1993), one can conceive of a bottle-neck in the refugee cycle, yet the model is still applicable in that it explains when a refugee decides to repatriate as opposed to when he or she actually achieves return.

It is therefore argued that as well as being valid in its application to the repatriation of my sample population, the '*integrated information model of repatriation*' may also be broadly applicable to other refugee situations, even where the characteristics in the '*system of the refugee cycle*' are different. What this also means is that the model allows for changing circumstances in the elements in any single system.

9.6. Conclusion

The model developed in this chapter has incorporated both the complexity and the order in the repatriation information system, as revealed during the preceding empirical chapters. The model seeks to explain when the refugee cycle ends for different refugees in terms of the receipt, evaluation and use of information. Although it has been designed

on the basis of the circumstances of my sample populations, it has been suggested to have a more general applicability to other refugee situations.

The '*integrated information model of repatriation*' therefore represents the qualified achievement of the aim of this thesis. The model also represents an original contribution to refugee studies, as it addresses three *lacunae* in refugee studies identified in Chapter 1, namely the conceptual distinction between refugees and other types of migrants; the dearth of overall theoretical reflection, and the dearth of studies of refugee repatriation. The model also has a series of implications, and these are discussed in the following chapter.

Chapter 10 Conclusion

10.1. Overview

The *aim* of this research has been to identify and analyse how refugees in exile receive, evaluate and use information from home in coming to a decision whether to repatriate. This aim has been pursued via two *objectives*, namely the development of a theoretical model (the '*model of a refugee repatriation information system*') and the testing of the model in the field. In achieving its aim, this thesis has proved a qualified success. As a result of these two objectives, an '*integrated information model of repatriation*' has been developed. During an evaluation of this model in the last chapter, it was pointed out that while the model generally succeeded in explaining repatriation amongst my sample population and might also be applicable to other repatriation movements, it could nevertheless by no means be described as comprehensive.

In pursuing the above aim, it was intended that this thesis would adopt a geographical approach in addressing three significant lacunae in the study of refugees, namely the conceptual ambivalence concerning the distinction between refugees and other sorts of migrants; the dearth of theoretical reflection, and the lack of empirical research on the process of repatriation. This has been achieved by drawing upon the systems approach from migration studies to formulate a theoretical model of repatriation. The subsequent fieldwork provided empirical support for the theoretical rejection of a clear-cut distinction between refugees and other kinds of migrants.

The last chapter represented the qualified achievement of the aim of this research. However, it is not surprising that the theoretical rationale adopted in pursuing that aim means that the thesis has a number of implications which extend beyond the limits of this immediate aim.

10.2. Implications

10.2.1. Definitional Implications

Discussion in Chapter 2 identified contradictory forces involved in refugee definition, and the distinction thereby between refugees and other kinds of migrant. On the one hand, there is an argument for distinguishing between refugees and other kinds of migrant in order that assistance may be targeted to those most in need. On the other hand, an emphasis on this distinction can be used to justify political attempts to reduce assistance and deny entry to all migrants, including genuine claimants (Black, 1993a). This thesis can be considered to bear implications for both arguments.

The '*integrated information model of repatriation*' reminds us once again that it is not only those who flee persecution and arrive in exile who can be considered to be in need. First, the model speaks to the notion of selective flight. There are many people in refugee-like situations without access to an international border, and thus without recourse to international assistance. These include those who live far away from the border, but also the elderly or infirm who cannot reach the border, and those whose access to the border is denied by logistical problems such as landmines, lack of transport or lack of resources to pay for the journey. Relatives of my respondents, who had not fled and thus became the transmitters of information, fitted into each of these categories. The remarkable instance of one of my respondents sending home remittances speaks to the need of those who did not cross the border. Second, the model shows how some people who do cross the border may not fit the criteria for refugee status, but may still be in need. Such people include those who arrived during Stage Two and even Stage Three of the model, who were not fleeing persecution, but perhaps the collapse of infrastructure as a result of the flight of others. Given such observations, if a distinction is to be made between refugees and other kinds of migrants according to a needs-derived basis, then the definition of a refugee should be extended to include those who do not satisfy current definitions but are still in need.

The model also has implications for the flip-side argument. As discussed in Chapter 2, one result of the introduction of stricter immigration controls in countries of the North has been the phenomenon of economic migrants portraying themselves as refugees. Such a phenomenon makes definition all the harder, and also throws new light upon refugee

enumeration and assistance programmes. This study has identified another process, which acts in the counter direction, and serves to blur the distinction even further. That is the metamorphosis in exile of some refugees into another type of migrant. A distinction therefore arises between those who arrive as economic migrants but portray themselves as refugees, and those who arrive as refugees and exit the refugee cycle to become economic migrants.

Such a finding is potentially a politically sensitive one. However, the implication here is not that refugee status, once granted, should be somehow monitored and withdrawn when it does not appear to be applicable; and in any case such a policy would be impossible. One cannot conceive of a responsible humanitarian programme which effectively forces refugees to return simply when it is safe in their areas of destination, despite the continuation of insecurity in other areas of the country of origin, and thus the inevitable unpredictability of conditions in the temporarily safe areas in the long term. However, following the end of a war, the model has shown that it cannot be assumed that all refugees will want to return. Such a situation might result in an interesting reversal of the conventionally assumed balance of push-pull factors between a country of origin and host country, whereby the country of origin may have to provide incentives to return, and the host country incentives to leave. Such a situation clearly takes the discussion away from the realms of a refugee cycle, and into the realms of a migration cycle (e.g. Rogers, 1981).

These dual definitional implications of the model seem to present a *prima facie* contradiction. On the one hand, many people who are not defined as refugees may be in need, and on the other hand many who are may not. However it is worth re-iterating Shacknove's seminal hypothesis (1985), to show how the two approaches might be integrated into a single definition of a refugee. For Shacknove, there were three prerequisites to the definition of a refugee. The first is a deprivation of basic rights. While these rights include human rights of freedom from insult or injury, for example, they also include a bundle of basic needs which make up the necessary conditions for the fulfilment of subsistence needs, including a technology for processing resources, an infrastructure for facilitating commerce and a method of distribution. The second is that a person without these basic rights is without recourse to the home government. In

exchange for their allegiance, Shacknove argued, citizens can expect that their government will guarantee physical security, vital subsistence, and liberty of political participation and physical movement. The third prerequisite is access to international assistance. Such an approach explains that regrettably, those without access to international assistance, such as internal displacees, are not defined as refugees. It also allows that the refugee can expect more than simply security from the home government. If return cannot guarantee economic subsistence or social re-integration, while remaining in exile can, a person can still be defined as a refugee. Whether they should still be entitled to assistance, and whether the host government should still be obliged to allow them residency, is another matter.

