

The Sierra Leone Post-conflict Peacebuilding Experiences

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1. Background

“Sierra Leone is a West African country with a population of about 5.2 million and a land area of 27,925 square miles (73,326 square kilo meters). The country is bounded on the North by the Republic of Guinea, on the North-Eastern axis by the Republic of Liberia and on the West, by the Atlantic Ocean.”¹ On the 23 of March, 1991, Sierra Leone was engulfed in a brutal civil war perpetuated by rebels of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) under the command of corporal (Rt) Foday Saybana Sankoh. This rebel movement launched its first attack on Sierra Leone on a small town called Bomaru in the Kailahun district of Eastern Province of Sierra Leone.² The root causes of the conflict has been attributed to many factors: Paul Richards argues that the rebellion was result of the alienation of intellectuals influenced by the “Green Book” of the late Libyan Leader Muammar Gaddafi coupled with the alienation of rural youth to acquire farmland the so called “New Barbarism.”³ Abdullah⁴ and Rashid⁵ argued that the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) rebellion was a consequence of urban youth culture, alienation and university student radicalism. Notwithstanding the various reasons propounded by scholars on the causes of conflict, the war was extremely

¹ Government of Sierra Leone. “National Micro-Finance Policy,” unpublished policy paper, 2003. Revised by National Commission on Social Action (NaCSA), 2010.

² Ibrahim Abdullah, “Bush Path to Destruction: Origin and Character of the Revolutionary United Front/Sierra Leone,” *Journal of Modern African Studies*, 36, 1998, pp. 203-35.

³ Paul Richard, *Fighting for the Rain Forest: War Youth and Resources in Sierra Leone*, Oxford: James Currey, 1996.

⁴ Ibrahim Abdullah, *op. cit.*

⁵ Ishmail Rashid, “Student Radicals, Lumpen Youth and the Origins of Revolutionary Groups in Sierra Leone,” in Ishmail Rashid (ed.), *Between Democracy and Terror: The Sierra Leone Civil*

destructive and characterized by banditry. In the course of the war, thousands of people lost their lives, hundreds of people were mutilated, raped, amputated, sexually abused especially women and girls and children conscripted as child soldiers⁶ and thousands more were displaced from their homes. There were also unimaginable destruction of property and infrastructure. During the period of conflict, several efforts were made by the International community and external partners to help salvage the lives of the vulnerable people by providing relief and humanitarian assistance.

Despite the several efforts from international community notably the United Nations to deescalate the conflict, Sierra Leone's capital city Freetown was plunged into an unprecedented carnage on January 6th 1999, when the RUF joined forces with some members of the military, the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (The AFRC Junta) and invaded Freetown by ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) who reinstated the legitimate government of former President Tejan Kabbah. with the support of the United Nations and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) three major Peace agreements were signed namely; the Abidjan Peace Accord (1996), the Conakry Peace Plan (1998) and the Lome Peace Accord (1999). The Lome Peace Accord like the Abidjan Peace Accord made provision for cessation of hostilities, cease fire monitoring, transformation of RUF into a political party, the establishment of a government of national Unity, the commission for the consolidation of peace, council of elders and religious leaders, encampment disarmament and demobilization, pardon and amnesty, review of the constitution, National Electoral Commission, reform of the military and police, post-war rehabilitation, reparations etc. This agreement was the main framework guiding Sierra Leone's post-conflict peacebuilding reforms. These reforms provided the basis for Sierra Leone peacebuilding experiences in a postconflict setting.

War, Pretoria: University of South Africa Press, 2004.

⁶ Elizabthe Rehn and Helen Johnson-Sirleaf, "Women War and Peace Progress of Worlds' Women, Independent Experts: Assessment on Impact of Armed Conflict on Women and the Role of Women in Peacebuilding," vol. 1, UNIFEM, 2002.

2. Overview

The United Nations Report “An Agenda for Peace” by Boutros Boutros Ghali (1992),⁷ introduced the terms “preventive diplomacy”, “peacemaking”, “peacekeeping” and “peace building”. The concept of peacebuilding was further developed and clarified in a series of subsequent documents, among those the Brahimi Report on UN Peace and Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) on Women Peace and Security, recognize that peacemaking, peacekeeping and peace building are closely interrelated and that peace building is aimed at preventing the outbreak, reoccurrence or continuation of violent conflict and therefore encompasses a wide range of political, developmental, humanitarian and human rights mechanism. The UN High Level Panel (2004) suggested that peacebuilding should focus on state-building usually, but not exclusively, in a post-conflict situation.

It should be noted at the outset that there are two distinct ways to understand peace building. According to the United Nations document (1992), “An agenda for Peace,” peace building Consist of a wide range of activities associated with capacity building, reconciliation, and societal transformation. Peacebuilding is a long-term process that occurs after violent conflict has ended. Thus, it is the phase of the peace process that takes places after peacemaking and peacekeeping. Many Non-governmental organizations (NGOs), on the other hand, understand peace building as an umbrella concept that encompasses not only long-term transformative efforts, but also peacemaking and peacekeeping. Peace building includes early warning and response efforts, violence prevention, advocacy work, civilian and military peacekeeping, military intervention, humanitarian assistance, ceasefire agreements, and the establishment of peace zones.

