



**NEAR EAST UNIVERSITY**  
**INSTITUTE OF GRADUATE STUDIES**  
**DEPARTMENT OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

**THE IMPACT OF ODA ON DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN FRAGILE  
SOCIETIES, LIBERIA (2006-2017)**

**M.A. THESIS**

**Gardeabaye Sylvester GLAGBO**

**Nicosia**

**January, 2022**

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MASTER THESIS

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## Approval

We certify that we have read the thesis submitted by **Gardeabaye Sylvester Glagbo** titled “**THE IMPACT OF OFFICIAL DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE ON DECOMCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN FRAGILE SOCIETIES, LIBERIA (2006-2017)**” and that in our combined opinion it is fully adequate, in scope and in quality, as a thesis for the degree of Master of International Relations.

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## Declaration

I hereby declare that all information, documents, analysis and results in this thesis have been collected and presented according to the academic rules and ethical guidelines of Institute of Graduate Studies, Near East University. I also declare that as required by these rules and conduct, I have fully cited and referenced information and data that are not original to this study.

Gardeabaye Sylvester Glagbo

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## Abstract

### **The Impact of ODA on Democratic Governance in Fragile Societies, Liberia (2006-2017)**

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**Supervisor: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Sait Aksit**

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The research on international development over the years have witnessed a growing divide as it relates to the overall impact of Official Development Assistance (ODA) toward developing nations. One side of the divide believes ODA has in time failed to substantially translate into actual development within developing nations. Instead, it has further widened the poverty and inequality gaps within developing nations and has to a larger extent plummeted the developing world into a circle of perpetual aid dependency, limiting their potentials to self-develop and have incentivized corrupt governments in these fragile societies. Thus, significantly contributing to the problem of consistent underdevelopment confronted by the developing world. On the contrary, the other side of the divide believes the opposite of the former, maintaining that foreign aid has been used as a catalyst to spur cutting edge developmental solutions in developing nations; thus, narrowing the tremendous poverty and inequality gaps which have hindered development processes in developing nations. Hence, offsetting the “poverty traps” and “financial gaps” in order to spur developmental outcomes in the developing world. Thus, this study is an argumentative paper attempting to settle a dispute that has persisted in the realms of international development and elsewhere, whereby scholars maintain that ODA toward developing nations has not had any substantial impact on the developing world. Premised upon the findings of this study, using the case study of the Governance Commission of Liberia, it has been established that ODA has indeed been impactful on the developing world and the nature of the impact further demonstrates the causal link between ODA and democratic governance frameworks as a *sine qua non* for Development at the level of developing nations.

**Key words:** Development, Democratic Governance, Fragile Society, ODA, Liberia.

## Özet

### **Kalkınma Yardımlarının Kırılgan Toplumlarda Demokratik Yönetişim Üzerindeki Etkisi, Liberya (2006-2017)**

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**Yüksek Lisans, Uluslararası İlişkiler Bölümü**

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Uluslararası Kalkınma araştırma alanı, Resmi Kalkınma Yardımının geliştirmekte olan ülkelere yönelik genel etkisiyle ilgili olarak yıllar içinde büyüyen bir bölünmeye tanık oldu. Araştırmacıların bir bölümü, kalkınma yardımlarının zaman içinde geliştirmekte olan ülkelerdeki fiili kalkınmaya önemli ölçüde dönüştürmekte başarısız olduğunu savunmaktadır. Bu çalışmaların önemli bir bölümüne göre, yardımlar geliştirmekte olan ülkelerdeki yoksulluk ve eşitsizliği daha da genişletti ve geliştirmekte olan dünyayı daha büyük ölçüde sürekli bir yardım bağımlılığı döngüsüne soktu, kendi kendini geliştirme potansiyelini sınırladı ve bu kırılgan toplumlarda yozlaşmış hükümetleri teşvik etti. Böylece bu çalışmalar geliştirmekte olan dünyanın karşı karşıya olduğu tutarlı az gelişmişlik sorununa önemli ölçüde katkıda bulunur. Bölünmenin diğer tarafı ise dış yardımların geliştirmekte olan ülkelerde en son kalkınma çözümlerini teşvik etmek için bir katalizör olarak kullanıldığını ve böylece kalkınma süreçlerini engelleyen muazzam yoksulluk ve eşitsizlik boşluklarını daralttığını ileri sürmektedir. Dolayısıyla yardımlar, geliştirmekte olan dünyada kalkınma sonuçlarını teşvik etmek için “yoksulluk tuzaklarını” ve “finansal boşlukları” dengelemektedir. Bu çalışma, uluslararası kalkınma çalışmalarına ve tartışmalarına katkıda bulunarak geliştirmekte olan ülkelere yönelik kalkınma yardımlarının önemli bir etkisi olmadığını iddia eden çalışmaların ağırlıklı olduğu bir alanda yardımların olumlu olduğunu savunan ve tartışan bir çalışmadır. Bu çalışmada, Liberya Yönetişim Komisyonu'nun vaka çalışması olarak kullanılması ile oluşturulan bulgulara dayanarak, kalkınma yardımlarının geliştirmekte olan dünya üzerinde gerçekten etkili olduğu tespit edilmiştir. Bu etkinin doğası, kalkınma yardımları ile demokratik yönetim çerçeveleri arasındaki nedensel bağlantıyı net bir şekilde ortaya koymakta ve geliştirmekte olan ülkelerde kalkınmanın kaçınılmaz bir unsuru olarak göstermektedir.

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Kalkınma, Demokratik Yönetim, Kırılgan Toplum, Kalkınma Yardımları, Liberya.

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### **List of Abbreviations**

<b>COS:</b>	Civil Society Organization
<b>CPA:</b>	Comprehensive Peace Agreement
<b>CSA:</b>	Civil Service Agency
<b>DAC:</b>	Development Assistance Committee
<b>ECOWAS:</b>	Economic Community of West African States
<b>EU:</b>	European Union
<b>FDI:</b>	Foreign Direct Investment
<b>GC:</b>	Governance Commission
<b>GDP:</b>	Gross Domestic Profit
<b>GEMAP:</b>	Governance and Economic Management Program
<b>GNP:</b>	Gross National Profit
<b>GOL:</b>	Government of Liberia
<b>HDI:</b>	Human Development Index
<b>HIPC:</b>	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
<b>IMF:</b>	International Monetary Fund
<b>LACC:</b>	Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission
<b>LDSP:</b>	Liberia Decentralization Support Program
<b>LIPA:</b>	Liberia Institute of Public Administration
<b>LIS:</b>	Liberia Immigration Services
<b>LRC:</b>	Liberia Reform Commission
<b>MAC:</b>	Ministries Agency and Commission
<b>NBC:</b>	National Bureau of Concession
<b>NTGL:</b>	National Transitional Government of Liberia
<b>ODA:</b>	Official Development Assistance

<b>OECD:</b>	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development
<b>PLR:</b>	Political and Legal Regulatory
<b>PSMP:</b>	Public Service Modernization Program
<b>UNDP:</b>	United Nations Development Program
<b>UNMIL:</b>	United Nation Mission in Liberia
<b>USAID:</b>	United States Agency for International Development
<b>WB:</b>	World Bank

## **CHAPTER I**

### **Introduction**

This chapter offers an introduction into the research topic, defining key concepts under study, research questions, the problem, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, study significance and guiding hypotheses of the study. Moreover, the chapter outlines the definition of key terminologies, study limitations, the methodology followed and concluded with a synopsis of chapters.

### **Background**

Aid from governments or multilateral development organizations to boost the economic activity and well-being of developing or fragile nations is referred to as official development assistance (ODA) or development assistance for short (OECD, 2020). Criticisms have been directed towards ODA within the development aid debate in Liberia whereby, some researchers, development policy practitioners, and academics argue that influence of ODA on poor countries is essentially not in existence (Sawyer, 1992). This ideological misunderstanding exists as a result of a number of interconnected issues and complexities. In order to comprehend “development” which has far-reaching special effects, one must first accept “development” as a process that is continuous that is hinged on important principles that nations should adhere to for the purposes of attracting the outcomes of development. Sound democratic governance is one of the institutional principles which create the policy environment that allows for development to take place.

Proper democratic platforms of governance in most developing countries are not in existence due to destructions resulting from civil wars or because these nations are very poor to make investments in such platforms (Paul Collier, 2016). Due to these factors, the concept of foreign aid categorized as ODA emerged. It refers to financial assistance provided by developed nations to developing or fragile countries in an effort to use this support as a motivator to strengthen or revive a platform of governance that is democratic, thereby creating conditions that are necessary for achieving development in these fragile nations. Lappin (2019) depicted that post-Cold War

conflict development aid projects focused on countries emerging from the war in war-torn Sub-Sahara Africa, East Asia, Europe, and Latin America, played a critical role in altering the circumstances essential for development to take place.

As a case in point, Liberia, a nation located in Sub-Saharan Africa, has recently undergone decades of violent civil war, as a result, multi-faceted cleavages and poor governance practices in the country. In addition to taking thousands of lives and destroying valuable property, the violent civil war had devastating consequences for the social, economic, and political institutions of the Liberian State as well as for the international community (Liberia TRC Report, 2010). As a result, the rule of law was complete breakdown, hence, paralyzing structures of governance that were democratic, and there after a deterioration in living standards of people, placing Liberia among the poorest republics in the world, a situation that most international development pundits believe is due to bad governance practices and weak state institutions, among other factors (Ellis 2007; Sawyer 2005).

Notwithstanding, in time, after several mediations by both developmental partners (donors) within the international community and local state actors, a milestone consensus was reached between the warring factions, political parties, civil society organizations and interest groupings to stop the civil conflict and have a transitional government arrangement that will incorporate the doctrine of good governance reforms and to put Liberia on an irreversible trajectory of peace and development. The democratic governance landscape in Liberia during the transitional period until the 2006 elections, however, was beset by a slew of challenges, including a never-ending struggle for dominance among political parties and former warring factions, constant internal wrangling, overlapping of functions by state actors and government functionaries, conflicting mandates, limited state capacity, broken state institutions, rampant corruption, financial mismanagement, and abuse of state resources. All of the aforementioned factors, as well as others, led to severe disarray in democratic government, as previously stated. Liberia's conflict-torn landscape is seen here.

Nevertheless, in 2006 a constitutionally elected government was sworn into power but quite obviously, the post-conflict Liberia democratic governance under the stewardship of Her Excellency President Madam Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, who emerged victorious after the elections, experienced its portion of the myriad of challenges



during the early stage of the government. Thus, the government embarked on a collective strategy that entailed partnership with donor organizations in an exertion to combat the profound aftermath of decades of civil crisis in Liberia, which in time yielded stunning outcomes for Liberia post-war reconstruction and development trajectories (Niels Hahn, 2014). Between the years 2006 and 2017, which the paper places under critical consideration, several aid interventions were made by international partners in the form of Official Development Assistance (ODA) among several initiatives to certify the enhancement of the Liberian state capacity to minimize corruption, mitigate financial mismanagement and help establish a sound democratic governance management system in post-conflict Liberia in an attempt of making a feasible condition necessary for Liberia to adequately spearhead its post-conflict developmental drive and aspire hope amongst the citizenry within time. Hence, researchers' position was that the process of post-conflict rebuilding "encompasses the development of democratic institutions, the rule of law, and the facilitation of societal reconciliation" (Jeong, 2005, 12-13).

There was, indeed, a great need for reforms in the literature on the necessity of effective governance in post-conflict settings, particularly in relation to African countries (Herman, 2011; Sriram, Martin-Ortega Jeong; 2005; Doyle and Sambanis, 2006). Popularity increased in the concept of good governance as early as the 1990s, referring to "the manner in which power is exercised when it comes to the management of a country's economic and social resources for development" (World Bank 1992). Good governance is further defined as incorporating the elements of government effectiveness, accountability, independence of the judiciary, the rule of law, as well as transparency (Kaufman, Kraay and Zoido-Lobaton, 1999).

The reform of governance has become an indispensable component to enhance post-conflict reconstruction efforts (Jeong, 2005; Doyle and Sambanis, 2006). On the other hand, Sawyer (1992) points out that, particularly in post-conflict nations where the social fabric has been ripped apart by violence, measures to enhance state capacity are inapplicable in settings where the state has often been a contributing factor to the issue (2005). Sawyer maintains, when implementation is carried out in an un-coordinated manner and in hasty, governance reform can result in the repetition of old ways or "pursuing great ideals without framing them in appropriate institutional arrangements" (Sawyer 2005: 139).

## **Statement of the Problem**

Moumouni (2018) established that in post-war nations, foreign aid had been applied mainly on humanitarian course without significant effects on long-term economic goals. Similarly, Thapa (2020) and Lappin (2019) asserted that with good governance, the agenda of donor institutions when granting ODA is achieved by fostering economic and infrastructural development, especially as noted in developing countries in post-conflict West Africa. In consideration of the increasing economic development evident in Liberia as from the 2005 democratic elections of Ellen Johnson, there is a need to assess the role of ODA in motivating the development of democratic governance in war-torn countries to bring out the significance of foreign aid in stimulating long-term development. This study, therefore, seeks to resolve a major dispute that lies in the understanding of whether ODA is intended to directly develop nations or to create the conditions viable to allow for development in developing societies that are fragile. Thus, demonstrating the causal link between ODA and functional democratic governance framework as a *sin qua non* for development outcomes in fragile societies returning from conflicts as in the case of post-war Liberia.

## **Purpose of the Study**

This paper aims at supporting the argument that ODA has been impactful on fragile democratic governance frameworks in creating the conditions necessary for development to take place in the developing world with reference to post-war Liberia, placing importance on the following objectives:

- i. To examine the causal link between ODA and democratic governance frameworks in fragile societies.
- ii. To explore the influence of ODA in the creation of a democratic governance framework after-war in Liberia.
- iii. To evaluate the impact of ODA in creating the conditions necessary for development to take place in post-war Liberia.

### **Research Questions**

- i. What were the major challenges associated with the post-conflict Liberia democratic governance framework?
- ii. How did ODA impact the democratic governance framework of post-conflict Liberia?
- iii. To what extent has the creation of the necessary democratic governance conditions impacted development outcomes in post-war Liberia?

### **Hypothesis of the Study**

This study was based on alternative hypotheses that:

H11. The economic development in post-conflict Liberia is hampered by challenges preventing the implementation of a democratic governance framework.

H12. ODA has positive impacts in the development of a democratic governance framework in post-conflict Liberia.

H13. ODA has an impact on creating the conditions necessary for development to take place within fragile democratic societies, particularly in post-conflict Liberia.

### **Significance of the Study**

The findings of the dissertation will be of major benefit to policy makers, governments, donor agencies and international development think tanks. The study will establish the association between ODA and democratic governance frameworks by establishing the influence of ODA on the creation of democratic governance frameworks in fragile West African states, particularly in Liberia. Moreover, the study will establish the role of ODA in the development of conditions conducive to assuring and promoting economic and infrastructural development in post-war Liberia. Essentially, this study appeal to policy makers, governments, donor agencies and international development think-tanks to redesign development assistance packages toward the developing world.