10.2.2. Theoretical Implications

Three themes pervaded the discussion in Chapter 3 of existing refugee theory. The first was the paucity of refugee theory, and especially repatriation theory. The second was the potential for drawing upon migration studies, with its far more developed literature and greater theoretical armoury, in order to inform new refugee theory. The third was the possibility of linking refugee and migration theories into an integrated theoretical framework which could incorporate all migrants.

The contribution of this study to existing refugee theory was assessed in the last chapter, when the '*integrated information model of repatriation*' was evaluated. It was suggested that this model is a valid theoretical statement both because of its inherent coherency and also its applicability to other refugee situations. In reviewing the theoretical model of an information system (Koser, 1993a), Robinson (1993) described the attempt to search for explanation of refugee flows through the application of migration theory as opting for *terra incognita*. Nevertheless, the systems theory of migration has been shown to be applicable and of assistance in explicating the refugee cycle. There are perhaps also fruitful applications of other schools of migration theory, such as gravity models, cost-benefit models or behavioural models. However, what this thesis has also done is lend credence to the possibility of the development of a single theoretical framework which incorporates all migrants.

In his exploration of the possibility of integrating international and internal migration

theories, Pryor (1981) suggested that one means was to seek similarities between the processes and patterns of the two types of migration, which might then allow them to be approached from a common theoretical standpoint. He identified several spheres within which similarities might be pursued, which included causal factors and patterns of migration flows. Focusing upon these spheres, the following discussion considers some of the similarities between migration movements and refugee movements, as informed by this research. It then goes on to consider how theory integration might be based upon such similarities.

Although my fieldwork focused upon the issue of repatriation, there are certain data which concern causes and patterns of flight. These limited data suggest a certain degree of similarity between refugee flight and migration. In terms of causation, the notion that within a single vintage the cause of flight changes such that refugees arriving in Stage Two and Three are moving for economic reasons, invites the observation these later arrivals are better compared with migrants than with refugees. There also seem to be similarities in patterns of movement. The notion of search, whereby migrants move in a step-wise nature searching for improvements while they go would seem to parallel the step-wise flight of some 35% of my respondents via other locations. The notion of bridges between migrants, which are articulated by return visits and remittances, and used to facilitate the immigration of another person from home would seem to parallel the arrivals of some respondents in Stage two. Finally the notion of maturing migration streams, whereby changing perspectives upon and expectations of the host country are manifested by new patterns of family migration and return migration, have been shown to be highly applicable to this particular refugee situation.

Turning to return migration, King (1978) identified the main causal factors in return migration to include expulsion from the immigration country, laws restricting length of stay, lack of economic opportunity and failure to adjust. Such causal factors can all be applied to repatriation movements as described in the model in the last chapter. Expulsion and return due to legal restrictions corresponds with the notion that many refugees in Stage Three will not return until they have to, in other words when their refugee status is removed. Lack of economic opportunity relates to many of those stayees in Stage Three who are not returning yet because they consider themselves economically

better-off in exile, and cannot be expected to return until this changes: for example when rations are reduced or withdrawn. Finally, failure to adjust was one of the reasons given for the reactive repatriation of some, especially the elderly, during Stage One.

An alternative causal typology of return migrants distinguishes between forced, planned and spontaneous movements. Forced repatriations are strictly 'refoulements', but as Crisp (1984) has shown, they may nevertheless be described as voluntary repatriations by the authorities involved. Planned returns most closely respond to the notion of proactive repatriation, which occurs in Stage Two of the model. Spontaneous movements most closely correspond to the reactive repatriations expected in Stage One.

A survey of typologies of patterns of return migration flows reveals the possibility that repatriating refugees may also be included in these typologies. The most geographical return migration typology was that by Alvarez (1967), which was discussed in Chapter 3. He considered patterns of movement and return within source areas, and developed a five-fold typology to describe the various possibilities. There was at least one respondent in each of these categories from my survey. Another classification is made on the basis of temporal criteria into occasional, periodic, seasonal, temporary and permanent returns. Occasional returns are short-term and for reasons such as family visits and marriage. The occurrence of such visits was found to be one of the most surprising characteristics of many of my respondents. Periodic movements are regular returns, normally for business. This is the category into which refugee traders who acted as agents fitted. Seasonal returns are dictated by the nature of a job, an example being seasonal agricultural returns. Although generally not in my study areas, Mozambican refugees on the western border of Malawi used to return to their fields in Mozambique seasonally. Temporary returns are normally fairly short-term. Perhaps the best example of temporary returns amongst my respondents was that of the abortive repatriate, although of course his intention was not to return for a short-term. As shown in the model above, reactive repatriations during Stage One can normally be expected to be permanent.

This brief review has shown that similarities between refugees and other migrants can be found in the spheres of causation and patterns of movement, for both flight/migration

and repatriation/return migration. Pryor (1981) suggested this search for empirical similarity as a possible vehicle for the integration of theories, but does not go on to attempt such an integration. Perhaps, as Zelinsky (1983) seems to conclude, a fully integrated migration theory cannot be achieved. Beyond the following preliminary observations, an attempt to integrate migration and refugee theories is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Despite the similarities observed above, there is no doubt that refugee movements throughout the refugee cycle, particularly in the early stages, can conform to more conventional notions of relative powerlessness. What does seem to be clear is that in order to incorporate properly the full spectrum of refugees, migration theories would have to expand to allow for this forced nature of many refugee movements. Hence, for example, cost-benefit analyses from which derive Todaro's notion of 'privately rational economic calculations of the individual' (1976, p.28), are not satisfactory. More recent extensions, which consider non-economic costs and benefits, and also the relevance of expected rather than actual differentials, make the model more relevant. Perhaps the most valuable extension is to place the cost-benefit analysis by the migrant into the context of political restrictions and constraints. It is most interesting to note that Zolberg (1981) was a proponent of such extensions to migration theory, and then later (Zolberg, *et al.*, 1986, 1989) constructed a theory of refugee movements upon such political dimensions.