It is generally agreed that the central task of peace building is to create positive peace, a stable social equilibrium in which the surfacing of new disputes does not escalate to violence and war. Sustainable peace is characterized by the abuse of physical and structural violence, the elimination of discrimination, and

self-sustainability. Moving towards this sort of environment goes beyond problem solving of conflict management. Peacebuilding initiative try to fix the core problem that underline the conflict and change the patterns of interaction of the involved parties. To further understand the notion of peacebuilding, many contrast it with the more traditional strategies of peacemaking between the conflicting parties in order to move them towards non-violence dialogue, and eventually reach a peace agreement.

3. Sierra Leone's Peacebuilding Experiences

In Sierra Leone, tremendous resources had been put into peacebuilding over the past ten years; this has had implications for the harnessing of local resources for peacebuilding and the move towards state consolidation of security and provision of basic services for its citizens. Strengths have been largely in the establishment and functioning of institutions of governance, economic and social and the successful holding of two democratic elections and smooth transfer of power from one political party to another in 2007. Limitations had been in the area of continuity of support for effective performance of these institutions. Government is committed to ensuring the functionality of these institutions, sadly though is still donor dependent. Though economic reforms had been on-going, it has still not fully reverted that the state can now take responsibilities of resourcing some of these institutions. Resources are still scarce, especially in the face of world recession, high level of unemployment especially youths for which 800,000 are unemployed or not employable though with the intervention of the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (UNPBSO) priority support has been on job creation for youths. The strengths had also been in the creation of some long term national institutional programmes through the common vision contained in the "Agenda for Change," and United Nations' "Joint Vision" Document and non-state actor's commitment to development especially in poverty reduction and promotion of participatory governance.

⁷ Boutrous, Boutrous Ghali, *An Agenda for Peace*, New York: United Nations, 1992.

Various post-conflict peacebuilding arrangements were put in place after the declaration of the end of the war. These post conflict peacebuilding arrangements ranged from demobilization to governance reform, addressing impunity and efforts at building long term reconciliation between victims and perpetrators. In all these post-conflict peacebuilding arrangements ranging from disarmament to, resettlement and institution building, social, political and economic, the issue around the programmes in responding to the needs of the vulnerable viz women, children, victims and perpetrators is critical as in all these processes underline two key targets “dealing with Victims” and “Perpetrators” and “state rebuilding.” Prominent amongst programmes put in place to address the issue of victims and perpetrators were the Truth and reconciliation Commission (TRC), the Special Court for Sierra Leone, the national reparations programme and the activities undertaken by the United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (UNPBF) and support by the International community for institution and state rebuilding. In addition, there are equally other programmes that were put in place to enhance institution and democratic reforms. The activities undertaken in Sierra Leone that constitute postconflict peacebuilding experiences can be placed into two categories namely; the Immediate Post-conflict peacebuilding activities and the Medium to long-term post-conflict peacebuilding activities to development.

4. Immediate Post-conflict Peacebuilding Activities

4-1 Demobilization, Disarmament and Re-integration

Sierra Leone like many other countries around the world considered disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants as the first step in the transition from war to peace. In many countries, demilitarization has been used in times of peace especially when reducing the size of armed forces and redistribute public spending. However, DDR is much more complicated in a post-conflict

environment, when different fighting groups are divided by animosities, (RUF, AFRC/SL and CDF) and face a real security dilemma as they give up their weapons. In Sierra Leone the National Commission for Disarmament Demobilization and Reintegration was established and demobilised over 45,000 ex-combatants and successfully integrated 24,000 men and women from all warring factions.⁸ DDR supported the transition from war to peace by ensuring a safe environment, transforming ex-combatants back to civilian life, and enabling people to earn livelihoods through peaceful means instead of war. In many cases, these are often difficult to be achieved as the mistrust between and among warring factions will be present even after peace agreement.⁹ Demilitarizing warring factions required adequate attention and resources not only from the government but that of the International community, NGOs and CSOs, because it is a very complex issue or process.

4-2 Resettlement, Rehabilitation and Reintegration

One of the consequences of the war was the large displacements of people – These were both internally and externally displaced especially refugees from the Mano River Basin of Guinea and Liberia. These displacements had a huge impact on cross border operations. As a result of this, one of the institutions established to respond to the repatriation of displaced persons was the National Commission for Resettlement Re-integration and Rehabilitation (NCRRR). This commission resettled over 350,000 IDPs and operated a micro credit scheme for vulnerable populations that were non-combatants immediately after the war. The scheme was called the Social Action for Poverty Alleviation (SAPA) and it involved the following; gardening/sale of agricultural produce: resale of agricultural produce and backyard gardening processed food stuffs and small scale industries amongst others. NCRRR now National

⁸ F. Kai-Kai, *Disarmament, Demobilization and Re-integration in Post-war Sierra Leone*, 2000.

⁹ J. S. Stedman, et.al., “Ending Civil Wars,” in Stephen J. Stedman, D. Rotchild and Elizabeth Cousens (eds.), *The Implementation of Peace Agreements*, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002.