## **Limitations**

As it relates to the limitations, there are several, but only a few are elucidated. This argumentative paper required a certain amount of time for research, huge budgeting for travels and data collection, and the availability of tons of related literatures to be able to objectify the study. Nevertheless, in the instance of this study, all these, unfortunately, were not to a larger extent available. Moreover, the study compilation was a completely rigorous exercise as a result of the disruption of the worldwide pandemic Covid-19, which had compelling implications that demanded countries from across the globe to take extraordinary preventive actions thus, limiting gatherings, meetings, conferences and to an extent appointments etc. This action limited my chances of gathering more first-hand information from major stakeholders, agencies and personnel best situated to help inform my paper. Notwithstanding, due to the fact that I could not access information from organization, entities and major stakeholders, my next option was accessing needed information and materials via the World Wide Web (www), but this option was unforgivably costly, ranging from costly internet data packages to online payment for desired information and materials needed for the compilation of the study. Finally, juggling financial responsibilities and domestic stress to contend with whilst compiling this paper from home was a force to reckon with to a larger extent.

## **Definition of Terms**

1) Economic growth: describes the comparison in the increase of production of economic goods and services from one period to another. Popov (2018) describes economic growth in terms of nominal or real terms describing it as the gross domestic product (GDP) and gross national product (GNP) respective of the expansion in the production of goods and services in an economy, including the expansion of labor force, capital goods, and technology. According to Peterson (2017), economic growth is demonstrated by an increase in the combined market value of increased goods and services produced, using estimates, particularly the GDP. The concept of economic growth is not widely used to determine where nations are developed because there have been many instances whereby nations with high GDPs don't translate to the livelihood statuses of people living in those societies.

- 2) Economic development: entails development that is concerned with how people are directly affected by improvements in their surroundings. It assesses the perceived living standards and the existing freedom to warrant a good living standard (Mubinovna & Nutfulloevna, 2020). Rosés and Wolf (2018) asserted that measuring the development of the economy entails an evaluation of real income per capita, education standards and literacy level, healthcare outcomes, housing quality and availability, environmental standards level, and life expectancy. The perception of economic development is closely associated UNDP Human Development Index, which places emphasis on the educational rate of societies, health care opportunities available to reduce mortalities and employment opportunities that affects income to qualify if it is true or not nations are developed.
- 3) Developed nation: is a terminology used to define countries exhibiting a high GNI per capital level consistent with their industrialization level (Diaconescu, 2019). According to Diaconescu (2019), a country is categorized as developed when the GNI per capita is above \$12,000, with an average of approximately \$38,000. By 2012, the combined population from developed countries accounted for approximately 1.3 billion, and included countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, Japan, Canada, Singapore, Korea, Taiwan, Australia, Israel, New Zealand, and Scandinavia, as well as some countries in western Europe and the Gulf region.
- 4) Developing nations: is a terminology that describes states and territories that exhibit a significantly low GNI per capita consistent with their level of industrialization (Stjepanović, Tomić, & Škare, 2017). Developing countries are categorized into moderately developed nations with a GNI per capita of between \$1,000 and \$12,000 and an average of approximately \$4000, or less developed nations with lesser GNI pr capita levels (Gil-Alana et al. 2021). By 2012, moderately developed countries accounted for approximately 4.9 billion people (Stjepanović, Tomić, & Škare, 2017), and included countries, such as China, Jordan, Mexico, Indonesia, Fiji, Thailand, and Ecuador, as well as countries in South America, southeastern Asia, Central America, southern and northern Africa, the Soviet Union nations, Eastern Europe, and many Arab countries.
- 5) Official Development Assistant (ODA): is government assistance intended to finance a humanitarian course or to induce economic and infrastructural growth of poor countries (Leigland, (2018). ODA excludes granted loans and credits towards

military development. According to OECD (2021), ODA is granted based on the established bilateral agreements, or through a multilateral development agreement with an international donor agency, such as the World Bank or the UN. Importantly, ODA is configured into soft loans, as well as the supply of technical assistances with the soft grants amounting to a quarter of the overall grant element (Leigland, 2018). The OECD reserves a list of emerging nations and regions, such that only aid to the listed countries qualify as ODA. According to OECD (2021), the list is updated regularly and contains approximately 150 countries and territories with a GNI per capital lower than US\$12,276.

- 6) Development aid: has been defined using technical terms such as development cooperation, technical assistance, development assistance, ODA, international aid, and/or overseas development aid. Kobayashi et al. (2021) associate it to any technical, material or financial assistance that is provided by a government or international donor agency to a recipient to facilitate social, economic, political development, or environmental conservation. It may also be defined or can further defined as "aid expended in such a way that is anticipated to promote development, whether achieved through economic growth or other means". Developmental aid is not humanitarian aid by targeting poverty eradication as opposed to inducing a short-term effect (Aid-hub 2015).
- 7) Governance: is a concept that defines the organization and management of a particular community to address its political, economic, cultural and social needs (Pierre and Peters, 2000). Governance has further defined the process, mechanism, institution, and/or relationship that people, citizens or interest groups use to articulate and further their obligations and human rights while mediating their disparities (Shabbir Cheema, 2005:5). In addition, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the World Bank define governance by inducing a prefixing adjective on them such that the WB accentuate good governance from a political stance (Abrahamsen 2000), while UNDP exemplifies good governance from a democratic point of view (Governance for the Future, 2006). Moreover, there is evidence that good governance may make a contribution to pro-poor growth (Dollar & Kraay, 2002; Chong & Gradstein, 2004). Kofi Annan (1998), similarly, demonstrated good governance as "perhaps the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promoting development".

- 8) Good Governance: the word "governance," as well as the phrase "good governance," has been more popular in development literature during the last several years. Addink (2019) identifies bad governance with the increasing perpetration of social evils in the community, a notion that is becoming widely accepted. On the other hand, Keping (2018) asserts that donor institutions are their ODA predicated on the implementation of reforms that promote "good governance", especially in Africa. There are eight key qualities of good governance. Addink (2019) argues that participants in good governance have a voice since consensus is sought in a transparent, responsible, efficient and effective process. Moreover, the governance is characterized by equitability, and inclusiveness while adhering to the governing rules and regulations. Corrupt practices are reduced, minority viewpoints are taken into consideration, and the decision-making process listens to the viewpoints of the vulnerable groups in the community according to this plan. It also responds to the demands of the current and future generations of society ([www.unecap.org](http://www.unecap.org)).
- 9) Democratic governance framework: is an act through which institutions follow the structures set by democratic processes and norms in their internal and external environment as they interact with other institutions (Ansell et al., 2021). According to Ansell et al. (2021), the framework for democratic governance captions institutional transparency and accountability, political pluralism, human rights, an active civil society, the rule of law, growth of a multiparty political system, democratic electoral process, reinforced parliamentary systems, prevention of misappropriation of state resources, and close monitoring of the enactment of norms and processes defining democracy.

### **Research Methodology**

The present study adopted a qualitative methodology in the collection, analysis and interpretation of data from secondary sources. According to Azungah (2018), qualitative methodology entails the use of non-numerical data to define the characteristics of a population. The choice of qualitative methodology was guided by the application of a descriptive research design to narrow the area of investigation.

Moreover, the use of a qualitative method was in support of an interpretivist epistemology and ontology that basis the source of knowledge of realistic explanation

of population characteristics. In this study, the attributes of fragile post-war communities of West Africa were of significance, referencing the appropriate use of ODA in building a development-friendly environment for the economic revival of post-war Liberia.

The study examined reports (annual or periodic reports) on Liberia from the United Nations Development Program, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development. Moreover, the study examined previously published articles sourced from various online databases, particularly SAGE, EBSCO, ProQuest, and JSTOR. The included articles and reports featured ODA, governance and development in West African countries, particularly in Liberia. The sourced data spanned from 2006 to 2017 to capture data in the cost-conflict era of the case study county.

The collection of secondary data was aided by a search query. Through a desktop search, a search query was designed and used, which featured key terms, phrases and a combination of key terms using “OR” and “AND” as the main Boolean operators to build the search terms. The generated search terms included “ODA in Liberia”, “Foreign aid in post war Liberia”, “ODA and governance in Liberia”, “democratic governance in Liberia”, and “role of ODA in democratic governance in Liberia”. The selected articles and reports were appraised based on the researcher’s knowledge on the study subject for usability in the analysis.

The collected secondary data was scored and tabulated to facilitate analysis. Thematic analysis was used to compare the data concerning ODA in terms of developing a realistic democratic governance framework with the overall developmental outcomes from the annual GDP performance and HDI reports. After familiarizing with the collected data, codes were applied to yield datasets from the comparisons. The generated datasets and categories were further examined to identify possible patterns of meaning. The isolated patterns were described into themes that answered the research questions defined.

## **Chapters Outline**

This dissertation is organized into five chapters. In chapter 1, the study commences with the introduction into key concepts, problem statement, main



objective of the study, core research questions, assumptions, significance of the study, limitations, definition of terms and their operational definitions, and lastly, the research methodology used in the collection and analysis of data. Chapter 2 focuses on the theoretical framework guiding the study, followed by an empirical review of previous literature on ODA and its significance in building an environment feasible for development in Africa, West Africa and Liberia. Chapter 3 places emphasis on historical analysis of ODA in Africa skewed towards West Africa and Liberia more specifically. Chapter 4 outlines the findings on the impact of ODA on democratic governance in Liberia. Lastly, chapter 5 provides a detailed discussion comparing the present findings with the reviewed literature to build conclusions and recommendations.

## CHAPTER II

### Literature Review

Various countries in the Sub-Sahara Africa, particularly Liberia, are categorized as developing economies based on their poverty index and development challenges they face. Different studies have been conducted across the globe to elucidate the significance of official development assistance (ODA) from donor partners. Diverse worldviews have been developed on the importance of ODA in the development programs of West Africa, particularly in Liberia, pointing to the challenges associated with its exploitation. The region has been marred with many development challenges spanning from leadership to economic and civil strife, even with continued donations of billions of dollars every year. Systemic corruption, poorly implemented judicial system, increased abuse of human rights, poor delivery of education systems and increased inequalities impede the development agenda of West African countries irrespective of continued aid. This chapter, therefore, seeks to provide a literature review and establish a theoretical framework evaluating the impact of ODA on democratic governance framework in fragile societies of West Africa, taking Liberia as the case study. Moreover, the chapter evaluates the casual link between ODA and democratic governance assistance frameworks in fragile West African societies, while identifying the impact of ODA in the creation of a democratic governance paradigm in post-war Liberia to build conditions favorable for development to take place.

#### **Theoretical Framework**

This study is founded on the premise of governance and economic development evaluating ODA as the influential factor. Governance, according to Olivier de Sardan (2011), describes a system in which entities and institutions are directed and controlled. Shittu et al. (2020) shared the opinion of Olivier de Sardan (2011) that governance entails the management and administration of processes and structures encapsulated in decision making in view of accountability, behavior, and control of institutions. According to Shittu et al. (2020), ODA has been used to influence the administration and political objectives of beneficiary West African

countries through donor administration, especially on project funding and performance. The domains under governance and leadership of ODA in West Africa are evaluated by the theory of bureaucratic rivalry, dependency theory, big push theory, and the pluralist democratic theory. According to Bauer and Ege (2017), the theory of bureaucratic rivalry posits that bureaucratic rivalry is the product of policy implementation which is facilitated by many actors who exercise different lead roles in a particular policy issue. Dalton (2017) agreed with the view of Bauer and Ege (2017) that according to the theory of bureaucratic behavior, the actors are all rational in their quest to optimize and maximize their own profits and welfare. The theory identifies individual bureaucracies, business organizations, and people as consumers rating them the same way seeking to maximize their profits and benefits. In the evaluation of the present study, the theory of bureaucratic rivalry explains the utilization of ODA in different countries underscoring the roles of different actors in the administration of financial aid. The theory explains the development accrued from financial aid, describing the conceptualized perception of development as freedom. Choi (2020) argues that the existing school of thought in ODA advocacy is development for a common good. It is an ideological approach exploited by economists and international organizations, such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank, to further their agenda intuiting the economic growth of developing nations. However, as the theory of bureaucratic rivalry describes, Blair and Winters (2020) demonstrate that various developing governments take the financial aid, involve different partner organizations in the administration of the ODA exercising their lead roles into diverse development agenda without a common goal in West Africa republics. While using the domains imprinted in the theory of bureaucratic rivalry, the present study seeks to demonstrate the impact of ODA on fragile democratic governance frameworks in presenting conditions supporting development to occur West African countries referencing post-war Liberia by identifying the causal links between ODA and democratic governance frameworks, and in creating conducive environment important for economic and infrastructural development in the country.

Focusing on the disbursement of ODA in enhancing economic development in African countries, the dependency theory has been used to explain the relationship between ODA and the governance of recipient countries. Mulbah (2017) argued that

ODA contributes to growth from humanitarian to economic development in third world countries because decisions implemented in alleviating development problems are overwhelmingly inclined to benefit the interests of both the developed and developing worlds. Lappin (2019) concurred with the intuition of Mulbah (2017) inferring that capitalism is a ranked, international paradigm in which industrialized nations capitalize on developing countries through the transfer of total welfare to the developed world seeking to remedy corruption and misappropriation of funds and resources in the sub-Saharan region, which is largely underdeveloped. Using the dependency theory, ODA is evaluated by outlining the practices that promote the interest of Western nations and maintain African countries dependent on developed countries. Hagmann and Reyntjens (2016), a Marxist philosopher, describe the relationship between the sub-Saharan region and developed nations as one in which the international bodies use their jurisdiction powers to superintend the operations of developing nations in a manner that benefits them. St-Amant (2017) agrees with Hagmann and Reyntjens (2016) evaluating the use of ODA to impact economic development by introducing the idea of metropolises and satellites arguing that metropolises through their power exploit the economic surplus of the underdeveloped countries. The dependency theory is significant in the present study because it outlines the policies and perceptions associated with sharing of resources for development which benefits the recipient countries, especially those in West Africa, Liberia included. The dependency theory framework demonstrates the relationship between foreign aid and Liberia, and the exploitation and use of natural resources by international organizations to rebuild Liberia in its post-war era.

Further, the big push theory has been used to explain the impact of aid on economic growth. Dalton (2017) argues that poverty limitations which emanate from various factors such as low productivity, weak savings, and population pressure impair economic development, and therefore, a push in the form of ODA increases capital invested in several sectors contributing to self-sustaining development. In congruence with Dalton (2017), Blair and Winters (2020) asserted that sub-Saharan countries require a big push from ODA to enhance economic excellence and reduce poverty as a strategy towards self-sustaining development. In contrast to Blair and Winters (2020), Arnmarker (2021) dismisses the existence of poverty traps arguing that the economic excellence of nations cannot be induced through aid. The argument

highlighted countries like China and India which advanced from poverty with minimal foreign assistance, which was directed to economic development in their entirety. The goal of ODA is in defining development captioning the empowerment of local citizens to lead them into actuating the freedom of choices while visualizing development from the lens of better health outcomes, education, and income equality.