A similar observation can be made for theories of return migration. Recent fieldwork by the UNHCR (1993a) suggests that those Mozambicans who used to cross the border from Malawi periodically in order to tend crops, are now staying for longer periods in Mozambique before returning, following the Peace Accord. Richmond's (1968) framework for studying return migrants according to differences in their intentions to stay permanently in either the receiving or sending country, or become 'transilient' migrants who exhibit a propensity to move between the two, might be applied to this phenomenon. Similarly, Cerase (1974) considers patterns of return migration in relation to the degree of integration in the host economy and society, and the categories in his typology might also include repatriating refugees. Nevertheless, neither theory can properly incorporate refugees without accommodating the forced nature of certain refugee returns. The '*integrated information model of repatriation*', which recognises that refugees may

become migrants who behave as theorised by Richmond and Cerase but also provides for migrants who may be forced to return once their refugee status is withdrawn, might inform an extension of theories of return migration to include repatriating refugees.

10.2.3. Conceptual Implications

In this study, the theoretical rationale that refugees might be comparable to other kinds of migrants, which underpinned the adoption of a theoretical approach from migration studies, has been lent weight by the empirical findings. One suggestion is that a re-conceptualisation of refugees might be appropriate.

Such a re-conceptualisation might seek to place refugees and other sorts of migrants into a single framework of analysis. It may, for example, be possible to conceive of a continuum, with the 'conventional' refugee at one end, and the 'conventional' migrant at the other. Such a continuum could be considered at each stage of the migration or refugee cycle, and at each stage there will be processes which force units at both ends of the continuum towards one another. Hence an anticipatory refugee, or a Stage Two or Three arrival, is probably not as close to the refugee-end of the continuum as an acute refugee. Neither is an economic migrant who is portraying him- or herself as a political refugee in order to overcome stringent immigration procedure, as close to the migrant-end of the continuum as other migrants. Similar observations have been made during this thesis concerning similar 'equalising' processes during the stages of exile and return.

It is worth commenting that while such a re-conceptualisation might be worthwhile for the academic, who might critically seek similarities and broad applications of theory, it may not be so worthwhile for the practitioner, who must base regulations of immigration and assistance upon some sort of distinction. This study, however, also has implications of a more practical significance.

10.2.4. Policy implications

Without negating the theoretical and conceptual observations which have been made above, I think it is important in a field such as refugee studies which is so firmly tied up with the experiences and needs of a normally vulnerable population, not to lose sight of practicalities. As Robinson (1990) observed, refugee studies are still in a formative

phase, and therefore the development of the field need not be hide-bound by existing structures. The study of refugees certainly provides an opportunity for a reciprocal relationship between academics and practitioners.

Although not the aim or one of the objectives of this research, it is almost inevitable that it does contribute towards the policy debate on how best to assist repatriation, specifically in the Malawi-Mozambique context, but also more generally. These implications are briefly discussed here, but developed in more detail in a field report (Koser, 1993*b*) prepared following my main field visit which was distributed to involved Governments and NGO s.

An important implication is that official repatriation programmes should incorporate the initiatives of refugee populations, which may not conform to the expectations of policy-makers. A good example is that the final intended destinations of a proportion of my respondents were not the areas from which they had fled. Furthermore some planned to go to their final destinations via another location in order to collect relatives, for example. It would have to be said that the UNHCR Draft Repatriation Plan (1991) for Mozambicans in Malawi, which envisaged the transportation of refugees to transit centres in Mozambique and then on to their areas of origin, does not incorporate such initiatives. Such an observation should be extended to all stages of an assistance programme, in which it is important that refugees themselves are involved in the planning and initiation of schemes, such that they can be relevant to the needs of the refugees.

Another policy implication of the thesis is the reinforcement of the observation that many refugees self-repatriate, either before the introduction of, or in parallel to, official programmes. That the UNHCR cannot sanction official repatriation programmes while conflict is still occurring in the country of origin is understandable: one cannot conceive of a responsible humanitarian programme which returns people to a basically unpredictable situation even if locally and temporarily safe. However, as Wilson (1993) stresses, there are nevertheless means by which the UNHCR and NGO's can support refugees' own return strategies.

One such means, which relates to the specific concern of this thesis, is to support

refugees' information networks. The Tracing Scheme of the Malawi Red Cross represents a significant attempt to support the information networks of refugees in the Malawi context. Further initiatives could include the active support of the temporary return of refugees or refugee representatives in order to assess conditions in the country of origin; the addressal of some of the issues which made refugees perceive institutional agents as inefficient such as the length of time taken to transport communications, and the distribution of news sheets and transmission of radio broadcasts containing information about the country of origin.

Not only may these information networks be important in the decision whether to return, but it has also been suggested that they may also be the key for many refugees to re-integration upon return. A further implication therefore concerns the targeting of material assistance. It is important to recognise that many repatriates plan to negotiate their economic and social re-integration in the country of origin via kin who are already there. In that case, it would seem illogical to distinguish between refugees and people already in the country of origin in repatriation assistance programmes, for in many cases it has been suggested that the former will not return until the latter can support them.

10.3. Concluding comments

The discussion in this chapter has demonstrated how the adoption of a new approach has raised many questions and pointed towards a number of future research directions. The *theoretical rationale* was that refugees and refugee movements should be placed in a broader context, and that one means of doing this is to compare refugees with other kinds of migrant. Clearly there are other, basically untried means of contextualising refugees, such as placing them within a historical context (the previous migration experiences of so many of my respondents, for example, must have affected their motivation and decision-making). Clearly, too, the comparison between refugees and other kinds of migrants invites a whole range of future research applications, perhaps with the eventual aim of deriving a unified theory of migration and a re-conceptualisation of refugees.

Emerging from the theoretical rationale was the '*system of a refugee cycle*' which provided the *contextual framework*. However, this study has focused only upon one

aspect of that system, namely repatriation. The way in which flight occurs in the system is still to be addressed as is the experience of exile, and the nature of the relationships between the elements in the system as well as the system and the external environment stand to be articulated. Even in the '*model of a repatriation information system*' there are unexplored elements, especially the nature of information transmission from the country of origin, and the nature of information circulation once it has arrived in the country of asylum. Furthermore, in terms of the empirical research actually conducted, it has already been pointed out that there was a male bias, the correction of which would certainly throw further light upon the information system.