Commission for Social Action (NaCsa) confirms that more than 6,500 persons benefitted and funding was provided by the African Development Bank¹⁰

4-3 Sustained Dialogue and Mediation

One of the main challenges to the immediate activities after the signing of the Lome peace Accord was securing the commitment of all warring parties to the agreement signed. These involved a key role by both our regional and International partners – ECOWAS led by Nigeria,¹¹ the OAU/AU,¹² United Nations,¹³ and United Kingdom. The role of these partners was not only limited to the huge ECOMOG peacekeeping mission on ground but also pursuing several mediation and negotiation efforts for the articles in the peace agreement to be implemented. Of concern was the renegeing of mainly RUF in delaying and sabotaging the implementation process. This led to ECOMOG’s transformation from a regional force to a full blown UN force in the form of UNAMSIL in 2000. This was further bolstered by UKs military intervention also in 2000 in halting another outbreak of violence especially after the 1999 RUF/AFRC invasion of Freetown

4-4 Dealing with Impunity – Transitional Justice – Two mechanisms were put in place namely the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the United Nations Backed Special Court for Sierra Leone.

i) The Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC)

The Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission which was largely borrowed from the South Africa Truth Commission was established by the Lome Peace

¹⁰ SAPA Microfinance Scheme. This was cheme developed to provide microfinance support to victims of the war.

¹¹ Brigadier-General R.A Adeshina, *The Reversed Victory: The Story of Nigerian Military Intervention in Sierra Leone*, Heinemann Educational Books, Nigeria, 2002, p.7.

¹² Resolutions of the OAU Heads of Government agreed in Harare, Zimbabwe, 2007.

¹³ “Seventh Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone,” (UN Doc. S/1999/836, 1999): “Eight Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Assistance Mission in Sierra Leone,” (UN Doc. S/2000/751, 2000).

Agreement signed in 1999 backed by a parliamentary Act (2000).¹⁴ The Sierra Leone TRC unlike other commissions operated alongside an international tribunal; the Special Court for Sierra Leone in order to account for atrocities committed during the war. The commission was empowered with immunity and powers to investigate cases brought to the commission. It composed of six memberships which included four nationals and three non-nationals with the United Methodist Bishop as the chairman. The TRC was initially seen as one of the several mechanisms that needs to be put in place for national reconciliation and consolidation of Article vi (2) of the Lome Peace Agreement which was subsequently ratified by parliament (Lome Peace agreement ratification Act, 1999 (Act No. 3 of 1999)).¹⁵ The government of Sierra Leone following Article 6 of the Lome Peace agreement went on to establish a TRC as a major post-war transitional mechanism by the enactment of TRC Act 2000 (Act No. 4 of 2000). Upon its completion, the commission was able to present its final report in 2004 but was released in 2005; a government white paper was then subsequently released in 2006. A key outcome of the TRC was the proffering of recommendations that responds to Sierra Leone's peace consolidation, social cohesion and long-term development.

ii) The Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL)

The SCSL was established by an agreement between the Government of Sierra Leone and the United Nations. It is to try those who allegedly bear the greatest responsibility for war crimes and crimes against humanity committed during the war in Sierra Leone after 30th November 1996. The United Nations Resolution 1315 gives the Secretary General the mandate to negotiate with the government of Sierra Leone to create the Special court in January 2002.¹⁶ However, a major stumbling block is the general amnesty included in the 1999 Lome Peace Agreement and subsequently enacted into

¹⁴ Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Act (2000). An Act passed by Parliament for the establishment of the Truth and reconciliation Commission in Sierra Leone.

¹⁵ See Journal Report by The Campaign for Good Governance, 2001, p.8. Cited in the TRC Report , vo. 3B 2004.

¹⁶ See the Special Court for Sierra Leone Website: <http://www.sc-sl.org> (accessed on 4th March, 2012).

national law. This amnesty however cannot apply to crimes against humanity, war crimes and other serious violations of international humanitarian law. In a historic decision in March, 2004 the SCSL refused to recognize the applicability of the amnesty provided by the Lome Peace Agreement and concluded that it did not prevent International Courts, such as Special Courts, or foreign courts from prosecuting crimes against humanity and other International war crimes. So far 11 persons were indicted, eight were tried, 2 of them died and one is on the run. Eight of the indicted persons are now serving their sentences in Rwanda and the ex-president of Liberia is on trial in Hague and hopefully his verdict will be delivered in April 2012.

4-5 Holding of Elections

Since Sierra Leone prior to the war was under a one-party constitution and one of the root causes of the conflict was the struggle for power, a national electoral commission was reconstituted immediately for the holding of national, presidential and parliamentary elections. These elections were contested by all warring factions as the warring parties transformed themselves into political parties- Revolutionary United Front Party (RUF) and the Peace and Liberation Party (PLP). The first attempt to hold elections as a strategy before peacemaking was in 1996, which the RUF refused to participate in and instead unleashed violence on some citizens who voted. With this experience it was quite clear that part of the process of immediately consolidating state power was to have free and credible elections after the signing of the Lome peace agreement. The elections were held and were largely won by the then President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah. The strength of democratic peace consolidation further actualized into the holding of the 2002 & 2007 elections that was won by President Ernest Bai Koroma, who effectively continued the rebuilding processes and continuing the ongoing economic and democratic development.

4-6 Civil Society

The primary function (s) of civil society is to provide oversight and advocacy roles with some directly engaged in basic services delivery. In the absence of state institutions, civil society engaged in many diverse postconflict activities, these included rehabilitation, disarmament, addressing impunity, dealing with issues of victims and needs, child soldiers and broader engagement in policy and rule of law reforms, budgetary oversight, and to ensure their accountability and transparency. Civil society involvement also contributed to more effective and equitable decision making. Civil society organizations further created opportunities for dialogue amongst stakeholders, such as initiatives to build trust between community and security sector forces. The experience in South Africa in the 1990s has shown that security and justice sector reforms are more effective and more sustainable if civil society support the process and provides its expertise to parliaments and other oversight institutions. Civil society organizations were part of all the processes of the immediate post-conflict peacebuilding activities, the advocacy and watch dog role was immense.