Using the pluralist democratic theory, foreign aid is evaluated by assessing the results and/or effects it induces the recipient community. Lappin (2019) argues that unilateral and multilateral donor organizations seek to establish whether their aid works. However, no substantive answer has been established. Arnmarker (2021) argues that the theory identifies various challenges foreign donors experience in the award and governance of aid pointing to the underlying common good and focus. Arnmarker (2021) concurred with Lappin (2019) that various recipient organizations, non-governmental organizations, and multilateral agencies influence governance and development by establishing accountability approaches towards their ODA efforts. Similarly, Mulbah (2017) argues that many recipient countries in West Africa, including Liberia, are challenged with accountability in their development agenda following apposite use of the foreign aid. St-Amant (2017) contradicted with the opinions of Mulbah (2017) that the foreign aid reduces positive effects to the receiving African countries identifying the aid to synergize natural resources in various governments to make institutional reforms commanding a rent-seeking behaviour (Hagmann & Reyntjens, 2016). Saliba (2018) agreed with the sentiments of Hagmann and Reyntjens (2016) asserting that both ODA and natural resources lead to rents characterizing windfall gains that disrupt political and economic incentives. The pluralist democratic theory has been used to explain these attributes vis-à-vis development through democratic governance framework to show how poor countries can benefit from them without much effort and both have the ability to actuate rent-seeking behavior. Considering the pluralist democratic theory and the theory of bureaucratic rivalry, the theoretical position of the study is that ODA supports the development of democratic governance frameworks in fragile developing societies. This theoretical approach has been built upon the increasing infrastructural developments noted in Liberia following the end of civil war, and the evident bilateral relations building between Liberia and international organizations and donor agencies.

## **Economic Development of West Africa**

The general economic growth index in West Africa is increasing as projected by the 2019-2020 3.6% growth associated with the recovery of commodity prices in the global market and improvements in service and production sectors across the region (The World Bank, 2021). Alkali (2021) countered the findings in the World Bank (2021) report identifying uneven performance and economic challenges in West Africa as demonstrated by regional economic indicators espoused by the African Development Bank survey. For instance, Liberia, a West-African country, is categorized as one of the poorest countries globally. The country has been hit by diverse forces that adversely affect economic development, particularly civil war in the 1990s (Paczynska, 2016), Ebola in the early 2010s (Bowles, Hjort, Melvin & Werker, 2016) and Covid-19 pandemic in the early 2020s (Chen et al. 2020). Bunte et al. (2018) concurred with Paczynska (2016) that Liberia was the most hit by Ebola and was still recovering from the effects of the civil war and health crisis when the economy was further devastated by the Covid-19 pandemic. Irrespective of the abundant natural resource wealth in addition to the favorable geographic position of the country, Liberia continues its economic deterioration among the globally poor economies. Reports from the World Bank (2021) established that in 2016, approximately 2.2 million people in Liberia could not afford their basic needs. Among this population, more than 68% (1.5 million) lived in rural areas (The World Bank, 2021). Katib (2021) concurred with the World Bank (2021) report that in consideration of the poverty index, close to 1.6 million Liberians were living below the food-poverty index while approximately 0.67 million were categorized to live in extreme poverty. Over the years, De La Fuente, Jacoby and Lawin (2020) established that there exists a widening gap in regional and urban-rural rates of poverty with the continuity of the Ebola crisis coupled with the deterioration of the commodity prices in the global market. While the country boasts a wide pool of natural resources, particularly gold, iron ore, diamond, fisheries, fertile soils and forestry, the economic potential of Liberia in the exploitation of these resources remains largely unused.

Some countries in West Africa, particularly Nigeria's largest economy in Africa, are in the post-recession period with their economic dominance and performance in the region commanding a dynamic industrial base that majors on manufactured exports to the international market (Afolabi, 2019). Alkali (2021)

expressed contradictory views to the summations of Afolabi (2019), pointing out that the majority of West African states, especially Liberia, are only struggling with their political, cultural and economic activities. According to Chirisa, Mlambo-Simba and Matamanda (2018), the economic zones in Liberia developed consistent with the growing significance of the Atlantic Ocean and the coastal plains. Further, Koehler (2020) agreed with Chirisa et al. (2018) that Liberia's strategic dominance is embedded in the West African rocks comprising of granite, schist, and gneiss. Moreover, with iron-bearing formations in the West African shield, Liberia further exploits the sandstone beds along the coast. The region has a unique soil topology primarily comprising of latosols of low to medium fertility spanning across three-fourths of the total land surface (Hartman & Morse, 2020). On the other hand, the total amount of rainfall in West Africa is irregularly distributed to impact the weather conditions positively with subsequent effects on agricultural and related economic activities.

Various governments in West Africa are working in partnership with donors and multilateral institutions, such as the African Development Bank, to avail crucial financial support to reinforce the development infrastructure of the region while revamping regional economic diversification. For instance, the government of Liberia under the presidency of George Weah has been structured to exploit foreign aid to continue enforcing the Pro-Poor Agenda for Prosperity and Development (PAPD) that strive to address the country's economic and political challenges (Wang, Pearson & McCauley, 2021). Katib (2021) shared the view of Wang et al. (2021), demonstrating that the economy of the country has been rebounding towards recovery after experiencing depression for the last two consecutive years. Currently, the region is experiencing a real GDP growth in 2021 of 3.6%, which allowed a per capita GDP increment overturning the 2016 effects (The World Bank, 2021). However, the poverty level is anticipated to increase slightly with an associated increased contraction of per capita consumption. Chirisa et al. (2018) associated the economic contraction with associated economic growth resulting from prices of export commodities. Nevertheless, both Kieh (2018) and Chirisa et al. (2018) established that inflationary pressure due to the calm economic environment has contributed to a rebound in economic activity in West Africa. Evidently, West Africa's economic development has a long way to go respective of public administration, democratic governance and

guided exploitation of natural and ODA resources to impact domestic revenue mobilization significantly considering the declined country's score between 2010 and 2019.

### **Official Development Assistance in West Africa**

Official development assistance (ODA) has been described as foreign aid designed to loan the government towards economic development, benefiting the welfare of developing economies (Patel et al., 2016). Kenny (2020) concurred with Patel et al. (2016), describing ODA as a loan categorized as a concessional loan granted to developing countries in West Africa to endorse sustainable economic, political and social development as well as improve the welfare of people. According to Roodman (2014), different West African countries contract foreign governments for ODA resources through diplomatic and trade relations or through bilateral agreements with the developing countries. In Liberia, for instance, ODA may be granted in agreement with other members of the United Nations or their agencies or in agreement with other multilateral and international lending institutions, such as IMF. Barkat, Mrabet and Alsamara (2016) shared the view of Roodman (2014), intimating that Liberia secures a net ODA capping various disbursements of loans designed under the concessional terms necessitating the country to repay the net principal amount. Other ODA grants, as Kenny (2020) determined, entail grants offered through official agencies, which are Development Assistance Committee (DAC) members, or by those that are non-DAC member countries, or through multilateral institutions striving to promote and enhance the welfare and economic development of developing countries and territories categorized in the DAC list detailing the recipients of ODA globally. According to the World Bank (2021) report, Liberia has been loaned, in addition to ODA and associated grant element that is calculated at 25% interest and an appended 10% discount rate to the awarded loan. When calculating the amount to grant, Patel et al. (2016) argued that the net official aid accounts for the aid flows characterized by the net of repayments provided by the official donors to developing economies listed in part II of the DAC list detailing the recipients of ODA globally. Barkat et al. (2016) agreed with the summations of Patel et al. (2016), purporting that the contents of Part II of the DAC list identify West African countries and territories that are relatively developed. Consistent with the findings of Barkat et al. (2016), Morozkina (2019)



established that the official aid granted to West Africa at any time is rendered following the stipulated terms and conditions congruent to those used in ODA awards. On the other hand, Nhamo, Nhemachena and Nhamo (2020) intimated that in 2005, DAC annulled Part II of the DAC List with the termination of data gathering on official aid and related resource flows aiming the Part II countries and territories in 2004.

According to Morozkina (2019), West Africa was on its way to recovery from the economic meltdown exacerbated by the Ebola crisis in the region when the COVID-19 pandemic commenced, which led to a disruption in the local and global economic growth and development trajectory, negatively impacting the momentum in the region. Connolly and Mincieli (2019) shared the viewpoint of Morozkina (2019), affirming that the major challenge introduced in West Africa by the health crisis of Ebola and Covid-19 pandemic is the dynamics related to a shift in ODA award and use as well as changes in regulations affecting project-specific and quick-spending loans program. In the recent past, Connolly and Mincieli (2019) confirmed that the West African states, including Liberia, initiated diverse quick-spending loans programs with a promise to institute critical policy reforms in specific priority economic sectors targeting improving health systems and health outcomes and upscaling economic domains to avert dire effects from the crisis. Evidently, West African governments exemplified their commitment to exploit ODA and natural resources in public infrastructure to bring out the positive impacts of foreign aid in fragile societies, as reflected in economic recovery and job generation.

### **Negative impact of Aid on Africa, West Africa, and Liberia**

Despite the success and benefits of aid to the Sub Sahara region, there is evident disagreement among researchers and scholars on the effectiveness of aid to Africa. Barkat et al. (2016) suggest that regarding Africa, aid has been misappropriated, ineffective, and has led to failure and dysfunctional states in Africa, especially in the western states. Kenny (2020) supported the intuition by Barkat et al. (2016) suggesting that aid donations in Africa do not support reconstruction, industrial development, and establishment of social services as seen in the case of US interventions in the redevelopment of Europe after World War II. Further, De La Fuente, Jacoby, and Lawin (2020) explained that Africa is trapped in a dysfunctional cycle and unable to implement necessary measures towards economic prosperity due

to aid dependency. Haggmann and Reyntjens (2016) demonstrated that statistics provided by the World Bank and IMF on economic growth, employment creation, and poverty reduction indicate that the current economic growth trend in Africa has a weak association to poverty extinction because aid fails to improve economic stability and creation of employment opportunities. Mulbah (2017) coincides with the perception of Haggmann and Reyntjens (2016) proposing that aid is responsible for slow employment rates, economic development, and reduction in poverty levels due to poor implementation structures. In essence, aid is attributed to extreme poverty levels in West Africa due to poor governance systems due to increased aid dependence with poor guidelines on the provision of solutions to unemployment, infrastructural development, and industrial evolution.

### **Democratic Governance Framework in Fragile Societies**

Governance in Africa has been neglected for a long while has been suspected as the primary hindrance towards economic development (Fosu, 2018). Various African countries strive to build and advance on governance gains that were achieved from their independence with some success. Beegle and Christiaensen (2019) concurred with the conclusion of Fosu (2018), asserting that the development of good governance requisites the foundations of mobilized civil societies, effective state and political leadership, and an efficient, effective private sector. Further, Tchamyou (2021) supported the view of Fosu (2018), arguing that good governance is pegged on transparency and accountability, citizen participation, effective combat of corruption, and the presence of an enabling judicial system. Consistent with the theoretical framework defined, administration and use of foreign aid have sought governance reforms in developing countries seeking to establish public institutions with the capacity of actuating the identified good governance domains. In West Africa, for instance, Liberia, Yahyaoui and Bouchoucha (2021) argued that the intentions of ODA have been the development of democratic governance frameworks following the increasing peace space and democracy in the country, providing a conducive environment for economic and infrastructural development.

Democratic governance is essential in ensuring sustainable development and peace within societies. Fragile countries have continued to build policies and frameworks to help them realize their primary goal of making sure that their countries

restore democratic governance, development, and peace (Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff, 2011). Lasswell and Kaplan (2017) maintained the views of Brinkerhoff and Brinkerhoff (2011), intimating that a democratic governance framework is developed with the thought of preventing, managing, and resolving conflicts within fragile countries and increasing the democratic rights for the citizens in the countries. In support of Lasswell and Kaplan (2017), Newton et al. (2018) posited that democratic governance frameworks help improve the timeliness, efficiency, effectiveness, and coordination of activities in fragile and post-conflict countries while laying the foundation for sustainable peace and social justice. It aims to consolidate peace and prevent a relapse into political violence, encourage post-conflict reconstruction activities planning and implementation, helping address the leading causes of conflicts, and enhance coordination among the people and various organs of government.

There are several main pillars and constitutive elements of the democratic governance framework. Fung (2015) established that the main posts include improved security, political governance and transition, human rights, justice and reconciliation, humanitarian and emergency assistance, gender equality, and reconstruction and socio-economic development. Security as a function of the government is critical in ensuring that a country is running smoothly and people are enjoying the benefits of a peaceful country. Newton et al. (2018) postulate that the main objective of achieving the security pillar is to create a secure and safe environment for the fragile countries and their populations by new and well establishing functioning state administrations and institutions across the territories of the weak nations. Iheonu (2021) supported the conclusions of Fung (2015), suggesting that the security pillar in the democratic governance frameworks in fragile countries includes the enforcement of the ceasefire, security sector reforms of state forces, and the demobilization and reintegration mechanisms for the armed actors. With enhanced security, fragile countries can improve their well-being and boost the democratic rights of their populations.

The pillar on good political governance and transition in the democratic governance framework aims to promote pluralism and inclusive politics that positively contribute to nation-building. Ganev (2013) advanced that this pillar focuses on transforming society and leadership by developing a collective national vision that can deliver a more responsive and cohesive system of governance. Krawczyk and Sweet-

Cushman (2017) agreed with Ganev (2013), noting that this pillar emphasizes the role of women and youths to promote gender equality in governance. The post also emphasizes the importance of a governance system that guarantees broad-based leadership and participation.

The pillar on human rights, justice, and reconciliation focuses on protecting and promoting human rights. Linder and Mueller (2021) posited that human rights abuse in the form of policies of perceptions of injustices, marginalization, and identity-based discrimination could perpetuate conflicts that are threats to democratic governance. The governance can be achieved by strengthening the judiciary arm of the government and by providing legal and constitutional reforms that guide the economic, security, and political arrangements of fragile countries (Newton et al., 2018). Iheonu (2021) shared the view of Newton et al. (2018), suggesting that this pillar requires the government to address the human rights concerns of broad categories of population groups like the victims of human rights abuses and historical injustices, and IDPs. This pillar is critical in laying the foundations for recovery, reconstruction, and long-term socio-economic development.

## **Case Study**

### ***The Governance Commission of Liberia (2006 - 2017)***

Liberia gained its independence on July 26, 1847, making it the oldest African republic. Liberia's political system is based on the American model (Scully, 2018), containing three branches, including the executive, judicial and legislative. Further, the legislative consists of the Senate and the House of representatives. Mansah (2020) supported the view of Scully (2018), noting that the Liberian court system is divided into four entailing the justice of the peace, magistrate courts, circuit and speciality court, and the Supreme Court. Further, traditional courts exist in the rural areas of Liberia. However, between the years 1980 and 2006, Liberia was governed by a series of military and transitional governments.

In the year 1984, there erupted Liberia's first civil war, which Clarke (2019) argued was one of Africa's worst civil conflicts in the post-independence era. More than two hundred thousand lives were claimed, and more than a million people were displaced in other countries as refugees (Mansah, 2020). The rebels encompassed a

group of insurgents, mainly the Gio and Mano people from Nimba County in eastern Liberia. Additionally, as shown by Connolly et al. (2019), Anglophone Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) members established the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in 1990 that encompassed the Nigerian and Ghanaian troops among others for peace keeping in Monrovia. Mansah (2020) shared the view of Clarke (2019) that their presence prolonged the war by helping President Doe's troops before he was captured and killed in late 1990. Eventually, according to Sylla (2020), in August 1996, Nigerian officials forced the warring factions to disarm and demobilize by 1997, with a new government under Charles Taylor taking over in a democratic election.