Nevertheless, this thesis has scored a qualified success in achieving its limited aim. It has used information to place repatriation in the refugee cycle, not only for my respondents but also in a more general sense, and it has been an exposition a new method of analysis in refugee studies. It has also provided original empirical data on an otherwise unstudied refugee population from an unstudied Province in Mozambique (Wilson, 1992a).

Perhaps a good note to end on is my recent information that some 40% of the refugees from Mangochi and Nkhata Bay have now repatriated, including all three of my interpreters, and presumably a number of the respondents involved in this study.

Appendix I Glossary

Asylum-seeker

The term asylum-seeker is used in this thesis literally, to apply to all those people who are either seeking asylum, or awaiting the outcome of a decision upon their claim. As used in this sense, the term carries no geographical implications: the asylum-seeker can be inside or outside his or her home country. Moreover, it does not carry any political implications either: the asylum-seeker may or may not be a person with a genuine claim to refugee status.

Refugee

The term refugee is used in this thesis to apply to all those people who satisfy the following two criteria: (a) that they are outside their home countries, and (b) that they have fled that country primarily on the grounds of a well-founded fear of persecution of whatever sort.

Such a definition therefore includes all those people recognised as refugees by the 1951 UN Convention and the variety of regional statutes which exist, and by the extensions to 'humanitarian' refugee status sometimes invoked by UNHCR. However the definition also includes those people who satisfy these criteria but for one reason or another are not recognised as refugees either internationally or in the country of asylum.

At the same time the definition clearly excludes the internally-displaced, who many people consider to be in 'refugee-like' situations. It also excludes those who flee their home countries primarily on account of reasons other than persecution, such as environmental or economic factors.

Appendix II Fieldwork Details

Pilot visit

The first visit to Malawi was a two month pilot visit between May and June 1991. This pilot visit served five main purposes.

(i) First, the visit provided an invaluable general familiarisation, both with Malawi, and with the situation of the displaced there. This was not only environmental familiarisation, but also a familiarisation with logistical and political obstacles, and also with ethical considerations involved in conducting research in Malawi and amongst the displaced.

(ii) Second, a network of both academic and institutional contacts in Malawi was developed, which facilitated the main visit greatly, and also assisted in the negotiation of research clearance.

(iii) Third, the visit provided the opportunity to assess the extent of relevant secondary information available in Malawi, in the library of Chancellor College (University of Malawi), and in the forms of press cuttings and various institutional reports and circulars. The research which was currently underway in Malawi was also ascertained.

(iv) Fourth, the study areas were chosen during the pilot visit. All the study areas and a number of other refugee settlements were visited, and the choice made according to the criteria given in Chapter 4 (Section 4.4.2.).

(v) Finally, although research clearance at this stage had not yet been granted, discussions with a number of informants, and a review of relevant records, informed the development of the '*model of a repatriation information system*'. It also informed the development in England, before the main field visit, of a pilot household questionnaire.

The main field visit occurred between May and December 1992, and is described below.

Preliminary steps

Prior to the commencement of the fieldwork in any study area, three preliminary steps were necessary.

(i) There was a strict etiquette involved in gaining the consent of the local Malawian authorities before entering a refugee settlement. At interviews with the District Commissioner, the District Relief Officer and then the Camp Administrator (and strictly in that order), I introduced myself and my research, and showed official documentation including my temporary resident's permit, a letter of introduction from the University of Malawi (where I had research affiliate status), and my letter of research clearance from the Office of the President and Cabinet (OPC).

(ii) Upon entering a study area, an important task of any researcher is to attempt to gain the confidence of the study population. As is discussed in detail below, this is especially difficult amongst a politically vulnerable population such as the displaced. My principal strategy in addressing this problem was to convene introductory meetings in each settlement. These meetings included the camp chairman and block chairmen (all elected by and from the refugee population), and, in response to an open invitation, a surprisingly high number of refugees also attended. At these meetings I introduced myself, emphasising that I was not associated with any Government or NGO. I also introduced my research, stressing that during my surveys no-one was any under obligation to respond and that all responses would be treated confidentially. I also fielded questions.

By the time of the meetings, I had already contacted, via the camp administrator or local NGOs, potential interpreters. While I spoke basic Portuguese, it became apparent that very few people from Niassa, a particularly peripheral and underdeveloped region of Mozambique, spoke Portuguese. The dominant languages were Yao in Mangochi, and Nyanja in Nkhata Bay. Interpreters were therefore vital. These interpreters were all from amongst the refugee populations, and they were introduced during the meeting too.

The final purpose of the meetings was to draw the samples for the structured household survey. I felt that this was best done publicly, so that it could be seen to be random. A

structured random sampling procedure, on the basis of blocks, was adopted. Plots in each block were numbered, and so I asked people at the meeting to give me random numbers between 1 and 100 for the appropriate number of plots in each block, and the corresponding plot was chosen.

(iii) The final preliminary step was training. Before commencing fieldwork, I trained my interpreters, going through my pilot questionnaire with them, and asking them to practice dummy runs with me. The training session became two-way as my interpreters gave me invaluable advice concerning interview procedure, such as the use of technology (cameras and tape recorders), an appropriate dress-code, where to conduct the interviews and so on.

Community profile

The first stage of the field strategy in each settlement was the community profile. The following range of individuals were interviewed where possible: District Commissioner, District Relief Officer, Camp Administrator, field officers of the UNHCR and NGOs active in the area, and a variety of representatives of the refugee communities. Camp registration records were also consulted. Community profiles provided a context for the research. They elicited information concerning the history and administration of the settlements; demographic details of the refugee populations; patterns of flight and repatriation of the refugee population including timing and areas of origin and destination, and underlying themes such as patterns of conflict and co-operation between the refugee and local populations, and within the refugee populations.

Household survey

The household survey consisted of three stages, namely: structured interviews with heads of household; semi-structured interviews with a smaller number of collected household members, and semi-structured interviews with a number of collected households, thus satisfying the principle of 'person triangulation' (Denzin, 1970). These stages were to take place in strict chronological order.

The first stage was the head of household survey. The pilot questionnaire for the head of household surveys is attached as Schedule A. This questionnaire was designed in

England prior to my departure, and was informed by informal interviews during the pilot visit. The questionnaire design adhered to standard good practices concerning question form, type and wording (Moser and Kalton, 1979). The questionnaire was conducted amongst 25 heads of household in Chiumbangame settlement, Mangochi.