5. Medium to Long-term Post Conflict Peacebuilding Activities

The medium to long-term peacebuilding activities is undertaken within the framework of the PRSP 1 & 2 and the new vision of the president encapsulated in the President's "Agenda for Change" Document which is the guiding principle for development. In addition, there is the United Nation's Joint Vision by the UN Family in Sierra Leone. In the Agenda for Change the president stated his commitment to improving the lives of the people by transforming agriculture, energy, infrastructure, health and education and greater emphasis on programmes for the common man and woman, and a government with a sense of urgency, self-confidence and fair distribution of services to every region, district and town.¹⁷

5-1 Justice Sector Reform

In the justice sector, the task of rebuilding an effective judiciary as a stabilizing factor started with a focus on its geographic extension. The government's National Recovery Strategy 2002-2003, introduced in October 2002, identified the strengthening of the judiciary as a key challenge to lasting peace. The Justice Sector Development programme supported by DFID can fully be credited in bringing massive transformation to this area. Their intervention had contributed significantly to building the capacity of the justice and rule of law sectors. Magistrate courts and additional prisons had been constructed; there is a working judicial system that has been accompanied by some developments in other areas of the Justice Sector like the Local Courts. Despite some progress, the justice system is yet to overcome some obstacles in the rural areas where segments of the population still lacks access to the courts and legal counsels, and where their basic rights are ignored and there is over-reliance on the native court system.¹⁸

5-2 Decentralization and Local Government

As a means to mitigate over-centralization as one of the root causes of the conflict, decentralization has emerged as a highly popular strategy for improving public sector efficiency, responsiveness, and accountability in the developing world. We live in a golden era of decentralization. Support for shifting power to local tiers of government has never been higher. This perspective is grounded in the belief that doing so will increase government responsiveness and accountability to citizens, increase government flexibility to address the diverse needs of often highly heterogeneous populations, reduce corruption through enhanced oversight, and foster the dispersal of power from what have often been highly monopolized political structures, among other attributes. In the process, it is argued, decentralization will augment greater political

¹⁷ Speech delivered by H.E. Koroma at the State Opening of Parliament 2011.

¹⁸ See the British Council Website: <http://www.britishcouncil.org/jsdp-project-memorandum.pdf> (accessed on 4th March,2012).

legitimacy while strengthening a sense of citizen ownership of their government.¹⁹ In order to bring government and public service delivery closer to the people, the Local Government Act was enacted in 2004 which provides for decentralization, devolution of functions, powers and services to local councils. Since then local council elections have been held and a number of functions have been devolved to councils such as education, agriculture, health, road maintenance, social welfare etc.

5-3 Security Sector Reform

The experiences of the people of Sierra Leone during the war did not leave them with a good opinion about the delivery of personal security services by the existing security infrastructure. They had experienced the haphazard and uncoordinated way the war was conducted, resting on the pedestal of ugly and uncorroborated intelligence support which occasioned some of the greatest sufferings ever committed by man to fellow man. Therefore, it was no surprise in 1998 that a functioning security sector as a critical precondition for development commenced. The government of Sierra Leone embarked on a programme to establish a coordinated security and intelligence architecture with oversight mechanisms.²⁰ The focus and key principle was without security there could be no sustainable development. To carry out the required restructuring of the sector a security sector review was conducted led by the Office of National Security (ONS).²¹ The Sierra Leone Police (SLP) and the Republic Armed Forces (RSLAF) embarked on role specific restructuring which continues to date. Sierra Leone can today boast of a security sector architecture that is one of the best coordinated in a post-conflict country

5-4 Youth Issues

¹⁹ Yongmei Zhou (ed.), *Decentralization, Democracy, and Development – Recent Experience from Sierra Leone*, World Bank Publication, 2009, p.85.

²⁰ See the Security Sector Reform Net Website: <http://www.ssrnetwork.net/publications/> (accessed on 4th March, 2012).

²¹ Peter Albrecht and Paul Jackson, *Security System and Transformation in Sierra Leone 1997-2007*,” unpublished report, 2009.

On the issue of youths and since youths were mostly recruited as combatants, the Government of Sierra Leone in 2003 launched the Sierra Leone National Youth Policy. The policy provides guidelines as to the responsibilities of adults, the state and the private sector to youths; and the responsibilities of youth to society generally. This has now been translated into the establishment of the National Youth Commission with the promulgation of an act of parliament, the NYC has been established and a Chairman of the Commission has been appointed with commissioners a board and a secretariat. This Commission only became operational in 2011. There is a huge donor interest in promoting the activities of this commission

The policy delineates the specific role of the Ministry of Youth and Sports, the National Youth Commission, the National Advisory Youth Council, and the Districts Youth Councils.²² The National Youth Policy is anchored on the twin notion of youth empowerment and the creation of a responsible citizenry. Empowerment²³ in a post-conflict context involves privileging and mainstreaming youth related activities in the overall process of national reconstruction. The ultimate goal is to reinvent the time-honoured notion of dignity in labour, instil national consciousness and patriotism in our young citizens, to lay the foundation for the emergence of a responsible citizenry in the service of a one and indivisible Sierra Leone. This policy shall aim at creating a level playing field for youths to actualise their fullest potentials, be competitive nationally and globally, and to contribute as good, responsible citizens to the development of their country (*Sierra Leone National Youth Policy-June 30th 2003*).