Governance in Liberia changed significantly with various transitional governments during the 1990 – 2003 war period (Wleh, 2017). European Commission. (2021) report supported the view of Wleh (2017), showing that foreign aid in Liberia has been supported by various countries, especially the EU, whose main agenda was to facilitate the government to build strong governance practices founded on peace in the country. Importantly, Thapa (2017) showed that with the developed governance frameworks, the election of Ellen Johnson in 2005, ODA reinforced structures supporting the development of democratic governance in Liberia. Moving forward, other donor agencies developed bilateral relations with Liberia, seeking to institute transitional economic development programs.

After the end of the civil war in 2003, the Ebola crisis erupted in 2014, killing 11,315 people in more than six neighbouring countries (Clarke, 2019). Ebola was considered the deadliest crisis all over the globe, which Liberia experienced post-war as its economy was recovering. Mansah (2020) shared the opinion of Clarke (2019), asserting that the emergency management agencies played a role in combating the Ebola in Liberia, especially by managing communication, control of the peoples' movement, and coordination of disease surveillance. The governance commission of Liberia strived to promote health by raising awareness of Ebola infection, training more health workers, and providing medical supplies in all regions of Liberia. Contrarily to Clarke (2019), Sylla (2020) suggested that preventing and curing Ebola cost the government huge sums of money.

While still struggling with the country's economic development, Wilson et al. (2021) demonstrated that the global COVID-19 pandemic hit Liberia, further deteriorating its economy. The government put in place several measures to help combat the spread of Covid-19. Sylla (2020) concurred with Connolly (2019), suggesting that the government commission of Liberia played an important role in its economic recovery. Liberia has an economic freedom score of 49.2 and remains in a repressed category (Sylla, 2020). Mansah (2020) supported the view of Sylla (2020), intimating that economic stability is largely dependent on prudent management of natural resources. The government is set on domesticating the sustainable development goals and aligning them with the national budget.

### ***Before Official Development Assistance***

Kenny (2020) described Liberia as a country with populations living in extreme poverty characterized as below the economic development borderline. Nhamo et al. (2020) agreed with the view of Kenny (2020), adding that prior to the ODA awards, Liberia was under a very challenging condition where the citizens were exposed to diverse social, political and economic deficiencies. The Liberian economy was relatively under-developed, particularly as a consequence of the 1989 – 1996 civil war (Roodman, 2014). In addition to Roodman's (2014) intuitions, Connolly and Mincieli (2019) established that with Liberia being among the poorest and underdeveloped economies across the globe, its economy took a U-turn prior to the 1980 coup d'état. It was evidenced that across sub-Saharan Africa, the economy of Liberia was characterized to be the fastest growing and more developed. However, as Francisco, Moreira and Caiado (2021) intimated, Liberia's economy received a downward trajectory as a consequence of the civil war, which decapitated the economic infrastructure of the country, particularly the economy of Monrovia, the country's capital. Moreover, the poor country lost to brain drain leading to capital loss. Evidently, Liberia has been exposed to numerous challenges before and after the civil war, which affected its relations with aid donors, including the US, UK and European Economic Community.

The people of the Liberian communities were characterized to be facing challenges associated with health and malnutrition, joblessness and related economic problems that hampered progress in the fragile country (Barkat et al. 2016). However,

in contrast with the summations of Barkat et al. (2016), Nhamo et al. (2020) showed that Liberia has a wide pool of natural resource wealth that remained untapped. Of significance is the mineral resources, water, arable land, climate favoring agricultural activities, and forests, which would be exploited to change the economic outlook of the country. On the other hand, Connolly and Mincieli (2019) asserted that the country was tainted with poor infrastructure, political stability and poor engagement and involvement of human capital. In the last two decades, Liberia has been experiencing steady progress, with the majority of the population engaging in agricultural activities and export of other natural resources, particularly iron ore and rubber. Importantly, with increasing political stability, more foreign investors are taking an interest in Liberia, leading to an increase in the local foreign-owned manufacturing industry.

Following the takeover of the democratically elected government in 1997, huge international debts were inherited (Roodman, 2014). Barkat et al. (2016) shared the opinion of Roodman (2014), further intimating that the government has depended on the maritime registry as the primary source of revenue from the increasing foreign exchange earnings. As such, with continued rebuilding on economic and political infrastructure and increasing avenues for income and revenue collection in the ravaged Liberian economy, the government has been reforming and implementing sound macro- and microeconomic policies that support foreign investment from developed countries (Morozkina, 2019). Connolly and Mincieli (2019) agreed with Morozkina (2019) that with the reception of ODA, Liberia augmented its potential to revive its economy by revamping its social and economic capital to address the existing challenges and eliminate development challenges. According to Francisco, Moreira and Caiado (2021), ODA was designed to be granted to developing economies, such as Liberia, consistent with its social position by evaluating the development hindrances that challenge economic growth. The foreign aid has been sanctioned to Liberia with the aim of ensuring the development of remedy to social challenges as a strategy to develop and boost the wellbeing of its fragile societies. Combining foreign investment and ODA, developing economies have, in the recent past, been able to strengthen their food security by reinforcing various economic sectors affecting commodity and food markets (Nhamo et al. 2020). The findings of Nhamo et al. (2020) and Francisco et al. (2021) are applicable in the present review with Francisco et al. (2021), further elucidating the purpose of the foreign aid noting that it increased humanitarian

assistance to developing countries, which are not stable. As intuited, the multilateral lending institutions work in conjunction with the general budget support to help in creating sustainable help for fragile societies.

### *After Official Development Assistance*

The award of ODA in Liberia has been set for the economy on the basis of 70% of its national income while aligning the government spending with the social, political and economic practices of its populations (Patel et al. 2016). In concurrence with Patel et al. (2016), Morozkina (2019) established that Liberia is ranked the fourth-largest economy, taking awarded ODA as a share of its gross domestic product (GDP). Connolly and Mincieli (2019) described democratic governance as an institution commanding a system of standards and values captioning a government system where various state institutions work consistent with the democratic norms and processes at local and international levels interacting and collaborating with other institutions. In this regard, democratic governance and state security constitute the primary goal of ODA led by multilateral and international organizations to reinforce the associated infrastructure.

Roodman (2014) assert that many developing countries have been exploiting the benefits of ODA since its inception in the 1960s. Nhamo et al. (2020) shared the viewpoint of Roodman (2014), intuiting that the ODA that was awarded to Liberia from the US in 2019 was approximately \$600 million, an amount that has been increasing since, as illustrated in Figure 1 below.



Figure 1

*Net ODA and foreign aid received in Liberia, in US\$*



(Source: The World Bank, 2021)

The finding suggests that the development indicators from the utilization of these funds are established based on historic data and forecasts able to uptake the funding allocations from ODA. During the years of civil wars in Liberia, which violently impacted the people between 1989 and 2003, the overall economy of the country was markedly destroyed (Lowder & Carisma, 2011). However, as Morozkina (2019) demonstrated, with the increased momentum of foreign aid flow, Liberia has been able to address most of the challenges that affected its peace and stability. Consequently, the significance of ODA is felt following its positive impact on development and democratic governance in fragile societies.

### **Summary**

The chapter has reviewed governance and economic development, seeking to establish their link with ODA in West Africa with a focus on Liberia. On the other hand, literature is scarce on the implications of ODA in instituting democratic governance across West African societies. Moreover, there is literature paucity on the association between ODA and democratic governance to institute economic development in West African countries receiving foreign aid.

The guiding premise is that with the apposite governance of West Africa, ODA is geared towards driving development in the recipient countries, particularly in Liberia. The chapter below explores ODA domains on governance in Africa and West Africa, featuring the drivers to success and failure of ODA in West Africa with a particular concern on Liberia.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **ODA in Africa**

Foreign aid has been undergoing various reforms, which became evident in the 1980s with the changes in the Japanese ODA bureaucracy. As of 1992, various governments in the developed countries developed their ODA Charter, which defined diverse reforms in the ODA administration. Consistent with ODA reforms, different recipient countries, including Liberia, were required to adhere to the reform series to stimulate a shift in the focus on economic development, modernization, and growth through large-scale projects in infrastructure development. This chapter explores the significance of ODA administration in developing economies in Africa, focusing on Liberia in West Africa and identifying the governance domains embraced through foreign aid, especially in addressing social development, environmental protection, and, importantly, governance democratization across fragile societies.

#### **Aid and Governance in Africa and West Africa**

The potential of foreign aid in influencing governance while stimulating the economic growth process of various developing countries has been in the limelight in the recent past. In that five decades, David, John, and Hussain (2020) have estimated that various countries in Africa have received the cumulative US \$1 trillion in foreign aid. On the other hand, various countries in Africa are still struggling economically and largely depend on ODA to finance their budgets. The prevailing worldview is that ODA brings about democratic governance in fragile societies signifying the effectiveness of foreign aid. The debates on the effectiveness of foreign aid were openly argued in the Paris Declaration of 2005 when it was ratified by the Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) organization captioning the member countries of the Development Assistance Committee (DAC) (Gautier & Ridde, 2017). Mensah, Cater- Steel, and Toleman (2021) shared the view of Gautier and Ridde (2017), asserting that with the continued provision of ODA to African countries, various economies have made a stride towards their economic development in the long term. Seedee (2018) established that consistent with the viewpoint of the recipient country, and short-term foreign aid is more effective when offered in the event a

country experiences an internal or external shock. Similarly, Cook (2018) agreed with the intuition of Seedee (2018), suggesting that many developing countries in Africa do not stimulate the potential for foreign direct investment (FDI) considering that many multinational companies refuse to invest in them, making them exploit ODA for economic growth. In essence, foreign aid in the majority of low-income countries in Africa, and especially West Africa, is a major economic domain to facilitate governments in providing basic services, particularly health, education, and roads, to their populations.

Foreign aid has been shown to motivate the development of efficient democratic governance in many governments capturing the significance of institutional capacity to reinforce the management of government institutions (Grabowski, 2017). Ware (2018) supported the opinion of Grabowski (2017), intimating that various developing countries strengthen their governance to receive and manage foreign aid in diverse forms, including project financing, cash, program financing, education, and training, as well as through technical assistance. While middle-income African countries command a significant quantity of natural resources that they exploit economically in pulling FDI, the majority of low-income countries have a poor command of economic infrastructure, necessitating their dependency on ODA for basic services (Cook, 2018). The findings of Ware (2018) were consistent with the summations of Cook (2018), who argued that developing economies in West Africa has a low level of human capital based on the ratio between elementary enrolment versus secondary school enrolment, or the technical and vocational training capacity. Using these social and economic domains, Krawczyk (2018) established that developing countries in Africa have a wider space to allow for economic development through ODA, especially with better democratic governance. As a consequence, the largest proportion of developing countries in Africa is noted depending on ODA to facilitate democratic governance because it is predominantly channelled to humanitarian course, while others set aside a proportion towards economic, infrastructural development.

In consideration of the pluralist democratic theory, foreign aid has been playing a significant role in stimulating the growth and development of the economy in low-income West African countries by supplementing their domestic finance sources from revenue and savings to increase their capital stock and investment (Gautier & Ridde,

2017). Seedee (2018) supported the view of Gautier and Ridde (2017), demonstrating that there are diverse mechanisms that ODA uses to contribute to governance and, subsequently to economic development. First, according to Ware (2018), foreign aid motivates the restructuring of human capital to actuate the administration and management of physical capital to increase investment. Secondly, the award of foreign aid leads to increased capacity building in the human capital for better governance in the management of import capital goods and technology. Blair and Roessler (2021) agreed with the suppositions of Ware (2018), identifying the role of foreign aid in a decrease in indirect effects that lead to a decrease in savings and investment rates, which are a product of adept governance. With good democratic governance, foreign aid stimulates the apt transfer of technology into economic areas that increase capital productivity while promoting internal endogenous technical dynamics. Evidently, the four approaches define the capacity of foreign aid in stimulating the development of adept democratic governance important to impact positively on economic development.

Various worldviews have been developed examining the significance of foreign aid in governance and economic development. Seedee (2018) established that foreign capital inflow had been deemed sufficient and important to stimulate governance towards economic recovery in developing countries, such as Liberia. The findings of Krawczyk (2018) were consistent with the conclusions of Seedee (2018), asserting that there is a concrete link between ODA and governance towards economic growth, considering that foreign aid augments the available domestic resources when exploited through good governance. Moreover, ODA shapes the democratic governance of a country to enhance supplementary sources of domestic savings, which facilitates the closure of the foreign exchange gap (Grabowski, 2017). Cook (2018) concurred with Grabowski (2017) that the modelled governance leads to utilization of ODA in building stronger managerial skills and capacity to create better avenues towards access to modern technology that result in opening up to the foreign markets, eventually inducing economic growth. The findings of both Cook (2018) and Grabowski (2017) are applicable to the present evaluation with Cook (2018) purporting that with good governance, foreign aid is a major contributor to economic development in low-income countries in West African countries, which have a cumulative GDP of 12.5%. While considering ODA as the most significant component

of foreign revenue, the theory of bureaucratic rivalry argues that the potential for foreign aid is able to mold governance to boost the growth of the economy through apposite administration of foreign aid, decreasing the poverty and inequality indices. In addition, Berg (2020) evaluated the trends of foreign aid and their capacity towards governance in Africa, demonstrating that ODA elicits direct influence on the public sector by positively contributing to democratic governance, which defines domestic borrowing while controlling public spending. Blair and Roessler (2021) shared the view of Berg (2020), arguing that in the examination of the effect of foreign aid on governance, it was established that ODA elicits direct interaction with policy index in developing countries, especially with the implementation of sound macroeconomic policies. Evidently, prioritizing governance reforms as a product of ODA induces restructuring of domestic income distribution in developing countries.

### **Factors that Made Aid to Work and Not to Work in Liberia**

Liberia's Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program was put into action in September 2005, after a Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) was negotiated by the Economic Community of West Africa States (ECOWAS) two years earlier in August 2003 (Epreman & Brun, 2018). The CPA, which came after fourteen years of violence and conflict and rampant corruption in the public service, initiated the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL), which was formed by former fighting parties and established a time frame for transition to an elected government. David, John, and Hussain (2020) agreed with Epreman and Brun (2018) that in September 2003, the UN Security Council introduced the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNML), whose aim was to support the actualization of the CPA under Chapter seven of the UN constitution. Subsequently, donors started giving aid to support the transition of the government through an integrative reconstruction schedule, the Results-Focused Transition Framework (RFTF). According to David, John, and Hussain (2020), the donation of aid to Liberia was effective and faced different challenges, as explained in the following review. The GEMAP negotiations kicked off when there was a good political will which propelled the success of the discussions. Allen and Devitt (2012) elucidated that the negotiations were painful because the GEMAP negotiations began during the annual assessment of the Results-Focused Transition Framework in 2005, which indicated that corruption was rampant

in Liberia and posed a major threat to recovery and transition schedule. The minister for finance and economic affairs called upon the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the American federal government to help in improving public funds management and accountability. In support of Allen and Devitt (2012) findings, Moumounim (2018) suggested that the initiative led to the establishment of a non-paper agreement between the US, World Bank, and the European Commission to introduce a more powerful method in addressing graft and corruption founded on recovering funds, controlling expenditure, improving operational systems and funding. The agreement culminated in the Economic Governance Action Plan (EGAP), whose main aim was to link the international organizations and the transitional government in the bid of ensuring credible management of aid. In contrast to Moumounim's (2018) conclusions, Bartlett (2019) argued that ECOWAS was uncomfortable with the level of international intervention, which it argued would undermine the peace agreement and its wrong timing with just a few months remaining to the national democratic elections. As such, ECOWAS agreed Liberia join other international bodies in supporting the EGAP after consultations with the UN.