According to Fink and Kosecoff (1985), the three indicators during testing that a pilot questionnaire requires revising are: failure to answer questions, the giving of several answers to the same question, and the researcher being forced to write notes in the margin. All three occurred during the pilot surveys. As a result, four main problems were identified, concerning: question design; question types; question specificity, and the format of the questionnaire. These are briefly discussed in turn.

As originally designed, the question design was closed, with respondents' responses placed in categories. One problem was that the categories were often not appropriate. Another was that the questions themselves were often inappropriate. On the other hand it became clear that there were certain issues which were important, were not included in the original schedule, but were suitable for such structured interviews. One example was the question of the present location of the respondent's village chief from Mozambique. One further problem with question design proved to be question ordering, for example, Question 2 asked whether the respondent's relatives were still 'at home', before the location of the respondent's home had been ascertained in Question 5.

The specific problem concerning question type was that certain questions concerned periodic behaviour and/or tested the memories of respondents. As Werner and Schoepfle (1987) observed, such questions may be inappropriate in structured interviews unless responses can be verified. As is discussed in Chapter 4 (Section 4.5.1.), opportunities for verification were infrequent.

It proved to be necessary to ask specific questions in order to ascertain certain information, and the pilot questionnaire did not allow for specificity. For example, in one case I asked: 'Since arriving in this camp, has anyone told you anything about the place to which you intend to return?' (Question 19(a) of Schedule A), and the automatic response seemed to be 'No'. However, when I re-phrased the question specifically: 'You

say that your brother went back to Lichinga last year, and that you plan to join him there: have you heard anything from him since he went back?', some of the same respondents replied positively.

The most obvious problem with the format of the pilot questionnaire was its size. I had taken to Malawi some 200 copies of this schedule, and especially as copies of each schedule would have to be made in case of theft or loss of the original, the potential volume of paper which would have been generated by the survey was enormous.

As a result of such problems, a revised head of household schedule (Schedule B), was prepared in the field. Unlike the pilot, the form of the questions in this schedule were open-ended. Such a question form allowed respondents to express opinions during the interviews (Werner and Schoepfle, 1987). Furthermore, instead of placing responses into pre-prepared codes, they were written down in full as accurately as possible, and coded at a later date. Both strategies provided for greater coverage and specificity, and the better incorporation of questions concerning periodic behaviour and memory.

It is clear that the revised schedule represented a move to a less structured interview, nevertheless the consistency of information gathered during each interview was maintained. This change in the structure of the schedule also proved to be an important confidence-building measure. As Whyte (1984) observed, in filling out a questionnaire a respondent is necessarily a passive informant. However where the interview format is less structured, the respondent can become an active collaborator. This transition in the status and input of the respondents seemed to make them more responsive.

No responses were written on the schedule sheet: they were instead written into field notebooks. Each night these notes were copied into separate 'neat' notebooks, such that two copies of each interview were maintained. The revised schedule therefore also overcame the problem of format associated with the pilot. (The hundreds of blank pilot schedules were used in latrine bases being constructed in workshops in Chiumbangame settlement!)

Using the revised schedule, a total of 125 heads of household were interviewed: 50 in

Chiumbangame, and 25 in each of Kalanje, Mgolosera and Jappie. These interviews were conducted on the mantles of the respondents' homes (only once, after a special request, was I allowed to see the interior of a home). The interviews tended to last between half an hour and one hour. I conducted every interview (with an interpreter), as there were not sufficient funds to employ research assistants.

While a large percentage of selected households were described as female-headed in the registration books maintained by the camp administrator, many of these actually proved to be male-headed. Where they were female-headed, I met with a great reluctance from the head of household to participate. Sometimes women refused to speak with me; more often they insisted upon a male relation being present. This male relation then almost always took over the conversation. I found no difference in this attitude between the generally Muslim Yao and Anglican Nyanja. My assumption is that it was a reaction to the fact that I and my interpreters were male. Despite my efforts, I was not able to employ a female interpreter. It is worth noting that on one day, as an experiment, I conducted several interviews with a female friend (also expatriate). On this day, women seemed to be much more forthcoming. I decided to address this poor response rate amongst women in two ways. First, I hoped that the in-depth, collective interviews, would provide a forum for women to speak. Second, I decided to interview the community women's leader in each settlement. These women were more willing to speak with me.

After the completion of the head of household surveys in each settlement, the data were analysed. As a result of this analysis, a number of issues which needed in-depth investigation, and a number of case study households, were identified. Schedule C shows the hit-list of topics identified for these semi-structured interviews. These interviews involved household members as well as the heads of household. The purpose of these interviews was first to gain a more explanatory or analytical insight into patterns which had emerged as a result of the structured interviews, and second to gain an insight into the way in which household members interacted in the repatriation information system. In total, 25 semi-structured household interviews were conducted: 10 in Chiumbangame, and 5 in each of the other settlements.

These household interviews had only a limited success. As is described in the empirical chapters, they did offer an insight into the interaction between household members. They also provided information on certain issues which had emerged as relevant during the head of household interviews. However, they were characterised by the dominance in the conversation of men, and the reluctance of women either to speak at all, or to express any opinions other than to agree with the men.

Following the principle of 'person triangulation' (Denzin, 1970), the final round of household surveys were planned at the collective level. The purpose of these interviews was to provide an insight into the interaction between households in the refugee information system. However, several attempts at collective discussion groups in Chiumbangame settlement basically failed. There are a number of standard procedures related with focus group studies (Rudduck, 1978). These include the researcher understanding social and cultural conventions and knowing enough to make a contribution, which procedures I feel were satisfied. However, I did experience difficulty with maintaining authority during the discussions, which was probably a function of inappropriate group formation and stability. Again a characteristic was the reticence of women. Another was the domination of the conversation by a handful of outspoken people. As a result, very little information emerged which had not already been forthcoming from the individual or household interviews. The only option available was to interview individuals who represented collective households, such as the block and camp chairman.