Steady progress has been made in increasing youths and female participation in politics, governance and decision making. The National Youth Commission was established in 2009 to empower the youths develop their potential, creativity and skills for national development. The Commission is currently in the formation stage as the commissioner is yet to be appointed by the president. Women have been agitating for a

²² GoSL, "National Youth Policy," unpublished policy paper, 2003.

²³ GoSL, *Agenda for Change: Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper II* (Freetown: Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone, 2009).

30% quota in public positions and right to contest in national elections, which is yet to be achieved.

5-5 Corruption and Good Governance

Corruption and bad governance is overall cited as one of the main root causes of the conflict,²⁴ as such any post-conflict peacebuilding arrangements that does not address corruption may only be postponing the war to another day, especially corruption in the public sector and parastatals. Moreover, this has rendered development very slow or worst still retrogressive. Efforts to combat corruption have been massive by president Koroma in giving enormous powers to the Anti-corruption Commission in not only investigating but also in prosecuting cases. Through this the ACC has succeeded in pursuing high profile cases

5-6 Natural Resources

Since the control for natural resources and minerals were one of the most sought out benefits of the warring parties and currently for it to be judiciously managed for national development needs of the state and with the new boom in the interest of investors in Sierra Leone's minerals, there is now in existence the Mines and Mineral Act of 2009. In order to improve on revenue generation the first online mining database in West Africa has been established to increase transparency and accountability in the country's rich natural resource sector. This system will stamp out all forms of malpractice in terms of licensing, financial management and general information pertaining to the mining sector. The public should be aware of what mining companies pay to the government and what the government receives from mining and exploration companies. This was launched on Jan. 19 2012; the Government of Sierra Leone Online Repository System is a joint initiative between the

²⁴ Sahr Kpundeh, "Corruption and Political Insurgency in Sierra Leone," in Ibrahim I Abdullah (ed.), *Between Democracy and Terror, the Sierra Leone Civil War*, 2004.

government and international donors, including the German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ), the United Nations Development Programme, the Revenue Development Foundation and the World Bank.

The purpose of the system is to have information on all revenue data for the country's extractive industry - payments made for licenses, royalties, and contributions to local chiefdoms - collected, recorded and published for public accessibility. It also shows whether mining companies have been authorized to legally operate in the country. Sierra Leone's mining industry has a long history of unregulated operations, most notably the "blood diamonds" which were found to be partially responsible for fuelling the country's 11-year civil war. Apart from diamonds, Sierra Leone has significant deposits of other minerals, including iron ore, bauxite, rutile and gold. In late 2011, African Minerals and London mining began the extraction of iron ore in the country for the first time in 30 years. According to the government's projected budget for 2012, this mineral alone could contribute to more than 50 percent increase in the country's GDP in 2012. This Online Repository System is also part of the move to make Sierra Leone compliant with the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), which requires the timely publication of payments made by mining companies to government, as well as revenues generated from the projects. Until now, information relating to mining agreement between the government and natural resource extraction companies was kept at the Ministry of Mines on paper documents that were neither secure nor accurate. In fact, old records were so poorly kept that the new system is only able to include information gathered after 2010. Before the advent of this system when licenses and payment details were handled with paperwork, some payment details (went) missing and receipts were not found.²⁵

5-7 Gender and Sexual Violence and Women's Rights

Sexual and gender based violence including rape and abduction was widespread during

²⁵ See All Africa Website: <http://allafrica.com/> (accessed on 4th March, 2012).

the war and in view of the fact that domestic violence and the non-enjoyment of rights of women is a challenge in post-conflict peacebuilding, three acts²⁶ have been passed by parliament, the domestic violence, the devolution of estate and customary marriage acts. Institutional reforms had made in the Ministry of Gender and Children Affairs though the Ministry is highly under resourced. Notwithstanding there is hope with the onset of the UN Women programme by the United Nations the Ministry's capacity will greatly be enhanced

5-8 Political stability of the State

Retrospectively, one of the root causes of the conflict identified was the struggle for power and the disparity between North and South as evident in the characteristics of the two main political parties – SLPP and APC a substantial effort was placed into the establishment of national democratic institutional structure that will regulate and mitigate against the excesses of political party interaction and co-existence at all times especially during elections and the institution of good governance and effective political citizen participation. This deals with organizational stability of the state that gives political leaders legitimacy to rule. Since the end of the war in 2002, key democratic institutions²⁷ have been established in response to either the Lome Peace Accord or the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. The New National Electoral Commission,²⁸ the Political Parties Registration Commission, the Anti-Corruption Commission, the Local Government Decentralization Secretariat and the National Human Rights Commission have all been established to enhance democracy and good governance.

²⁶ “Gender Acts on Domestic Violence, Devolution of Estate and Marriage,” 2007. “Gender Acts on Domestic Violence, Devolution of Estate and Marriage,” 2007. These were three acts passed the Parliament of Sierra Leone, namely the Domestic Violence Act 2007, The Devolution of Estate Act 2007, the Registration of Customary Marriage and Divorce, 2007.

²⁷ Provisions for the establishment of these bodies were made in the Lome Peace Agreement of 1999 and signing of the Joint Inter-party communiqué in New York in 2009 after widespread incidents of political violence.