The GEMAP focused on financial management and accountability in public funds by tackling the security, administration, and economic challenges to ensure donors continue supporting the transitioning government. Damman et al. (2014) proposed that the GEMAP set objectives to help in the smooth transitioning of the government, such as enhancing financial management and responsibility by contracting international auditing experts with existing co-signatory powers. The budgeting procedure and expenditure control measures were evaluated through different business operations and comprehensive financial management information structures. GEMAP had the mandate to introduce effective procedures to curb corrupt practices through the introduction of an anti-corruption commission and the providing international law experts as consultants to the Liberian judiciary. Improvement of the procurement procedures and granting adjustments by advancing the transparency needs to assist Liberia in joining the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative and the Kimberly system. Keijzer et al. (2020) complemented the assertion of Damman et al. (2014), inferring that GEMAP improved the economic capacity of Liberia by establishing a model and allocating resources to develop capacity in anti-corruption efforts and introducing a timeline to assess outcomes through advanced service

delivery and exit programs. The GEMAP objectives reaffirmed the success of RFTF as the all-embracing system for donation coordination and the access to aid in a bid of reducing poverty by introducing an Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy.

The aspect on whether aid enhances GDP growth can be explained using two models, which are theoretical foundations of the effectiveness of aid. Developing countries face limitations in savings and export revenue which injures investment and economic development. Aid donations are meant to compensate for the gap between investments and domestic earning. Although this model has been severely criticized since its introduction, it has provided foundational principles in early aid regulations and regression standards that address the relationship between aid growth and aid savings (Allen and Devitt, 2012). In congruence to Allen and Devitt's (2012) viewpoint, Moumounim's (2018) research indicated that aid has no substantial effect on development savings or investment where aid was shown to support unproductive public consumption and lacked to promote investment. Bartlett (2019) contrasted the findings of Moumounim (2018), noting that the connection between aid and domestic savings is negative in many nations but yields positive results in countries with good adjustments and streamlined policies. Alonge (2019) identified three main contentious issues contributing to the negative results of aid effectiveness, including; misallocated aid where donors give aid for prudent reasons to the unprepared countries, misappropriation of aid where governments are receiving donations undertake non-developmental projects with the funds, and use of GDP development to assess aid effectiveness is not the right evaluation model. Keijzer et al. (2020) concurred with the suppositions of Alonge (2019), noting that while aid effectiveness research studies show that donors aim as specifically the promotion of economic development or reduction of poverty levels in the receiving nations, an opposing point of literature on aid allocation indicates that most donors often have a different agenda and provide the aid according to their organized interests. If a substantial amount of aid is provided for strategic reasons, no positive implication in terms of economic development or poverty reduction should be expected. Previous studies on aid effectiveness (Moumounim, 2018) equally assume that the recipient country's governments share the selfless objectives of the donors. Brault et al. (2018) contended the suppositions of Moumounim (2018), arguing that the recipient government and a selfless donor can have conflicting aims since the former consists of different stakeholders, including



wealthy persons who might impact aid distribution. When foreign aid is misappropriated and misused, one cannot expect the donations to have a significant effect on growth. Aid could increase the consumption rate of an economy rather than investment, which explains why the negative results are experienced on economic growth while still reducing poverty levels because there could be higher consumption among the poor or improved service provision to the poor. Given the effect of misuse of donations of funds and ineffectiveness in the development of the economy, donors and recipient governments should lay down appropriate systems to increase the credibility and management of donation funds.

## **Liberia's Politics and Economy History**

### ***Political History***

Liberia is among the oldest countries in West Africa, considering that it was not exposed to colonial rule. According to Grabowski (2017), the country was established in 1822 as an isolation camp for the freed slaves returning to Africa from America. Ware (2018) agreed with Grabowski (2017), affirming that Liberia grew a large colony assuming the commonwealth status, and after the involvement of the American Colonization Society, it gained independence in 1847. The largest population living in Liberia is composed of off-colored people, described as Americo-Liberians, who have been taking the lead in the social and political governance of the country until the 1980s (Seedee, 2018). In concurrence with Seedee (2018), Cook (2018) established that following the freeing of slaves and relocation to Africa, they were based and developed Cape Mesurado in 1821, which grew into modern Liberia with a population increase by 1824. The major settlements were in arable lands in Monrovia, the present-day capital of Liberia, where the majority of economic activities commenced. According to Krawczyk (2018), following independence, the boundaries of Liberia expanded rapidly and significantly consistent with the prosperity and stability of the region, which was often negatively impacted by civil wars. The most significant civil war in Liberia spanned 1989 to 1996 and again to 2003, a war that blocked major economic developments in the region, negatively affecting the political and social stability of the country. The road to democratic governance, according to Blair and Roessler (2021), commenced with the post-conflict elections of 2005, where Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, the first women head of state in Africa, took the leadership of

the country. Geographically, Liberia is positioned strategically in a region with potential for diverse economic ventures in Africa (Gautier & Ridde, 2017). Krawczyk (2018) agreed with Gautier and Ridde (2017), intimating that Liberia along the West African coast with Sierra Leone bordering it to the northwest, the Atlantic Ocean to the west and south, Guinea to the north, and Cote d'Ivoire forming the eastern border. Importantly, the population of Liberia is dominated by American slaves freed and taken back to Africa. Consistent with the geopolitical positioning of Liberia, the country has been considered to hold dominating strategic significance for the entire African continent.

### ***Economic History***

The economy of Liberia has been pegged on agribusiness and the export of natural resources (Ware, 2018). Blair and Roessler (2021) agreed with the view of Ware (2018), expounding that agriculture is the backbone of the economy of Liberia, considering the abundance of water and arable lands in the country. Importantly, according to Berg (2020), the economy of the country has been relying significantly on the export of mining products, mainly iron ore and rubber, before the commencement of the 1989 – 2003 civil war. It has been demonstrated that Liberia formed the major African exporter of iron ore into the global market, with iron mining constituting more than 50% of Liberia's revenue between 1970 and 1980 (Cook, 2018). Krawczyk (2018) agreed with Cook (2018), adding that following the 1980 coup d'état, the economic growth rate of Liberia demonstrated a downward trajectory consistent with the diminishing demand for its iron ore in the global market associated with the country's political upheavals. Evidently, the civil war spanning 14 years elicited devastating consequences on the economic growth of the country. Among the effects of the decade-long civil war included the destruction of major businesses leading to the loss of the majority of foreign investors and businesses fleeing Liberia (Grabowski, 2017). Similarly, Berg (2020) agreed with Grabowski (2017), showing the production of iron ore completely shut down in 2001 while the United Nations security council prohibited the exports of diamond and timber sourced from Liberia in 2003. Thapa (2020) established the reprieve of the UN sanctions against timber exports from Liberia in 2006, with an upscale of the business taking course between 2008 and 2009 into mass production. A year later, the UN sanctions against the export of Liberia's diamonds were acquitted in 2007 with the resumption of the production and

processing activities through the Kimberley Process Certification Scheme. Further, the production of gold gained pace after the political stability and progression towards democratic governance in the country, defining an additional source to the government's revenues and an additional source of employment.

Considering the political climate of Liberia with a president elected democratically, there is a unique command of governance in the country seeking to reconstruct the demolished economy. For instance, Ware (2018) demonstrated that through the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program (GEMAP) commissioned in the 2003-2006 transitional government, Liberia was supported to build avenues to raise government revenue, while instituting governance towards efficient spending in a transparent way. Moreover, Blair and Roessler (2021) shared the view of Ware (2018), asserting that the government of Liberia has been striving to enhance its business climate by reconstituting economic commissions to govern land tenure problems, as well as reviewing tariffs and tax regimes integrate the country with the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) neighbors. Berg (2020) argued that the country, through the Liberian National Investment Commission began by infusing \$97 million towards economic development in 2007 and has been upscaling it by \$100 million in recent years. Consequently, local and foreign investors are increasing in the country after assessing the economic climate and establishing the potential and opportunities in the mining industry, agribusiness and rubber, timber and forestry industry, and light industry, among others (Krawczyk, 2018). Notably, Blair and Roessler (2021) shared the view of Krawczyk (2018), intimating that some mining companies, such as the Arcelor Mittal Steel, have made agreements with the Liberian government to invest approximately \$1.5 billion in the mining industry and be involved in the government venture in accessing the global market.

In the aftermath of the Ebola and Covid-19 crisis in Liberia, the government has been exploiting rubber exports as the primary revenue resource together with some inputs from the maritime registry revenues (Huber, Finelli & Stevens, 2018). Ware (2018) concurred with Huber et al. (2018), affirming that Liberia commands the second-largest maritime registry across the globe with more than 2,724 vessels that garner approximately 83.3 million gross tons with a total earning of more than \$16 million yearly as maritime revenue. In the recent past, there has been an increasing interest in the exploration and exploitation of crude oil off-shore along the Atlantic

Coast of Liberia for commercial gains. With these inputs, the country has been recovering slowly from the effects of the recent economic crisis brought about by the disease pandemics, making the strides to recovery slow but progressive.

### **Liberia Relations with International Institutions and Donors**

Liberia has been engaged with donors for many years, with the focus of donor funding changing gradually towards long-term economic development and cooperation from humanitarian assistance (Seedee, 2018). Cook (2018) shared the view of Seedee (2018), intimating that the international community of developed economies, such as the United States, Japan, United Kingdom, Germany, France, and the larger EU, have demonstrated a long-standing interest in establishing close bilateral ties with Liberia. In actuality, the US has been ranked the largest donor to the country consistent with the official statistics from OECD, which showed that France, Japan, Germany, Italy, and Sweden are categorized as the other major donors following the US in contribution in their descending order. Even with such funding from international donors, the many years of civil conflict and poor political and economic management of the country left the country heavily burdened by a \$3.4 billion debt from bilateral creditors, multilateral development banks, and other commercial creditors.

Grabowski (2017) established that with the political stability and in the governance of Ellen Johnson, Liberia built bilateral relations with diverse multilateral institutions and governments, with the US being its first bilateral creditor in 2008 following the accord to implement the 2008 Paris Club. Consistent with the suppositions of Grabowski (2017), Ware (2018) established that the other international donors and institutions introduced bilateral agreements pledging debt relief. The country, through President Ellen Sirleaf, established strong relations with the African Development Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), and the World Bank gearing the support of the country through a formal program to pay Liberia's arrears to international creditors amounting to \$1.5 billion (Grabowski, 2017). Cook (2018) agreed with the opinions of Grabowski (2017) that with increased political stability and rooting of democratic governance under Ms. Johnson, Liberia garnered technical assistance from its international partners, such that the government started seeking reinforcement into primary economic reforms in order to attract and intensify local and

foreign investments while striving to qualify for the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) initiative towards debt relief.

Taking the US as the primary donor, Huber et al. (2018) established that the Agency for International Development (USAID) has been partnering with Liberia to implement the US development initiative to assist Liberia in humanitarian and economic development. Berg (2020) concurred with Huber et al. (2018), arguing that the post-war rebuilding strategy by the USAID towards Liberia encompasses inducing reintegration while increasingly targeting longer-term infrastructural developments in the country. Through her administration and governance, Thapa (2020) asserted that the president realigned rehabilitation initiatives to embody national and community infrastructural development programs, particularly building of the road network, increasing and expanding the scope of electricity access, education, and technical training towards vocational skills, enhancing business development skills, protecting forests and natural resources, and renovating government institutions aiming at improving the livelihood of Liberians. Together with other multilateral international institutions, the USAID partners with Liberia in financing the basic education programs targeting the enhancement of education and equality among boys and girls (Gautier & Ridde, 2017). Cook (2018) supported the view of Gautier and Ridde (2017), pointing to the collaborative effort between Liberia and international donors on improving the health sector, by revamping primary health care clinics in the country, supporting HIV/AIDS prevention programs, and addressing the health needs towards prevention and treatment of malaria. Evidently, the international institutions support the development of key domains towards economic breakthrough and a strong foundation towards democratic governance. For instance, the US and UK are keen on supporting reforms in the judicial system and implementation of the rule of law by instituting the development of victim abuse centers and legal aid clinics, supporting peacebuilding and reconciliation efforts in various communities, commissioning anti-corruption projects, stimulating transparency and accountability across the public institutions, and training judges and lawyers to oversee apposite governance across the judicial system.

Relations with other international institutions and donors have not been as straightforward as with the US. For instance, the European Union Commission, according to Grabowski (2017), demonstrated a limited presence in the country's

capital Monrovia and gradually and progressively increased its staff on a yearly basis. Ware (2018) concurred with Grabowski (2017) that the international community was cautious of establishing a bilateral relation with Liberia, but maintained close and continuous peace talks through their representatives in the country. The relations between Liberia and the European Commission (EC) were guided by the perception of capacity in the international organization (Huber et al., 2018). Blair and Roessler (2021) agreed with Huber et al. (2018), suggesting that although the EC had cut down ODA in Liberia calling for reforms, it has changed its stand consistent with the change in governance related to increasing reforms. The UN system, equally, has had parts characterized of low capacity coupled with high staff turnover in Liberia, which has been improving over the years considering the ease of hardships in work stations. In the post-conflict era, Liberia enhanced its cooperation with the EU, which supported the Liberia's transitional economic development program that consolidated national peace leading the country towards poverty reduction (EC, 2021). Blair and Roessler (2021) shared the view of the EC (2021) report demonstrating that the support of the EU was further directed towards transformative agenda to create economic transformation and to increase equality and inclusiveness in a more just Liberian society. Consistent with the good governance across public institutions, economic and infrastructural transformation through peace, the rule of law and security aided by the EU, the US government strived to build confidence in the political and public governance in Liberia (USAID, 2021). Šváblová (2021) supported the conclusions in USAID (2021) report asserting USAID played a key role in instituting reforms in public institutions. The consequences of these donor-mediated reforms include elicitation of measurable social and economic improvements in average Liberian lives.

Evaluating the modalities of awarding foreign aid, Cook (2018) noted that the World Bank, together with the EU Commission and the African Development Bank, demonstrated a prioritization in setting aside budgetary support for the country. Krawczyk (2018) concurred with Cook (2018), adding that with increasing bilateral relations with other nations, institutions, and donors, Liberia secured budget support, while Sweden developed associated restrictive guidelines that ultimately prevented their efforts to assist Liberia in budget allocations. According to Grabowski (2017), the brain drain coupled with inefficient donor coordination structures and unavailability of like-minded donors had been hampering the development of the

relations immediately post-war. However, Cook (2018) contrasted the conclusions of Grabowski (2017), asserting that with increased political stability exemplified in democratic governance under President Johnson, relations with donors and the international community has stimulated capacity building in the recent past, which has made lobbying from the national and international partners and organizations easier for development cooperation and long-term infrastructural development. It is evident that with increasing stability in addition to favorable conditions educing potential for development cooperation, which are gradually emerging, donor interests and foreign direct investments have increased in Liberia significantly.