Informant interviews

The initial purpose for which informant interviews had been designed was to gain an insight into those issues which had not been properly explored by the household survey. The informant interviewed, and the questions asked, very much depended upon the issue in question. For example, during discussions in Nkhata Bay, I received contradictory responses concerning whether the Nyanja were matrilineal or patrilineal. A Village Chief from Mozambique was able to explain that although the Nyanja are traditionally patrilineal, many had been influenced by Yao traditions and were therefore matrilineal. Other informants interviewed included settlement school headmasters, and the settlement clinical officer. Thus these informant interviews elicited information on institutionalised

norms and statuses (Zelditch, 1962).

A second purpose of the informant interviews became the addressal of the poor response rates gained amongst women, and during collective interviews. In respect of the former, semi-structured interviews were conducted with community women's leaders (Schedule D). In order to provide an insight into the collective unit of analysis, semi-structured interviews were conducted with Block and Camp Chairmen (Schedule E), who represented the refugee communities at the collective level in Malawi, and Village Chiefs and Village Chairmen (Schedule F), who had represented communities at the collective level in Mozambique. As discussed in Chapter 7, allegiance with these assorted leaders varied, and so examples of each were interviewed where possible.

Agent interviews

Throughout the fieldwork period after the completion of the head of household interviews in each settlement, agents who had been identified by respondents were studied. The majority of agents were personal, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with them (Schedule G). In total, 11 personal agents were interviewed: 5 in Chiumbangame, and 2 in each of the other camps.

There were two principal examples of information conveyance via a non-personal agent, namely the Malawi Post Office, and the Malawi Red Cross Message Scheme in Mangochi. In both cases, the responsible official in each district was interviewed, and records where they existed consulted.

Non-participant observation

Throughout the field period I maintained three separate, on-going sets of field notes as a recorded observations and comments which did not emerge from the any of the formal field strategies, but which were felt to be of interest or relevance. The three sets of notes were substantive, methodological and analytic field notes (Burgess, 1984). The substantive notes are a continuous record of observations, conversations and events; and of the contents of documents addressed. The methodological notes consist of personal reflections on my activities in the field. They deal with problems, impressions, feelings and hunches as well as with some of the processes and procedures associated with field

research. According to Burgess (1984), the main purpose of these notes is reflection. The analytic notes were for preliminary analysis carried out in the field. They include the preliminary questions and hypotheses, which were developed and changed as an on-going process.

Schedule A: Pilot Questionnaire

Hut Number

Visits:

- 1) Date
- Time
- Successful Interview
- Reason if not
- Return Date/Time

- 2) Date
- Time
- Successful Interview
- Reason if not
- Return Date/Time

Introduction

Good morning/afternoon. I am a University student from England and am looking at how Mozambicans in Malawi conceive of their future.

Please feel free to speak to me. Please note that I am not writing down your name. Your answers will only be used by me for the purposes of my degree. They are confidential. I am not working for any Government. My research is financed in England.

I would like to ask you a number of questions which I have written down here. The interview should take about one hour.

First I would like to ask you about your household at present, then about your life before you left Mozambique and your experiences when you were leaving. Then I would like to discuss what you think you might do and where you might go in the future. Finally I would like to discuss whether you know anything about conditions at home, and how you came to know.

A. You and your household at present

1. (i) Members	Person	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	H. of. H.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
(ii) Relationship	Spouse	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Parent	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	Child	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
	G.Parent	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
	G.Child	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
	Sibling	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
	Other Rel.	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
	Other N/Rel	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9	9
(iii) Sex	Male	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Female	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
(iv) Marital Status	Single	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Married	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Widowed	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
(v) Age Group	0-4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	5-15	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	16-25	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	26-45	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
	46-60	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
	+60	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
(vi) Occupation	Unemployed	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Housewife	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
	Labourer	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
	Other	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4

B. Your experience before flight

2(i) Who lived with you before you fled?

(ii) Relationship

Person	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Spouse	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Parent	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
Child	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
G.Parent	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
G.Child	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
Sibling	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Other Rel	7	7	7	7	7	7	7	7
Other N/Rel	8	8	8	8	8	8	8	8
(iii) Did they flee with you?								
Yes	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
No	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
(iv) Present whereabouts?								
Home	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Other in Moz	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2
This Camp	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3
Other in Mal	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4
Other Country	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5

3. What is your first language?

- 1.Yao
- 2.Lomwe
- 3.Portuguese
- 4.Other

4. Do you speak (the local language)?

- 1.Yes
- 2.No

5. In which (district) were you born?

- 1.Cuamba
- 2.Majune
- 3.Maua
- 4.Mecula
- 5.Nipepe
- 6.Lago
- 7.N'Guama
- 8.Mavago
- 9.Sanga
- 10.Muembe
- 12.Lichinga
- 13.Marrupa
- 14.Mecenhales
- 15.Metarica
- 16.Mandimba
- 17.Other (specify)

6. In which district were you living when you fled?

- 1.Same as place of birth Go to Qu.9
- 2.Other (specify)

7. How long had you been living there before you fled?

- 1. Less than 1 Year
- 2. 1-5 Years
- 3. Over 5 Years

8. Why did you leave your district of birth?

- 1. Voluntary Relocation
- 2. Forcible Relocation

9(i) Had you been outside Mozambique before fleeing this time?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No Go to Qu. 10

(ii) Where?

(iii) Why?

Reason	Malawi	Zambia	Tanzania	RSA	Other
Migrant Labour	1	1	1	1	1
Refugee pre-1975	2	2	2	2	2
Refugee post-1975	3	3	3	3	3
Other	4	4	4	4	4

C. Your experience of flight

10. Please describe, step-by-step, why you decided to flee.

11. Please describe where you went between leaving your home and arriving in this camp.

12. How long ago did you arrive in this camp?

- 1. Less than 6 months ago
- 2. 6-12 months ago
- 3. Over 12 months ago

D. Conceiving of the future

13. Do you intend to return to Mozambique eventually?
(prompt: in the short term/long term, with your family etc.)

- 1. Yes Go to Qu.16
- 2.No

14. Why not?

- 1.Economically better-off in Malawi
- 2.Socially happier in Malawi
- 3.Don't Know
- 4.Politically safer
- 5.Other (specify)

15. Where do you intend to settle?

- 1.Malawi
- 2.Other (specify)

Go to Qu. 17

16. In which (district) in Mozambique do you intend to settle?

- 1.Same as Place of Birth
- 2.Other (specify)

E. Information

17.(i) Since fleeing, have you returned to Mozambique?

1.Yes

2.No Go to Qu.18

(ii)Please tell me about all the occasions

(iii) Where did you go?