²⁸ The National Election Commission (NEC) is working towards the next presidential and parliamentary election in November 2012.

5-9 Democracy and Good Governance

Democracy and good governance being one of the priority areas of the UN Peace building Fund (UNPBF) has received support from the United Nations Integrated Peace building Office (UNIPSIL) in Sierra Leone that has ensured progress in the peace building process in providing operational capacity building support to the National Electoral Commission to conduct a credible presidential and parliamentary election in 2007 and 2012. One will recall that free, fair and credible elections in Sierra Leone were far-fetched. Therefore as a post –conflict measure it was prudent to ensure that the electoral process that was incredible and barbaric before and during the war is given support in order to facilitate credible free and fair elections in an atmosphere of tranquillity.

The Political Parties Registration Commission has also been supported in maintaining dialogue between the political parties through outreach programmes especially after the March 2008 political violence that erupted within various parts of the country.

In other to strengthen democratic institutions, tremendous support in terms of training and capacity building and logistics have been given to various organizations by the UN Peace building Fund (UNPBF) such as the Human Rights Commission that was set up to protect and promote human rights, the Office National Security which has been decentralized on to chiefdom level and has police, military and civilian personnel. The police force, the military and the prisons have all received various supports. There are now civilian personnel working in the ministry of defence, this is to enhance the new principle of civilian oversight of the security sector reform.²⁹

5-10 Law Reform and the Office of the Ombudsman

²⁹ United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office, “Joint Vision for Sierra Leone of the United Nations’ Family,” 2009.

With regards constitution and reform of the rule of law, a law reform commission was established with the mandate of updating archaic laws and reviewing existing laws that are not in tandem with the new social realities of Sierra Leone. Further, the Office of the Ombudsman was established to look into issues and complaints of employees and other stakeholders as regards the government civil service.³⁰

A public Sector reform programme has been put in place to respond to poor performance of the public sector as one of the reasons for the state failure that led to the war. The purpose of the new public sector reform programme is to reengineer, capacitate and re vamp the public service institutions and workforce for increased service delivery. The programme has been designed with substantial support and commitment from key development partners; the United Kingdom department for international development, European Commission and United Nations Development programme.³¹

The new public sector reform programme responds to the relatively poor performance of the public service over many years. It is a comprehensive programme that covers all essential requirements for modern civil service. It demonstrates the public service as a central feature of its strategy for good governance.

Also, developments in the Media with the creation of the Independent Media Commission and the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Service (SLBS) being transformed into a national broadcaster known as the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation (SLBC). On telecommunications, the advent of the establishment of the National Telecommunications Commission (Natcom) and the landing of the Fibre Optics Cable with support from the World Bank are also giant strides in promoting long-term democratic development.

5-11 Social, Health and Education

³⁰ “The Ombudsman Act 1997.” “The Ombudsman Act 1997.” An Act of Parliament in 1997 (Act No. 2 of 1997) establishing the office of the Ombudsman in Sierra Leone.

³¹ Justice Sector Development Programme is funded by UK DfID.

In providing free and compulsory primary education as a bench mark for the road to sustainable development, there is free primary school for all pupils in government and government assisted schools as government provides fee subsidy to schools. The Government has gone a step further by providing school free education for the girl child in junior secondary school, and has continued paying Basic Certificate Examination (BECE) and West Africa School Certificate Examination (WASSCE) fees for all students attempting those exams for the first time.

The introduction of peace and conflict into the education curriculum also formed part of the education reforms. On the health front the current government has in 2010 introduced a Free Health Care policy for lactating mothers, pregnant women and children under - five years. This is to reduce the high infant and maternal mortality rate in the country.

5-12 Economic Reforms

On the economic front, in order to curtail the pilfering of funds and reduce corruption the National Revenue Authority was set up in 2002 as a central body for collecting and assessing national revenue and to administer and enforce specific laws and to make consequential amendments to certain laws. Furthermore, the Business Registration Act was passed in 2009 to make the country more business friendly where in potential investors can register their business in one spot in one day. Another step taken by Government was to establish the Goods and Services Tax (GST) which provides for the imposition of a broad based tax in the consumption of goods and services in Sierra Leone.

Even though Sierra Leone has been blessed with a lot of mineral deposits yet some people have seen it as a curse rather than a blessing as the extraction of the minerals have not benefited the majority of Sierra Leoneans. In this respect, the Government enacted the Mines and Minerals Act in 2009 which is aimed at consolidating and amending laws on mines and minerals, promote national and foreign investment in the mining sector by introducing new and improved provision for

exploration, mine development and marketing of minerals and secondary mineral processing to benefit Sierra Leoneans, ensure management and accountability in accordance with international best practice and communities adversely affected by mining and to introduce measures in reducing harmful effect of mining activities on the environment.

Personal security is a key in human existence, and making preparations is critical in ensuring quality life after retirement. It is for this reason that the government in 2001 established the National Social Security and Insurance Trust which is a social insurance scheme required to provide retirement and other benefit to meet the contingency needs of workers and their dependants.

5-13 Addressing Political violence

The implementation of the joint communiqué signed on 2 April by the major opposition party, the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), and the ruling All People's Congress (APC) was initiated by UNIPSIL is one of the critical steps in violence reduction and building dialogue between the two main political parties. The UN Peacebuilding Fund (UNPBF) provided vital financial support for the implementation of the joint communiqué. In collaboration with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the Political Parties Registration Commission, sensitization campaign on the essential messages of the joint communiqué was undertaken through the use of dramatic sketches and radio programmes in all 149 chiefdoms of the country. The communiqué is monitored by The Joint Communiqué Adherence Committee, comprising APC, SLPP, the Sierra Leone police and the Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone and co-chaired by the Political Parties Registration Commission.