### **Summary**

This chapter has explored the significance of foreign aid, especially in inducing reforms in West Africa featuring Liberia, and motivating the development of good governance in the country. In particular, the chapter has underscored the success factors and limiting contributors of foreign aid in developing west African countries. Moreover, the political and economic historical perspectives of Liberia have been explored from the founding of the country, the civil wars, independent elections post war, and the role of aid donors in the development of the country in the post-conflict era. The chapter has demonstrated Liberia's bilateral relations with the international community in rebuilding and strengthening it economy through education and better health care delivery systems. The subsequent chapter provides an examination of the findings and their analysis.

## CHAPTER IV

### Findings And Analysis: Liberia

This section of the paper focuses on the analysis of data and the findings, which will either contradict or validate the major assumption of this paper. The major argument maintains that foreign aid is impactful in creating the conditions feasible for development to take place in fragile developing societies. Detailed data on foreign aid is provided spanning from 2006 to 2017 featuring the effects of ODA on Liberia's governance and economic climate. Thus, a causal relationship is created between ODA and a democratic governance framework in order to achieve development results in fragile societies in West Africa in the post-war era, focusing on Liberia as the case study. In order to achieve this aim, the following objectives were addressed:

- i. To examine the causal link between ODA and democratic governance frameworks in fragile societies.
- ii. To examine the impact of ODA in the creation of a democratic governance framework in post-war Liberia.
- iii. To examine the impact of ODA in creating the conditions necessary for development to take place in post-war Liberia.

The evaluation of the objectives was guided by corresponding research questions including:

- i. What were the major challenges associated with the post-conflict Liberia democratic governance framework?
- ii. How did ODA impact democratic governance in post-war Liberia?
- iii. To what extent has the creation of the necessary democratic governance conditions impacted development outcomes in post-war Liberia?

Thematic analysis was used in breaking down the collected data, aiding in its interpretation. After familiarizing with the included data, coding was performed to build data sets. The resulting data sets were examined to identify possible patterns of meaning consistent with the study aim. The isolated patterns were, further, described into themes responding to the research questions.



## **Major Governance Challenges in Post-Conflict Liberia that Attracted ODA Intervention**

The study inquired about the challenges that Liberia experiences in its post-conflict era in the development of a democratic governance framework necessitating the involvement of international communities through ODA intervention. From the analysis on the challenges that influence the formation of the Liberian government's governance framework, Nyei (2014) established that a centralized governance system presents a poor approach towards the distribution of social, political, and economic resources and opportunities to the people increasing inequality across the localities. Signé and Korha (2016) argue that the centralized governance system has limited the functionality of self-governing and self-organizing mechanisms that allow the local people in utilizing their own and available resources for maximal benefits. Signé and Korha (2016) supported the view of Nyei (2014), suggesting that it is until the fiscal, political, and administrative powers are devolved through a decentralized democratic governance system, Liberia will keep underachieving its full potential relative to social, economic, and infrastructural development. As Gilgen (2011) asserted, the decade long war that led to the deaths of more than 250,000 people, with the destruction of properties valued over billions of dollars, caused a total collapse of governance institutions in the country. During such a time of Liberia's horrible and unhappy past, governments then were heavily controlled by different warring factions whose immediate family members dominated and occupied almost all key civil service positions that they were grossly unqualified to hold. The decade-long civil war resulted in the breakdown of democratic frameworks, as warring factions who headed the government became unanswerable to the citizens of Liberia.

Consequently, after the rest of the civil upheaval, Sayndee (2018) demonstrated that the governance committee was established as the center point of research on how Liberia runs a better government. The governance commission ensured fiscal and monetary discipline and probity in the administration of the nation and to deliver public services. Šváblová (2021) agreed with the findings of Sayndee (2018), asserting that the Act of National Legislature established the governance commission in Liberia in 2007. The Act mandated the governance commission to devise policy recommendations to help promote transparency and accountability in government, but more importantly, to foster a just and inclusive government where citizens' views are

counted in national decision-making. In essence, the international community nurtured the commission to establish good governance structures by assisting in the design, advising, and formulating apposite policies and frameworks to promote integrity through institutional arrangements at all levels within every public or private institution. The support of the international community was essential in the establishment of the governance community because it sought to promote a merit-based system that respects the rule of law and discipline in the running of state resources. It is not a gainsaying that a proper governance framework that involves the participation of Liberians in light of the statuses – lettered or unlettered and rich or poor was absent. The absence of a pluralistic democratic environment in Liberia has resulted in tremendous malaises that have afflicted democratic government in the country, which is despicably sad.

Wong (2012) established that a good governance framework had been associated with poor implementation of the decentralization programs consistent with the experiences and history of Liberia. The findings of Funaki and Glencorse (2014) were consistent with those of Wong (2012), who argued that the majority of West African governments were affected by unsuccessful democratic governance programs through devolution associated with politics of patrimonialism that ensued following independence. According to Signé and Korha (2016), leadership during and post-war largely reinforced the legacy of centralized states as an approach of dominating and amercing wealth and power while promoting regime survival and political order. This view by Beevers (2018) was directly associated with the opinion of Signé and Korha (2016), who examined the democratization of governance in Sierra Leone through decentralization, which resulted in the dissolution of President Siaka Stevens' local councils formally formed bringing the political power under his control. In Liberia, Funaki and Glencorse (2014) asserted that in post-conflict politics, the effectiveness of governance was hampered by the failure of existing structures, institutions, and rules of the government, available resources, and national issues impacting international bilateral relations involved in the implementation of reforms.

Nyei (2014) demonstrated that the presence of foreign aid in post-conflict Liberia has been challenged by de facto practices and policies associated with the re-engineered public institutions, administration, and society, over-centralization, and poor definition of local administrations. Krawczyk (2021) agreed with the sentiments

of Nyei (2014), asserting that the democratization of governance in the country has been affected by a chain of over-centralization, necessitating the need to adapt and implement legal frameworks that are comprehensive in defining the scope and limits of powers, responsibility, resources and authority of every government level including the relations and interactions between government institutions and with the international community. From the findings, it is suggested that without apposite legal frameworks, international institutions funding the Liberian government would exhibit little or no trust over the oversight institutions. Further, the necessity for constitutional reforms has impeded the bilateral relations between Liberia and aid donors who identify the need for humanitarian and economic assistance in the country but are derailed by poor governance in the existing public institutions (Wong, 2012). The finding of Krawczyk (2021) shared the perception of Wong (2012), who established that proper governance of democratic institutions necessitates the exercise of power and authority by the Liberian central government. For instance, in Liberia, the Ministry of Finance does the oversight of all the taxes while the sole control of all-natural resources is pegged on the central government. As demonstrated, the local units do not have any deliberate powers within the Liberian governance structure, necessitating the involvement of ODA to influence the administration of local units to function through the generated capital as extensions of line ministries, further, warranting the need for constitutional reforms to facilitate democratic governance in the country.

The international community evaluated the challenges of post-conflict Liberia and established the need for democratic governance. Essentially, Nyei (2014) noted that during the post-war era, the country designed a public policy that featured broken governance institutions, which disregarded the rule of law. Krawczyk (2021) agreed with the argument of Nyei (2014), affirming that before the involvement of the international community and aid donors, Liberia was afflicted by deteriorating democratic governance structures. It is through the efforts of ODA and bilateral agreements with lending international institutions and states that the establishment of the governance commission instituted the agenda of democratic governance framework in the country. The analysis of the challenges is summarized in Table 1 below.

Table 1

*Analysis findings on challenges that influence the development of the Liberian government's governance framework*

Codes	Categories	Themes
- Broken democratic governance institutions		
- Poor adherence to the rule of law		
- Paralyzed democratic governance structures		
- Bad governance practices		
- Intense combination of political and economic struggle	Centralized governance system limited functionality of self-governing and self-organizing mechanisms	The major challenges associated with post-conflict Liberia democratic governance framework
- Clamp down of the press and freedom of expression		
- Struggle for dominance among the political institutions and former warring factions		
- Consistent internal wrangling		
- Overlapping of functions by state actors and government functionaries		
- Conflicting mandates and limited state capacity		
- Rampant corruption and financial mismanagement		
- Misuse of governmental authority and resources		
- Severe disarray in democratic government		
- Country development funding		
- Devolvement of administrative powers	decentralized form of governance	

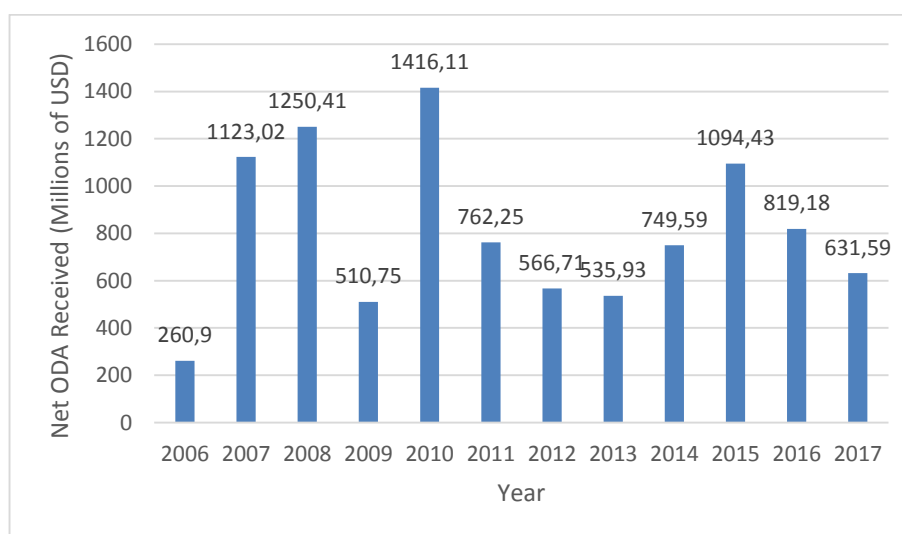
(Source: <https://www.emansion.gov.lr/>)

***Projects implemented in Liberia by UNDP, USAID, EU, World Bank towards Democratic Governance***

Different international organizations have been involved in the award of ODA to African states with Liberia being among the beneficiaries. Figure 4.1 illustrates the amount of ODA that has been issued to Liberia between 2006 and 2017 from different donor agencies.

Figure 2

*Net ODA received in Liberia between 2006 and 2017 (Millions of USD)*



(Source: The World Bank, 2021)

From the ODA awarded, different projects have been implemented in Liberia by UNDP, USAID, EU, and World Bank towards democratic governance. The projects have been in response to challenges highlighted in Table 4.1 above. In particular, the response to the challenges, especially characterized by bad governance practices and paralysis of democratic governance structures affecting the political and economic struggles, the USAID and EU have been funding programs in Liberia to motivate cohesion and healing in the country, while increasing their ODA towards the development of good governance under the elected president (Signé and Korha, 2016). In addition, Hopper (2017) shared the view of Signé and Korha (2016) underscoring the role of UNDP in the country's technical and financial support in initiatives addressing the implementation of Agenda 21 objectives in the peace accord. Consequently, pressure from these international agencies induced continuance of

projects leading to positive outcomes. The world Bank, on the other hand, has been contributing towards feasibility and/or model projects to test and redefine best governance practices in the country (Mvukiyehe and Samii, 2017). McCandless (2019) concurred with Mvukiyehe and Samii (2017) that the World Bank together with the UN under the leadership of UNDP promoted the established governance framework in the post-conflict Liberia through an integrated approach to sustainable development as a driver for capacity building. Altogether, the international relations facilitated the move towards devolution decentralizing Liberia's governance into a new country development funding dispensation characterized by devolvement of administrative powers.

### **The Impact of ODA on Democratic Governance in post-war Liberia**

The study inquired about the influence of ODA on the democratic governance of Liberia in its post-conflict era.

#### ***Governance Commission of Liberia***

The inquiry assessed the Governance Commission of Liberia and established that it was formerly referred to as the Governance Reform Commission, described as the mitochondria and research powerhouse that falls under the executive branch in the Liberian government. According to Fearon et al. (2011), the governance commission is tasked with the onerous responsibility of advancing policy recommendations that seek to promote an effective government that delivers quality public goods and services for the mass of its citizens and strengthens governance institutions. Etuk and Aweting (2020) shared the opinion of Fearon et al. (2011), arguing that the governance commission furthers the recommendations from the peace mediation meeting that brought Liberia's decades-long civil war to an end. Evidently, the works of the commission were mediated, financed, and sponsored by the United Nations, the Economic Community of the West African States, and Liberia's development partners, particularly those that signed Ghana, Accra Comprehensive Peace Accord. In this regard, the significance of ODA on the democratic governance framework has influenced major policy reforms in key mandate parts of the governance commission, particularly on the public sector reform mandate area, political and legal reform mandate area, the civic engagement with citizens, the national integrity system mandate area, the monitoring and evaluation reporting, and publication mandate area.

***The Impact of ODA on Democratic Governance Framework in post-war Liberia vis-à-vis the Governance Commission***

The study inquired on the significance of ODA in motivating the development of a democratic governance framework in Liberia after the civil conflict through the governance commission. The findings were categorized consistent with the mandate areas influenced through ODA leading to Liberia's democratic governance.

**The Public Sector Modernization Program (PSMP)**, established in 2014, defined the Liberia's government commitment to increase and sustain the remuneration and performance management in different government ministries while reinforcing the payroll management of the civil service in the country. In a statement by President Sirleaf (Executive Mansion, 2015, para. 5), she intimated that PSMP "*will be able to manage and make sure that the recruitment, qualification and grading systems are in place which will enable the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning be less transactional*" focusing on policy formulation. According to Signé and Korha (2016), among the many decisive effects of foreign aid on the democratic governance framework of post-war Liberia was the presentation of a \$30 million ODA intervention from USAID, Sweden, and International Development Association that was managed by the World Bank in the form of an aid envelope with the code-name "Operation Freedom". Through this, Hopper (2017) asserted that foreign aid provided the platform for a consolidated Tripartite arrangement of the governance commission, Civil Service Agency, and Liberia Institute of Public Administration to work under one umbrella in the formation of PSMP. The program, according to Mvukiyehe and Samii (2017), was recognized as the face of public service overseeing an evaluation of the duty and responsibility of mentioned government's functionaries thus, successfully mainstreaming, rationalizing, and harmonizing their operations into becoming more vibrant in the execution of their mandates toward the Liberian society. The finding suggests that through the ODA oversight, conditions necessary to influence the development of democratic governance infrastructure were created, increasing and reinforcing investors' confidence to invest in Liberia, a move that further attracted additional socio-economic prospects for the welfare of the Liberian people. Fearon et al. (2011) argued that the revolutionary achievement through ODA encompassed a complete governance policy reform leading to influence on government functionaries at the level of ministries, agencies, and commissions

(MACs). The analysis was consistent with USAID agenda as pointed out by the US Ambassador Deborah Malac (Executive Mansion, 2015, para. 14) that “*US Government has been a key partner with Liberia in helping to build capacity, accountability and transparency of ministries and agencies to deliver essential services and to support conclusive democratic participation.*” Evidently, the MACs impacted by the reform leading to democratic governance frameworks included those listed under various ministries, departments, authorities, commissions and public institutions.