Occasion	1	2	3	4	5
Home	1	1	1	1	1
Intended Place of Return	2	2	2	2	2
Other	3	3	3	3	3
Yes	1	1	1	1	1
No	2	2	2	2	2
- 1 week	1	1	1	1	1
1-4 weeks	2	2	2	2	2
+ 4 weeks	3	3	3	3	3

(iv) Was it less than six months ago?

(v) How long did you stay for?

(vi) Why did you go on each occasion?

1.

2.

3.

4.

- 1.Visit Kin
- 2.Tend Possessions
- 3.Attend Ceremony

- 4.Official repatriation
- 5.Self-repatriation
- 6.Other

18.(i) Since arriving in this camp, have you received a letter from Mozambique?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No Go to Qu. 19

Please tell me about the letters which you can remember

(ii) Who was it from?

- a. Relation
- b. Friend
- c. Other (specify)

(iii) Did you receive it less than 6 months ago?

Person				
Yes	1	1	1	1
No	2	2	2	2

(iv) Please tell me what each letter told you about

1.

2.

3.

4.

- 1.Security
- 2.Economy
- 3.Kin/Friends
- 4.Possessions
- 5.Other

19.(i) Since arriving in this camp, has anyone told you anything about the place to which you intend to return?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No Go to Qu. 20

Please tell me about the occasions which you can remember

- (ii) Who told you?
 - 1. An Official (specify)
 - 2. Malawian
 - 3. Refugee
 - 4. Other (specify)

Person				
Yes	1	1	1	1
No	2	2	2	2

(iii) Was it less than 6 months ago?

(iv) Please tell me what you heard about on each occasion

1.

2.

3.

4.

- 1. Security
- 2. Economy
- 3. Kin/Friends
- 4. Possessions
- 5. Other

20.(i) Do you have access to any of the following?

- Newspapers
- Radio
- Other Media (specify)

- 1.Yes (circle)
- 2.No Go to Qu. 21

(ii) Have you ever heard anything about the place to which you intend to return from any of these sources?

- 1.Yes
- 2.No Go to Qu. 21

(iii) What was the source? (specify paper/broadcast name)

- 1.Newspaper
- 2.Radio
- 3.Other (specify)

(iv) Was it less than 6 months ago?

Source				
Yes	1	1	1	1
No	2	2	2	2

(v) What did you hear about on each occasion?

1.

2.

3.

4.

- 1.Security
- 2.Economy
- 3.Kin/Friends
- 4.Possessions
- 5.Other

I would now like to ask you about the last time you heard about your home area/the area to which you plan to return.

Source

21. Please tell me where and how you heard the information

1. Official
2. Media
3. Kin
4. Other Refugee
5. Other

Nature of the Information

22. What did you hear about?

1. Kin
2. Possessions
3. Security
4. Economy
5. Society
6. Other

23. Did you hear less than six months ago?

1. Yes
2. No

Evaluation

24. Did you think the information was accurate?

1. Yes Go to Qu. 26
2. No
3. Partly

25. What made you doubt the accuracy of (all of) the information?

1. Nature of the Source
2. Nature of the information

26. Please name the three pieces of information which you would consider most valuable in encouraging you to return.

Use

27. Have you told anyone who does not live in this household any of this information?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No Go to Qu. 29

28. Who?

- 1. Refugee from this camp
- 2. Refugee from another camp
- 3. Other (specify)

29. Would you say this information has changed the impression you had of your home area/the place to which you plan to return? In what ways?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

30. Would you say the information has formed your plans for the future? In what ways?

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

- 1. About the journey home
- 2. Who to go with
- 3. Where to go
- 4. What job to do upon return
- 5. Other (specify)

Thank you for your time.

(where applicable) Would you be willing to allow me to hold a less formal discussion about the same sorts of issues with you and your family at a later stage?

Time Taken

Schedule B: Revised Questionnaire (Head of Household)

A. Present

1. Who lives with you in this house?

** record:* household profile: present household members; relationship; sex; marital status; age group; occupation.

B. Past

1. Where were you born?

2. Where were you living when you left Mozambique?

**record:* history of internal migration; reasons for migration; length of time in each place.

3. Had you ever been outside Mozambique before?

**record:* where; why.

4. What did you do before you came to Malawi?

5. Who were you living with at home?

C. Flight

1. When did you come to this camp?

2. Did you come directly here, or via another place?

**record:* step-wise migration: reasons for visiting intervening places; length of time spent in each.

3. Why did you come?

4. Do you have any relatives still in Mozambique?

5. If so, why is it that you came here but they did not?

**record:* history of repatriation of relatives.

D. Future

1. Do you think you will go back to Mozambique one day?

**if not, record:* why not; alternative destination; discuss problems which might be faced.

2. When do you think it will be safe to go back?

3. Where will you go?

4. Do you know if there are land mines on the way?

5. What will you do when you return home?

6. Do you think your house is still standing?

**record:* how they know.

7. How will you get land/credit to build a new one?

8. Do you think that someone else has taken your land?

**record:* how they know, who they think has taken it; discuss land tenure.

9. How will you get access to land/equipment/credit for new land; or how will you get your old land back?

10. Who will be responsible for re-distributing land?

11. Do you think the Government of Mozambique or Malawi will help you?

12. Will you return without assistance?

13. Is your village chief here?

14. Will you keep the same chief when you return?

15. Will you return with the chief?

16. Do you ever discuss your plans for return with others?

E. Information

1. Have you ever been back to Mozambique?

**if not, record:* why not.

**if so, record:* how many times; when was the last time; reason for each visit; length of each visit; logistics of each visit; where the visit was to.

2. Have you ever received any letters or messages from Mozambique?

**record:* how many; when was the last; from whom each time; about what each time; delivered by whom each time.

3. Have you ever sent any letters or messages to Mozambique?

**record:* how many; when was the last time; to whom each time; about what each time; taken by whom each time.

4. Have you ever been heard or been told anything about your home area or relatives?

**record:* how often; when was the last time; what/who was the source; what was heard.

5. Do you ever listen to the radio?

6. Can you read newspapers?

7. What was the last thing you heard about your home area or relatives?

**record:* the source; how long ago.

8. Did you believe what you heard or were told?

**discuss:* why or why not.

9. How would you go about finding out information about Mozambique?

**record*: source; *discuss*: why that particular source.

**record and discuss*: any previous efforts.

10. Do you think you should be assisted in getting information about Mozambique?

**discuss*: how that might be done.

11. What would you like to know about?

12. Have you heard about the Peace talks in Rome?

Schedule C: Discussion topics for household interviews

A. Introduction

B. Home Conditions

1. Discussion of what conditions in the intended destination are presently like.

prompt list: range of home conditions; the degree to which they are perceived to be changing.