5-14 Infrastructure and Road Construction

Poor roads and infrastructure were one of the key areas of intervention in accelerating development, communication and linking rural and urban areas. Currently there is

massive construction of roads evidenced in all parts of the country. The government has invested massive capital into this area. This had led to better roads and faster movement of goods and services across the country. This will automatically contribute to poverty reduction and income generation for the citizens. Government's policy on infrastructural development is to build infrastructure for state affairs, create access for affordable housing for the population and provide reliable road networks nationwide. There are visible signs of construction work as evidenced in the new National Electoral Commission building, the new offices for parliamentarians, rehabilitation of district offices and road construction.

5-15 Energy and Water

Energy is one of the most critical challenges facing Sierra Leone and was badly affected by the 11 year war. The World Bank, Government of Japan through JICA, The European Union have all invested massive resources to resuscitating the energy sector over the years, as without energy there could be no economic development and a gap in giving citizens a descent standard of living. The Bumbuna Hydro Power Plant, commissioned in 2009, generates power supply to Freetown though intermittent and some areas are underserved. Plans are being put in place to expand the Bumbuna Hydro System to 400 megawatts. This has increased the installed generation capacity from the 5 megawatts inherited in 2007 to 76 megawatts. The World Bank-funded Interserve Project has increased the transport capacity of the distribution network to many especially Freetown. The key challenge of the energy sector is how to maintain constant supply of electricity and for the electricity produced to revamp the economy. Currently, there are very few industries, therefore most of the electricity is consumed domestically and the earning capacity of the average citizen to pay for the use of electricity is limited. An alternative source of energy needs to be explored for longer-term use of energy supply.

5-16 The National Reparations Programme

The Sierra Leone reparations programme originated from TRC recommendations. In September 2008 a directorate of reparation was established within NaCSA (National Commission for Social Action) through a task force to operationalize plans for the establishment of a reparations programme. A week long strategic meeting was organized between staff of the directorate and a combined IOM/ICTJ (International organization for Migration (International Centre for Transitional Justice) technical team. From this meeting major documents and processes, including draft registration form, eligibility determination, registration steps and procedures, data collection procedures, and the benefits budget estimate for the project year one were developed.

Due to limitation of funds available for year one of the project and the need for additional planning to implement some of the recommended benefits, the programs further prioritized the services that will be provided. The first year project one services or benefits provided included; free physical health care, free fistula surgery, psycho-social support, shelter for the most vulnerable and symbolic reparations. On health, a list of victims requiring free physical health care by district were generated from the data base and the victims provided with beneficiary cards in dictating eligibility for this benefit. Total cases load per region were passed to the ministry health; a document was signed between NaCSA and the ministry of health, for beneficiaries to be included in the ministry's vulnerability group for free health care.

For Fistula surgery a list of victims requiring fistula surgery was generated from the data base. NaCSA also entered into an agreement with mercy ships for the latter to carry out surgeries where applicable. NaCSA transported the victims from their various locations to mercy ships hospital in Freetown for medical attention and return them to their homes after treatment.

On education, a list of school going victims eligible for education support will be generated from the data base and compiled according to schools per district. The list was sent to various schools for verification. Re-imburement of fees for 2008/2009 academic year and support for uniform and books were made to parents of verified student in the respective schools. Payment was done through NaCSA offices in the

district.

Housing, a list of eligible victims were provided with shelter support and compiled and prioritization based on degree of vulnerability will be done to determine those who will received shelter in project year one. NaCSA will negotiate for lands with government and community leaders. They are expected to prepare bills of quantity, tender for bids, award contracts and monitor construction of the houses by contractors

Symbolic reparation was organized in at least three chiefdoms in each of the twelve districts in 2009. NaCSA provided the required materials and financial support for the communities to undertake symbolic reparation activities. The first symbolic reparation took place in Bomaru Kailahun district where the war started in 1991. Community leaders identified a host of activities including prayers and religious recitations, symbolic cleansing of the bushes and re-burials. Though these activities were undertaken, it is evident that the programme only catered for some percentage of victims and as it is, governments commitment to reaching the wider victims is yet to be seen and NaCSa too because of limited funds can only manage a proportion of victims for the first year.

5-17 Agriculture

Agriculture is the engine for socio-economic growth and development with a focus on the commercialization of the agricultural value chain and promotion of private sector participation. High-yielding planting materials, fertilizers, weed killers, power tillers, rice cutters, rice threshers, rice mills and cassava graters is now provided for farmers and rehabilitation of inland valley swamps and constructing feeder roads is in progress.