**The Decentralization Policy for National Governance Act.** The evaluation established that the Decentralization Policy for National Governance Act provisioned by the Political and Legal Reform (PLR) Mandate area of the governance commission provides the political and legal regulatory framework for decentralization and local governance reforms in Liberia (Fearon et al. 2011). The National Policy on Decentralization and Local Governance (NPDLG) was established in 2012. The Liberian government position was to open space for public participation and devolution to the local government level. Hopper (2017) concurred with Fearon et al. (2011) supporting that the democratic policy framework is still being implemented through the Liberia Decentralization Support Program (LDSP), with funding from the EU, Swedish Government, USAID, UNMIL, and UNDP consisting of an aid envelope in the amount of approximately US\$ 10 million. The finding suggests that the government sought foreign aid disbursed in channels to facilitate capacity building, logistical support, and implementation within a 10-year period. As noted, the most remarkable achievement of the LDSP is the construction and operationalization of the county centres in all 15 geographical subdivisions. Through the 15 county service centres, Nyei (2014) established that governance service is devolved to allow every citizen in Liberia to get services related to birth certificates, driver licenses, business permits, and other basic services. Etuk and Aweting (2020) concurred with Nyei (2014), intimating that people, unlike prior to devolution, do not have to travel from their home counties to the capital Monrovia to receive services rendered in the service centres. As such, the services are easily accessed in the rural parts of the countries.

Beevers (2020) established that based on data gathered from the LDSP initiative at the counties level demonstrated that within the period under review,



infrastructural facilities were built in all the 15 counties to house the governance one-stop service point, including the county service centres. Etuk and Aweting (2020) shared the view of Beevers (2020), augmenting that through the different service centres in the counties. Service is rendered to more than 29,391 end-users leading to the generation of more than Liberian \$32.29 million as revenue from the service fees paid (Etuk & Aweting, 2020). In this regard, with the provision of government services across all countries, the citizens feel the direct impact of the government and reap the dividends of the government decentralization policy.

**The Local Government Act.** The study, further, explored the Local Government Act enacted in 2018, but first adopted in 2012, an initiative sponsored by USAID, EU, and UNDP aid. According to Kasim and Agbola (2017), the government position on the initiative has been demonstrating the commitment toward providing equal opportunities to all citizens to engage the government by devolving some administrative powers of the central government to local or municipal structures. In its ratification, the international community, through Liberia's USAID representative, asserted that *"the agency seeks to support the civil service agency empowering it to oversee devolved institutional development and human resource management to ensure that the government functions tally the national civil service regulations"* (Konig, 2018, p. 7). The assertion demonstrates the significance of the Act in defining the eligibility of public servants in the local government. Mvukiyehe and Samii (2017) concurred with the findings of Kasim and Agbola (2017), suggesting that reforms on the Local Government Act have been targeting effecting policy on national decentralization as agreed at the Comprehensive Peace Accord in Ghana, ensure national democratic participation in the democratic governance process, and generating revenue in order to support local governance framework at the district and counties level. In addition, the reforms through the initiative focused establishment of democratic, administrative, political, and fiscal governance structures at the counties and district levels, charged with the running of the day-to-day activities of the local governance structure in place.

**The Government of Liberia and the Civil Society Organizations (CSO) Accord.** Lastly, the study explored the impact of ODA on the governance of the CSOs. Signé and Korha (2016) demonstrated that the CSO accord commenced in 2006. The

government position in the CSO accord, sponsored by USAID initiative, defined it as a policy framework that aimed at establishing the roles and functions of both CSOs and the Government of Liberia within the democratic governance architecture framework of post-war Liberia. As George Kieh, a UN representative in Liberia, noted, “the new democratic order must be hoisted on a synergy of economic, political, social, cultural and religious pillars” (Toure, 2007, p. 4), CSOs provide credible action plans to engage with the Liberian government towards the formulation of policies. However, strengthening knowledge, policy dialogue and engagement in advocacy were the guiding strategies that led to the success of CSOs in Liberia. As Signé and Korha (2016) asserted, the governance created a framework of partnership with the motive of attracting international support from various donor agencies. Etuk and Aweting (2020) shared the view of Signé and Korha (2016), adding that CSOs are tasked with the responsibility of providing oversight and monitoring the working of public institutions, especially the Liberia Anti-Corruption Commission, Independent National Human Rights, and the Liberia Extractive Transparency Initiative. The finding suggests that CSOs are the oversight institutions of monitoring and reporting of the country’s gender policy of 2009 coupled with the national youth policy, a policy framework that resulted in the adoption of the Freedom of Information Act of 2010, which has increased the opportunity for CSO participation in formulation and implementation of governance policies to create a condition feasible to attract development outcomes in post-war Liberia. Moreover, according to Mvukiyehe and Samii (2017), the implementation of the CSO accord promoted the launch of the Anti-Corruption Commission in the country that induced the ratification of the Economic Governance Reform Unit within the poverty reduction strategy (PSR) mandate areas to facilitate the efforts in assisting the Government of Liberia to carve economic policies to address emerging recurrent economic challenges. The findings suggested significant effects from CSO accord related to ascent and enforcement of the Liberia National Tourism Authority Act, the Judicial Reforms, and the launch of the Land Commission. The National Tourism Authority Act was enacted in 2020, and has so far impacted the promotion, encouragement, regulation and development of tourism to create employment, improve livelihood and increase Liberia’s revenue. Moreover, the Judicial Reforms were enforced in 2006 has have impacted the rule of l leading to the actuation of the justice system in the country. Importantly, the Land Commission was introduced in 2009 under the Act of the Legislature mandated to advocate, transform,

propose and coordinate land policy and programs. All these policies have led to the reinforcement of the democratic governance framework in post-conflict Liberia, as summarized in Table 2 below.

Table 2

*Analysis findings on the impacts of ODA on democratic governance in post-conflict Liberia*

<b>Codes</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Themes</b>
-Advancing policy recommendations	Governance Commission of Liberia	The impact of ODA on democratic governance framework in post-war Liberia
-Strengthening governance institutions		
-Advocating for policy reforms		
-Mainstreaming, rationalizing, and harmonizing operations	The Public Sector Modernization Program (PSMP)	
-Development of democratic governance infrastructure		
-Promoting political and legal regulatory framework for decentralization and reforms for local governance	The Decentralization Policy for National Governance Act	
-Promoting the devolvement of governance services		
-Initiating direct influence on governance		
-Demonstrating the commitment to providing equal opportunities to all citizens	The Local Government Act	
-Effecting policy on national decentralization		
-Establishment of political, democratic, administrative, and fiscal governance structures		
-Establishing the roles and functions of CSOs and the Liberian Government	The Civil Society Organizations (CSO) Accord	
-Providing oversight and monitor the work of public institutions		

(Source: <https://www.emansion.gov.lr/>)

### **The Impact of ODA on Conditions Necessary for Development Outcomes in Post-war Liberia**

Thirdly, the study inquired about the influence of ODA on the development of feasible conditions to promote economic and infrastructural development outcomes in post-conflict Liberia. In the examination of the development outcomes as the result of the enabling democratic governance landscape created by ODA in post-conflict Liberia, Schroeder et al. (2014) established that the election of a stable government in 2006 under President Ellen Johnson created a conducive environment for the development of good governance through professionals, technocrats, policy activists and the opposition leaders. Kasim and Agbola (2017) supported the view of Schroeder et al. (2014), noting the significance of a democratic governance agenda characterized by political inclusivity and protection of civil and constitutional rights and liberties. In this regard, good governance aided by national reconciliation was in coordination with donor institutions pursuing rapid impact development projects featuring economic revitalization, security, infrastructure, and basic services. The participating international community in national reconciliation received critics at first, with many Liberians arguing for progress towards democracy. McCandless (2019) asserted that if Liberia secured ODA immediately after the war, Liberia's journey to reconstruction and reconciliation could have been easier warding off anti-democratic activism. The analysis findings are summarized in Table 3 below.

Table 3

*Analysis findings on the impacts of ODA on democratic governance in post-conflict Liberia*

Codes	Categories	Themes
-Election of a stable government	Development outcomes	The Impact of ODA on Conditions Necessary for Development Outcomes in Post-war Liberia
-Creation of conducive environment for development of good governance	resulting from democratic governance landscape	
-Pursuing an economic agenda that emphasized on creation of friendly climate to attract foreign investment	Economic renewal and development through ODA	
-Institution of apposite land tenure reforms to increase agricultural products		
-Sustainable economic development and growth in the employment sector		

(Source: <https://www.emansion.gov.lr/>)

Nyei (2014) assessed economic renewal and development through ODA and mediated by good governance in Liberia in the post-conflict era and demonstrated that international aid donors through Sirleaf's administration were pursuing an economic agenda that directly emphasized the creation of a friendly climate to attract foreign investment, and increased exploitation of the available natural resources. Mvukiyehe and Samii (2017) concurred with the findings of Nyei (2014) asserting that with good governance and coordination with aid donors, Liberia has been able to institute apposite land tenure reforms that directly target increase in agricultural production, creation of jobs focusing on youth employment, and expanding social and economic infrastructural development across all marginalized economic zones. Evidently, through the instituted governance, the current administration has been laying the foundations for sustainable economic development and growth in the employment

sector consistent with the GDP growth depicted in the 2006 – 2017 IMF (2021) report in Table 4.

Table 4

*IMF Report on Liberia's GDP growth (2006 - 2017)*

2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015*	2016*	2017*
8.0%	12.7%	7.1%	5.3%	6.1%	7.4%	8.3%	8.7%	0.7%	0%	2%	4%

(Source: <http://www.imf.org>)

Other indicators of economic recovery and growth, particularly, consumer price index, increased significantly, with the 2016-2017 change showing 19.95 from 160.63, while the labor force increased by 0.05% during the same period (Moody's Analytics, 2021). Moreover, Moody's Analytics (2021) report showed that the level of exported goods increased by 2019 by a margin of US \$531,059 from the previous year. Further, Fearon et al. (2011) demonstrated that increased job creation was evident considering that unemployment rates in both formal and informal sectors were markedly high and that its reduction pointed out a potential point of economic stability. Krawczyk (2021) supported the findings of Fearon et al. (2011), examining the UNDP human development indicators (HDI) report between 2000 and 2017, showing that the HDI value in Liberia has increased from 0.422 to 0.465, indicating an increase of 10.2%. According to the HDI (2020) report, data spanning from 2000 to 2017 demonstrated progress in life expectancy in Liberia rising by 17.7 years, while the years of schooling increased by 2.1 years, and a simultaneous 0.9 years decrease in expected years of schooling. Moreover, the report demonstrated that Liberia's Gross National Income per capita increased by approximately 12.7% across the same data period, as illustrated in Figure 3 below.

Figure 3

*Human Development indicators (2000 – 2017)*

<b>Year(S)</b>	<b>expectancy at birth</b>	<b>years of schooling</b>	<b>years of schooling</b>	<b>capital (2011)</b>	<b>HDI Value</b>
2000	51.7	10.5	3.5	1,209	0.422
2005	55.4	10	3.8	889	0.417
2010	59.6	9.5	4.1	1,020	0.441
2015	62.3	9.6	4.4	1,137	0.463
2016	62.8	9.6	4.5	1,091	0.463
2017	63.3	9.6	4.7	1,085	0.466

(Source: <http://www.hdr.undp/en/data>)

The findings suggest that the groundwork towards sustainable economic development collaborating with ODA has been successful considering the commencement, continuance, and completion of infrastructural development, and capacity building in the country. According to Moodys Analytics (2021), there has been a marked increase in the foreign direct investment in Liberia across the study period, with a margin of US \$12 million on a year-on-year basis. Through the enabling democratic governance landscape, Hopper (2017) showed that Liberia was able to demonstrate that while various foundational works were underway, it would take time for such development programs to start generating jobs and income. Similarly, Krawczyk (2021) agreed with the assertion of Hopper (2017), noting that with the projects largely depending on donor funding that that significant economic growth was to be evident after some time, Liberia has been demonstrating rapid economic growth as depicted above.

### **Discussion of the Findings**

This section explores the findings reviewing them relative to the findings in previous studies examined in the theoretical framework and empirical review. Specifically, the discussion explores the present findings as per the core research questions and data analysis above, comparing and contrasting them with the conclusions from studies reviewed in the literature review chapter. Thus, the discussion presents the inferences obtained and perspectives developed in answer to the research questions.

***Democratic Governance Hurdles Offset by ODA Validates Causal link between ODA and Democratic Governance framework in Fragile Societies***

In order to achieve the first objective entailing an examination of the causal link between ODA and democratic governance frameworks in fragile societies, the findings first identified the major challenges associated with the post-conflict Liberia democratic governance framework. The data analysed informed the study that due to the civil war in Liberia, the democratic governance space sustained a myriad of challenges that broke down the democratic governance architecture of post-war Liberia. The finding shared the view of Mulbah (2017), asserting that the challenges resultant of the civil war in Liberia contributed significantly in prohibiting the realization of any tangible developmental outcomes in Liberia. Similarly, Katib (2021) shared the perspective presented in the finding, arguing that Liberia experiences a precarious situation that attracted the intervention of ODA as a readily available catalyst used to offset the hurdles within the governance landscape of post-war Liberia. In this regard, the intensification of ODA was based on the implementation of new measures that influenced aspects of human development to be used to augment the HDI. This view was supported by Nhamo et al. (2020), intimating that targeting HDI through foreign aid has been reinventing the misplaced dimensions impacting economic development, particularly inequality, poverty and gender gaps. It has been evidenced that post-war, studies have elucidated adjusted inequality HDI, which demonstrated a decreasing trend in the inequality level within every social and economic domain, captioning education, life expectancy, and income level. Evidently, the identified challenges in the post-war error linked to violence, poor education outcome, poor justice systems, and increasing inequality have been composite with low empowerment index to command developed. With the input of ODA and collaboration with donor institutions, Liberia has been able to create a causal link between ODA and democratic governance framework in the fragile West African societies.

Further, the analysis established that the poor economic outcomes with persistent poverty in West Africa are linked to two compelling factors described as “poverty trap” and the “financing gap”. This view was directly associated with the conclusion of Sachs (2005), which suggested that in order to end poverty in developing countries, there is a need to address the economic pillars tied to financing and



empowerment. According to Sachs (2005), it was established that the extremely poor nations, many of which are situated in Sub Saharan Africa, Latin America, and parts of Asia, are entrapped in what has been described as poverty pits whose existence is pegged on financing disparities thereby prohibiting the affected governments from saving and investing into basic functional governance framework. With poor governance structures, developing nations are not able to espouse the conditions necessary for development to take place in their economies. To further reinforce the finding and Sachs (2005) assertion, Collier (2007) argued that there are four contributing factors that are directly linked with the stagnation of economic development in developing nations. Nhamo et al. (2020) pointed at the “conflict trap”, and “bad governance in developing countries trap” as the primary causes of poor economic development or recovery. The finding suggested that because of the eminent conflict trap, the affected nations are not able to develop because development cannot take place in the midst of political and socio-economic instabilities. Evidently, civil war is described as costly, an expense that is reflected as a contribution of the second factor associated with bad governance in small countries. Collier (2007) cited that development is challenged by bad governance practices in developing countries due to corruption and ineffective rent-seeking behaviours, among other social-economic vices. These findings shared the view of Linder and Mueller (2021), who suggested that in order to alleviate the various isolated traps, exercising effective social, economic and political controls in the use of ODA from the developed world would lead to gradual development, especially by revitalizing democratic governance. Essentially, the revival of good governance in developing countries has been demonstrated to create feasible conditions necessary to lift people out of poverty and attain development outcomes.