2. Significant home conditions about which nothing is known.

C. The Receipt of Information

1. How the household has found out about conditions at home.

prompt list: discussion of the various elements in the information networks.

D. The Evaluation of Information

1. Discussion of the quantity (density, range) and quality (frequency, directedness, accuracy) of information; perceived trustworthiness of transmitters and sources.

E. The Use of Information

1. The degree to which information about home conditions is used in discussing future plans.
2. Decision-making concerning return.

Schedule D: Discussion topics for interviews of community women's leaders

A. Introduction

B. Past

1. Womens' roles in the household before and since flight.
2. Womens' roles in the community before and since flight.
3. The degree of permanence of the change in women's roles.

C. Flight

1. Number of widows and other single women.
2. Coping strategies of widows and other single women.

D. Present

1. Womens' groups and forums.
2. Education and training.
3. Health and nutrition.
4. Patterns of economic production and work burden.
5. Structures of representation.

E. Future

1. Womens' priorities upon return
2. Coping strategies of widows and other single women upon return.

F. Information and Plans

1. The extent to which women make plans individually or in combination with men. The receipt, use and evaluation of information.

A. Introduction

B. The receipt, use and circulation of information

1. Formal/informal organisations at which refugees come together as a group.

prompt list: who attends meetings (membership; Malawians as well?); numbers at meetings; frequency of meetings; what is discussed?

2. The extent to which people discuss their plans for the future during these meetings.

prompt list: what is the general attitude towards the future?; are there noticeable differences between the attitudes of men and women (or other categories)?

3. How and what do people hear about conditions in Mozambique?

prompt list: are there ever any communal or camp-wide efforts to find out about conditions in Mozambique?; scouts; access to media; requests for permission to go home.

4. The extent to which such information is circulated around the camp.

5. The extent to which information from home is used in planning for return and the future in Mozambique.

Schedule F: Discussion topics for interviews of Village Chiefs

A. Introduction

B. Pre-Flight

1. The Chief's traditional role in Mozambique.

prompt list: how are chiefs chosen?; how was power shared with Village Chairmen?

2. Land tenure and distribution.
3. Traditional survival strategies.

C. Flight

1. The reasons for and pattern of flight from the village.
2. Patterns of repatriation of villagers.
3. The present distribution of villagers.

D. Present

1. How has the traditional roles of Village Chiefs changed in exile?

prompt list: vis-a-vis camp chairmen.

E. Future

1. Will the Chief's power be resumed upon return?
2. The intended destinations of villagers.
3. Predicted patterns of return.

prompt list: will households make the decision to return individually or in conjunction with the chief?; will the villagers return together or separately?

4. Conditions upon return.

prompt list: physical security; survival in the short- and long-term; facilitation of return and re-integration; civil order and local stability.

F. Information

1. Does the Chief have information about villagers currently in Mozambique?
2. Does the Chief have information about the village area?
3. Collective efforts to get information about either.

Schedule G: Discussion topics for interviews of information agents

A. Introduction

B. Information networks

1. Transmitters of information in Mozambique.

2. Receivers of information in Malawi.

3. Quantity and quality of information conveyed.

prompt list: density; range; frequency; directedness; accuracy.

4. Ways in which the cross-border movement of agents might be assisted.

Appendix III Settlement Profiles

History and refugee populations

Chiumbangame was opened in July 1987 in response to the sudden influx of refugees after the attack on Mandimba. It was established on tobacco estate land 2 km from the Mozambican border. By 1989 lack of land prohibited any further settlement in the camp and it was closed. It housed about 18,000 individuals in 1992. Mwawa was opened as an overspill camp for Chiumbangame, but was soon also closed. In 1990 Kalanje was opened, some 50 km north of Chiumbangame (but also only some 2 km from the border). It was closed in July 1992. Kalanje housed some 19,000 individuals in 1992.

Mgolosera was opened in late 1989 in response to the influx of refugees after the attack on Cobue. It was closed in late 1991 due to pressure on land, and housed some 2000 individuals in 1992. Jappie was opened in mid-1991, and was still open throughout 1992. It housed some 600 individuals, and had capacity for a further 400. As there were only two remaining open camps in Malawi in 1992, Jappie being one of them, recent arrivals had been relocated to camps in areas away from their point of arrival and normally away from their areas of origin in Mozambique. There were some 30 families in Jappie who were relocated from Mchinji in south west Malawi. Five of my respondents fell into this category.

Physical setting and natural resources

The dwellings in all the camps were of mud and thatch, to traditional Mozambican design, though usually smaller than typical of permanent settlements in Mozambique. They were also at a much higher density than traditional settlements.

Problems of natural resources were particularly acute in the Mangochi camps. The majority of boreholes were dry by 1992, land in short supply and exhausted, and deforestation almost total. All three aspects forced refugees across the heavily-mined border on a daily basis. These environmental problems had not yet occurred in Nkhata Bay.

Social infrastructure

In both areas NGO's¹ were responsible for productive activities, health care and education. In each area there were modest income-generating activities, such as knitting, pottery and gardening classes. In Nkhata Bay the four camps shared a common school, health clinic and training centre; in Mangochi each camp had its own.

Community structure and leadership

Patterns of community structure and leadership were imposed by the host government, and were common throughout camps in Malawi. The camps were divided into housing blocks, each consisting of between 200 and 400 houses. Chiumbangame had 20 blocks, Kalanje 18, Mgolosera 7 and Jappie 4. Each block elected a block chairman, vice-chairman, secretary, youth chairman and youth vice-chairman. The block chairmen elected one of their number as camp chairman, and the vice-chairman assumed his position in the block. The block chairmen, camp chairman, camp administrator (a Malawi Government official) and representatives of all the NGO's active in the camp, comprised the Camp Management Committee.

¹ The NGO's with principal responsibility in Mangochi were the International Rescue Committee (IRC) and Save the Children Fund, USA (SCF,US), and in Nkhata Bay the Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC).

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