5-18 The United Nations Peacebuilding Commission

The United Nations efforts in other parts of the world in sustaining development after war and supporting signing of peace agreements for long term sustainable peace have remained futile; and in recognition of the fact that most of the conflicts they tried to

resolve relapsed back to conflict within five (5) years of peace agreement decided to establish the United Nations Peace Building Commission (PBC) in 2005 to purposely help post conflict countries to transit from conflict to sustainable peace and development. The Peace Building Commission (PBC) is the United Nations intergovernmental advisory body charged with the responsibility of developing strategies and coordinating resources for reconstruction, institution building and sustainable development in post conflict countries. The commission was first proposed in 2004 by a High Level Panel of Threats, Challenges and Change. It was formally established in 2005 in order to prevent violent conflict rather than resolving existing conflict from post conflict countries as re-echoed by the Secretary General of the United Nations in the inaugural session of the Peace Building Commission in 2006 when he says “preventing violent conflict can be less costly than resolving existing conflict.”³² Sierra Leone and Burundi were therefore considered the first countries to be given the opportunity for the implementation of the objectives of the Peace Building Commission.

To address the immediate threats to post conflict Sierra Leone, the United Nations Peace Building Fund (PBF) was set up within the Peace Building Commission (PBC) with the main aim of addressing the threats to the hard won peace as well as to take actions that will prevent a relapse to conflict. The Fund is to support intervention of direct and immediate relevance to the peace building process and contribute towards addressing critical gaps in that process, in particular in areas for which no other funding mechanism is available.

The use of the Fund resources is intended to have a catalytic effect in helping to create more sustained support mechanisms, such as longer term engagements by development organizations and bilateral donors, and the mobilization of national stakeholders in support of peace building. It supports as well activities undertaken to support efforts to revitalize the economy and generate immediate peace dividends for the population at large; and design activities to strengthen national institutions and

³² Richard Ponzio, “The Creation and function of the United Nations Peace Building Commission,” Saferworld, 2005.

processes.

In addition, the Fund supports countries included in the agenda of the Peace Building Commission, as well as countries recovering from conflict or considered to be at risk of relapsing into conflict that are not included in the agenda of the Commission. Sierra Leone as a result benefited 35 million United States Dollars from the Fund to assist the country to undertake quick impact programmes that are critical to the consolidation of peace in the country. “The idea behind the PBF is to quickly identify and fund Sierra Leone with most critical Peace building gaps at the immediate post conflict phase, when other funding mechanisms might not be available; and to catalyze more substantial and sustaining support.”³³

Since setting up the Fund, it has made laudable progress. For effective control of the Fund and coordination of its activities, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was sign between the Peace Building Fund and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Sierra Leone in which the latter was appointed to serve as Fund Manager or administrative agent responsible for the administration of the Fund, under the overall direction and guidance of the head of the Peace Building Support Office, (PBSO) in Sierra Leone. The UNDP also serves also as recipient organization of the Fund. In this regard it disbursed fund to other UN agencies that support the implementation of peace building activities from the Peace Building Fund; established Peace Building Fund Account; receive fund from donor countries compile financial and narrative reports from recipient UN Organization and distribute such report to the PBSO and to each donor etc.

6. Challenges

Challenges to post-conflict peacebuilding can be many and diverse ranging from the cessation of hostilities, the signing of a peace agreement, commitment and resources to

³³ United Nations Peacebuilding Fund. “Mid Term Peacebuilding Fund Evaluation Report,” April, 2009.

the implementation of activities contained in the peace agreements, holding of credible elections to state and institution building. The key challenge encountered were political will on the part of all warring factions, creating a government of inclusion, the will of the international community to provide resources for the programmes and the attitude of the citizenry to the roll out of the peacebuilding activities and programmes. Further challenges include political intolerance, inter-party feuds, elections management, poor salaries of civil servants, corruption, nepotism, tribalism and ethnicity, patronage clientelism etc.

These challenges are inherent in the institutions of the state and political leaders that also control economic power. The media too faces daunting challenges in spite of the existence of a free press. A segment of the media is highly partisan and engages in naked propaganda in favour of one political party against the other despite the existence of the Independent Media Commission. Youth violence is also a challenge; large number of youths is unemployed and can be easily coerced with money and drugs to perpetuate acts of violence especially during electioneering periods. Civil society organizations are also affected by partisanship and sycophancy for them to survive. The issue of human rights promotion, protection by the police and the judiciary need to be strengthened. Poverty and illiteracy is also another challenge

7. Conclusions and Lessons Learnt

The example of Sierra Leone illustrates the following; firstly, the core of addressing violent conflict is to have a framework within which it must be handled a peace agreement, constitution or cultural values, norms or education system. Secondly, the institution of liberal peacebuilding in a weak state is daunting, “peacebuilding” and “statebuilding” must be pursued in tandem. The rebuilding of state institutions is vital to enhancing successful peacebuilding efforts. Thirdly, the role of external partners mainly the UN remains critical to the survival of the state and consolidating peace should be long-term as exemplified in the work of the UN Peacebuilding Fund, the UN

and other bilateral must remain engaged in bolstering certain functions of the state. Fourthly, the system of governance and representation through multiparty is elections which is the most accepted but reforms must be made within the frame work of peace that winner does not take all. This can militate against tribalism, nepotism and ethnicity.

Fifthly, corruption and mismanagement of state resources must be addressed within the aegis of existing international norms and standards like the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI) compliance for the export of diamonds. Compliance to international convention and protocols must be enforced by the state. State security apparatus must be provided for in such a way that their role remains relevant in the survival of the state. Conflict resolution mechanism and structures must be made part of the process of managing conflict in addition to formal systems. Reviving the economy is critical as if the state cannot provide basic needs like food, shelter, healthcare, education and jobs in the immediate future there is a likelihood for relapse. Human security issues must be at the heart of all of the peacebuilding efforts and statebuilding should focus its energies in providing basic services for its citizens.

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