Lastly, the analysis has shown that the implementation of new measures on ODA towards development causes positive change in the developmental landscape of developing countries. This finding was consistent with the opinion of Mulbah (2017), who asserted that the actuation of radical terms on DAC and issuance of foreign aid from the 1990s to 2000s revolutionized development goals in developing countries, aid instruments and stakeholders. As a consequence, it is purported that ODA is increasing in relevance as a tool for supplementing government financing towards humanitarian and economic development. However, while calls have been made

disagreeing on the significance of aid as the solution to the development of democratic governance frameworks, the present findings suggest that the post-conflict nations in West Africa have been using ODA coupled with effective regulations with collaborating international aid institutions to foster financing and infrastructural developments consequent of good governance. Therefore, the paper reaffirms its central argument that there exists a causal link between ODA and democratic governance in fragile societies.

### ***The Impact of ODA on The Governance Commission of post War Liberia***

In a bid to address the second objective examining the impact of ODA in the creation of a democratic governance framework in post-war Liberia, it was demonstrated that ODA induced direct influence on the democratic governance framework of fragile countries, especially in the design and development of the Governance Commission of Liberia. The finding was consistent with the summations of Kenny (2020), who pointed to the evident impact of ODA on the development of democratic governance and political revival of Liberia in its post-war era. The positive effects on the governance of Liberia's democracy have been pegged on the revival influence of foreign aid interventions by donor partners that collaboratively strengthened the country's leadership after the 2005 election of Ellen Johnson, which was considered free and fair. In addition, the finding was supported by Linder and Mueller (2021), who established that the uptake of ODA has been in confidence that it is important to democratic governance in post-war Liberia marking the turning-point for Liberia's renewed democratic governance dispensation. It is, thus, suggested that there is an expanding notion that foreign aid in the majority of DAC countries has been reflected to favour retention of the primary limits in the scoring of ODA specific to concessional and economic development. Through collaborative and restrictive measures, donor institutions have been able to exert significant pressure on recovering government from civil conflicts to build governance rooted on democracy to advance the DAC agenda on economic recovery and developments in post-war economies. The new argument, consistent with the findings, is that ODA is advanced with a focus on transforming the national platform of developing countries towards better governance and an ample landscape for economic development.

Further, the analysis revealed that the integrated application of ODA on better governance meant the current West African governments are striving to institute

superior bureaucracies, enhancing adherence to judicial systems and the rule of law, decreasing systemic corruption, and building better management structures for revenue collection and expenditure. The finding was supported by Connolly and Mincieli (2019), who showed that the identified reforms necessitate the governments, together with collaborating international partners, to solve marked collective action challenges entailing moral hazard, establishing grounds for the common good, and eliminating free-rider despondence. In addition, the finding was consistent with the conclusion of Kenny (2020), intuiting that similar to any public good, using ODA to improve governance results in a social and political benefit considering the non-selective nature of such democratic leadership with minimal incentives. On the other hand, patterns of poor governance may be institutionalized, leading to eminent political difficulties that challenge reforms. Evidently, ODA has been an important element in governance reforms in West Africa, particularly in Liberia, contributing to the economic and infrastructural development of aid-dependent countries.

The analysis has shown that ODA has ensured the overhaul of the entire democratic governance architecture of Liberia, decentralizing governance functions within all the counties via Counties Service Centres and the devising of certain political and administrative of the central government to local authorities to spearhead their governance processes and financial issues. This finding was in agreement with the conclusions of Sylla (2020), who suggested that collaborating with donor institutions has enhanced confidence in the democratic system because people feel a part of the system, which contributes to lasting peace and domestic revenue source aimed at maintaining the democratic governance system of post-war Liberia. Similarly, Kenny (2020) concurred with the finding, arguing that the collective success of the system is attributed to ODA through the provision of technical, logistical and financial support in the creation of a harmonized, result-oriented and highly versatile democratic governance framework in Liberia equipped to manage its developmental trajectories in coming years. The presented intuition agreed with the assertions of Acemoglu and Robinson (2012), intimating the importance of democratic governance in institutions for development and economic growth to take place in any nation because they create the conditions feasible for multifaceted opportunities. The analysis concludes that ODA facilitates the creation of strong governance institutions and systems, subsequently boosting their wealth. It is evident that ODA and support from

the international community were an intervention in the post-conflict Liberia to build strong public institutions that warranted democratic governance in the country.

### ***Evaluation of Democratic Governance Impact on Economic Growth and Development***

Addressing the third research objective examining the impact of ODA in creating the conditions necessary for development to take place in post-war Liberia, the overall development outcomes in post-war Liberia as a result of ODA intervention were measures assessing the creation of such conditions necessary to attract economic growth and development in the country. The interpretation of the gathered data, especially from the World Bank, showed that the total ODA basket directed toward Liberia in the form of loans and grants from 2006 to 2017 exhibited an increasing trend consistent with the increasing number of governments with bilateral relations with Liberia. The finding was consistent with the view of Moreira and Caiado (2021), who demonstrated an increasing trend eliciting the tangible gains as per the rate of return from this aid investment into post-war Liberia. According to the analysis for the period under, the IMF data on the GDP growth of Liberia demonstrate consecutive economic growth from a year-on-year basis reflecting an improvement in the overall economic activities. Similar findings were shown by Sylla (2020), who recounted the role of ODA in creating grounds for the growth of the overall production of goods and services that took place during the years under review as the result of the feasible conditions that attracted growth outcomes. Importantly, the analysis demonstrated a slowed growth from 2015, a period that tallied with the increasing prevalence of the Ebola epidemic that devastated the population and economy of Liberia. This finding was consistent with the summations of Moreira and Caiado (2021), who suggested the Ebola epidemic in West Africa as the major contributing factor to the downward trend, which had a dire effect on the overall production capabilities of the Liberian economy. On the other hand, as the analysis demonstrated, signs of economic recovery were eminent from the examined data as from 2017, which was consistent with the end of the epidemic showing that an increase in GDP growth by 4%. The summation in the analysis was supported by Katib (2021), who argued that the commencement of growth signified that the governance architecture in Liberia was functioning exceedingly hard to ensure economic restoration.

Further, the analysis revealed that post-war, the overall livelihood domains improved in the post-war era with increasing political stability in the country. This finding was anchored on the UNDP HDI report showing an improvement trend between 2006 and 2017. The finding was consistent with the assertions of Alkali (2021), who intimated that the overall improvements in livelihood conditions of people living in Liberia showed better reporting indices in the areas of health, education and income status of the entire population during the period. Moreover, in support of the UNDP HDI report, the analysis established that the value of the human development index in Liberia showed an increasing trend during the assessment period depicting an improvement in the livelihood of the Liberian population. This growth indicates the commendable strides of the democratic governance structure directed toward the growth and development of post-conflict Liberia.

From the analysis, it has been demonstrated that a steady improvement was exhibited with an increase in Gross National Income (GNI) per capital of depicting a double-digit percentage over the study period. A similar finding was demonstrated by Iheonu (2021), showing that with the increased GNI as reflected in 2017 data, the population of Liberia depicted an appreciated income flow, consequently influencing the freedom of people with respect to their human rights. Moreover, the finding was consistent with the results of Sylla (2020) validating the revolutionary achievement as a consequence of ODA, which was particularly influential in building an enabling environment and conditions necessary to foster economic development outcomes in Liberia during the post-conflict era. Evidently, the transition state of Liberia in the post-conflict era of reconstruction demonstrated a mid-term poverty reduction and growth. While some weaknesses have been identified in aspects of transparency and credibility, the present study has established that support of ODA creating good governance has educed apposite and effective financial management, tax collection, audit and external scrutiny. Connolly and Mincieli (2019) shared the perception of the findings asserting that the economy of Liberia has depicted a lowered competitiveness as a consequence of high operational costs in the country. The trend has been influenced positively by ODA and collaborative working with donor financiers to deduce progress and attract foreign investment while promoting economic development in the private sector. The consequence, as Alkali (2021) demonstrated, is trending towards reduction in energy costs, increasing road construction to expand the

accessibility of land and improved governance. As such, the established good governance has led to the creation of a business environment with feasible economic growth, poverty reduction and associated job creation.

## CHAPTER V

### Conclusion

#### Conclusion

The thesis of the study is that ODA is impactful and supports the development of democratic governance frameworks by creating the necessary conditions to facilitate development to occur in the developing world. Referencing the post-conflict Liberia, the study examined the causal link between ODA and democratic governance frameworks in fragile societies, the influence of ODA in the creation of democratic governance, and the involvement of ODA in the creation of conditions necessary to support economic development in post-war Liberia. Using data assessing the significance of ODA on democratic governance framework in West Africa, and more specifically, Liberia examining data from 2006 to 2017, three themes consistent with answering the research questions previously described.

In response to the first question inquiring about the major challenges associated with the post-conflict Liberia democratic governance framework, it was demonstrated that a viable democratic governance platform was created in the post-conflict Liberia for development outcomes to become a possibility. The findings show that a comprehensive peace accord was developed, underscoring the provisions on a ceasefire in the country and the placement of an international stabilization force, which encompassed the support of the international community to nurture security reforms using the post-conflict military teams. The peace accord supported the involvement of the aid donors and the international community in setting up the human rights commission and the functioning of the transitional government until the election and inauguration of Liberia's president in 2006. The challenges isolated included poor governance and insecurity, political instability and infringement of human rights, increased inequality, poor accountability and transparency and systemic corruption that challenged the success ODA, especially in its agenda of building democratic governance frameworks in the fragile West African states. The findings demonstrated that without alleviating the challenges, the reality of development in the absence of ODA in strengthening its democratic governance institutions would be impossible. Moreover, the case of the post-conflict Liberia democratic governance framework was

pertinent to informing the hypothesis of this study on the effectiveness of ODA because post-war Liberia shares a story unique to the stories exhibited by the most fragile democratic states situated in the developing world. They have all been faced with the realities of war, poverty, hunger, treatable diseases that resulted in mass deaths within the population, illiteracy, broken state institutions, corruption, and broken economies, among others. Hence, the study has affirmed that ODAs directed toward these stagnated fragile democracies have tranquillized their democratic governance settings in creating conditions conducive to allow development such that people within those locales have the freedom to make personal choices.

In answer to the second research question about the impact of ODA on the democratic governance framework of post-conflict Liberia, it was established that there are developmental challenges in the developed world that make it an economic and infrastructural barrier defined as a global phenomenon. Different West African countries have been depicted to institute budget support operations that are meticulously lined with that strategic framework of the respective governments to foster economic growth. For instance, during the transitional period between 2003 and 2005 when madam Ellen Johnson Sirleaf was elected, the international community restructured the operations of ODA to align with peacebuilding, economic recovery and poverty reduction strategy in Liberia, characterizing the business enabling reform action plan. Across Ellen Johnson's two-term presidency, aid donors redirected aid from humanitarian and relief programs to governance reforms, especially targeting the customs and tax modernization program, and the reform strategy and action plan, all revitalizing economic growth. Importantly, the president worked with the international community to align strategic action plans to create and reinforce good democratic governance frameworks across all public institutions in Liberia. During the period, foreign aid was demonstrated to impact two economic pillars entailing democratic governance reforms and economic revitalization in Liberia, which provide the frameworks necessary to support economic and infrastructural developments. In the country, the core country assistance, since the election of Ellen Johnson in 2005, through ODA has been framed consistent with the need to rebuild major state institutions and functions, while kick-starting and facilitating economic growth. Through ODA, Liberia built a strong governance framework that has been eliciting improvements in the efficiency and effectiveness of major state institutions and core



functions, while improving the business investment climate to attract local and foreign investments.

In response to the third question inquiring about the extent to which ODA influences the creation of the necessary democratic governance conditions important to support economic development outcomes in post-war Liberia, it was established that economic and infrastructural development is a process. The analysis proposed that through the development process, the cycle is of a continuous nature that necessitates the application of support systems to sustain it. It has, further, been established that in order to attain developmental outcomes in the fragile West African democracies, it takes time, commitment and resources depending on the severity of nation's political, economic and social challenges. Nevertheless, in the case of post-conflict Liberia, democratic governance transformation is a testimony that speaks on the fact that there is indeed a causal link between ODA and democratic governance in fragile societies. The significance of ODA has been demonstrated in putting in place infrastructural and institutional frameworks, enhancing the potential for investment, and improving the business climate and democratic governance indicators. Therefore, the study submits that ODA is an impactful catalyst in creating conditions necessary for developmental outcomes in fragile democratic societies and leads to developmental outcomes in post-conflict states.

### **Recommendations**

From the analysis, it has been established that ODA comes with huge responsibilities on both the donor and the recipient nations. Thus, it is recommended that donors and political elites in recipient nations demonstrate commitment towards ensuring the establishment of feasible democratic governance conditions in order to forge tangible development and safeguard the progress made. Secondly, it is recommended that recipient countries develop mutually working bilateral relations with donor countries and institutions aimed at ensuring transitions in political regimes do not factor into whether or not donor-aided projects should be continued or halted owing to political manifestos. Lastly, it is recommended that the developing economies should strive harder in building on the gains made from ODA into developing existing strategies transitioning them from ODA-reliance into informed, innovative means, particularly in infrastructural development and agriculture and light

manufacturing that are characterized as value addition since the bulk of the world's mineral deposit is situated mainly in the developing economies. Further research is recommended in a study to compare the significance of ODA in building democratic governance in post-war in West Africa and non-war countries in East Africa to establish the key development domains featured by financial aid in the two contexts.

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**Appendices**  
**Appendix A**  
**Turnitin Similarity Report**

Gardeabaye Sylvester Glagbo-THE IMPACT OF ODA ON  
 DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE IN FRAGILE SOCIETIES, LIBERIA  
 (2006-2017)

ORIGINALITY REPORT

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<b>7</b>	"The Princeton Encyclopedia of the World Economy. (Two volume set)", Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2009 Publication	<b>&lt;1</b> %

**Appendix B**  
**Ethics Committee Approval**



**BİLİMSEL ARAŞTIRMALAR ETİK KURULU**

02.02.2022

Dear Gardeabaye Sylvester Glagbo

*Your project "The Impact Of Oda On Decomcratic Governace In Fragile Societies, Liberia (2006-2017)" has been evaluated. Since only secondary data will be used the project it does not need to go through the ethics committee. You can start your research on the condition that you will use only secondary data.*

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Direnç Kanol

Rapporteur of the Scientific Research Ethics Committee

**Note:**If you need to provide an official letter to an institution with the signature of the Head of NEU Scientific Research Ethics Committee, please apply to the secretariat of the ethics committee by showing this document.