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the Reintegration of Former Combatants in Sierra Leone  
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**Lost Voices, Fragile Warriors: Social Capital, Reconciliation  
and the Reintegration of Former Combatants in Sierra Leone**

**Abdul Rashid Koroma**

A Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the  
University of Westminster for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

August 2018

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## **Abstract**

It is one thing to rebuild the physical structure of society after conflict; however rebuilding social capital is quite another feat. Social capital is the rebuilding of social relations through reconciliation and cohabiting together. Effective social reintegration of former combatants, which is understood to mean a return of social and psychological wellbeing of citizens - is a complex and subtle process, which is an essential element of peace-building mechanism in post-conflict societies. Traditionally, reintegration was seen as impossible unless founded on the re-establishment of trust between members who were previously in conflict, and based primarily on conventional measures of reintegration like economic and political indicators.

This thesis offers an alternative perspective to reintegration of former combatants by assessing the impacts of conflict on social capital, and exploring ways in which the effective social reintegration of former combatants may facilitate the restoration of social capital destroyed through the course of the conflict in Sierra Leone, and promote the achievement of sustainable reintegration and reconciliation. Using workshops and training courses, detailed literature review and six-month fieldwork in Sierra Leone as ethnographical research methods, this study investigates how civil-conflict disrupts social capital and how the successful social reintegration and reconciliation of former combatants can restore it. It shows that where reintegration occurs without reconciliation built on trust, coexisting peacefully might be an alternative to trust.

The study finds that bridging and bonding social capital has evolved in Sierra Leone, and that trust appeared as some kind of transitional mechanisms that initiated with peaceful coexistence at the local level. It also finds that social reintegration does not rely solely on conventional measures like economic and political indicators, but may also benefit from using alternative perspectives and methods. The study enhances current understandings of social capital dynamics and generates functional conclusions that can be used to create a fuller response to the changing dynamics of social capital as a result of civil-conflict in the future - and generate hope and aspiration for post-war Sierra Leone.

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**Declaration**

I certify that all material used in this thesis which is not my own work has been identified and referenced correctly. I also certify that no material used in this thesis has previously been submitted and approved for the award of a degree by this or any other University.

## **List of Acronyms**

AU	African Union
APC	All Peoples' Congress
AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
CBD	Community Based Development
CBO	Community Based Organisations
CDF	Civil Defence Forces
CRDP	Community Reintegration and Development Project
DRC	Democratic Republic of Congo
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
EO	Executive Outcome
FGT	Fundacion Guillermo Toriello
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HIPC	Heavily Indebted Poor Countries
ICC	International Criminal Court
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IMATT	International Military Training and Advisory Team
ISAT	International Security Advisory Team
KLA	Kosovo Liberation Army
KPC	Kosovo Protection Corps
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
MDTF	Multi Donor Trust Fund
NCDS	National Centre for Development Studies
NCDDR	National Committee on Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
NPRC	National Provisional Ruling Council
NRS	National Revenue Services
UNITA	National Union for the Total Independence of Angola
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
MPLA	People's Movement for the Liberation of Angola
PNP	People's National Party
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
PRGF	Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility
RRDP	Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Development Programme
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
RSLAF	Sierra Leone Armed Forces
SLPP	Sierra Leone's Peoples Party
SRA	Social Research Association
TFA	Transitional Financial Assistance
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UNICEF	United Nations Children Fund
UNAMSIL	UN Mission in Sierra Leone
UNDP	United Nations Development programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNODC	United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime
WWGI	World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators
WFP	World Food Programme



# INTRODUCTION

## 0.1 Research Inspiration

‘When I first came here, many people were afraid of me because they did not trust me, even to speak to me, let alone to have anything to do with me. There was a great deal of fear, which was generated by the civil-war. It was also very difficult for the civilians because some people in the community still had bad feelings for us. But later on, they started trusting us, and slowly we started getting involved in community activities like road building. Today, relations are getting better and better.... To come from the war-zone and start a new life in a civilian environment depending on yourself was not easy.’<sup>1</sup>

This thesis examines the reintegration and reconciliation of former combatants in Sierra Leone following the termination of eleven-years of brutal conflict. Critically, the thesis argues that where reintegration occurs without reconciliation built on trust, peaceful coexistence is an alternative. In other words, coexisting peacefully in a post-conflict environment might be an alternative to trust. The main parameters relating to this present thesis include: reintegration, reconciliation, social capital, and cohabitation as an alternative to trust in the context of post-conflict Sierra Leonean society.

This thesis will address the following research question on a conceptual and methodological level:

*How does the reintegration of former combatants link in with the reconciliation process in Sierra Leone?*

*What kind of relationship do former combatants form with the community in order to coexist peacefully?*

I start this inquiry on a personal note on how and why this study came to be undertaken, why it is important, and how it can add to our understanding to post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation following the termination of the conflict in Sierra Leone.

This enquiry is the culmination of a life-long personal interest in violent conflict and its aftermath and aspirations for a sustainable peace. Since my early academic years, I have been engaged in voluntary work, activism, working with Non-Governmental Organisations

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<sup>1</sup> An extract from this author’s interview with John Kangoma, a former RUF combatant, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2015 in Mandu, eastern Sierra Leone.

(NGOs) and self-help projects in Sierra Leone before emigrating to the United Kingdom in 2000. Hence, this study has its foundation in my personal desire to conduct academic research in the field of conflict resolution and peace management in a post-conflict environment.

Consequently, this research aims to contribute to the emerging literature in the discipline of post-conflict reconstruction and development, focusing in particular on the reintegration of former combatants when conflict ends.

Before undertaking my present research role, I returned to Sierra Leone for the first time in 2012, the first time in more than a decade. While travelling around the devastated countryside, considering my PhD project potentially looking at the post-conflict relationship between the former combatants and the communities into which they were (re)integrated, I noticed the high level of animosity between the communities and the former combatants, and a strong ‘us’ versus ‘them’ phenomenon. On my return visit to the same communities to undertake fieldwork in 2015, the tension between the people and the former combatants remained palpable. A researcher new to the region that might see only a calm surface and conclude that the reintegration of former Revolutionary United Front (RUF) combatants had been successful, that the social capital which was destroyed by the conflict had been rebuilt or renewed, that the reconciliatory process engineered by the international community had been successful, and that social stability has been achieved. However, as a Sierra Leonean myself, who lived in the country before and during much of the conflict, and now as a researcher, it was striking to see signs of the conflict such as burned out buildings, abandoned armoured vehicles and other dilapidated military fighting vehicles still scattered along the main roads that link regions. School buildings, hospitals and other infrastructures remain dilapidated, not fully rebuilt since they were destroyed by the conflict. These remaining materials are evidences of violence and indications that Sierra Leonean society ‘has not fully recovered’ from the disturbances and devastation of the decade-long conflict.

In the course of my conversations with community members, comments such as ‘before the war every other day there was dance here or there....’, or narratives such as ‘almost every week, there was marriage ceremony taking place here or there, but not anymore due to the conflict....’, highlighted the devastation that conflict can cause and the impact it leaves behind. I was also affected directly by the conflict. My family home in Segbwema was burnt down

and my village, Mano Menima, also in eastern Sierra Leone, was completely destroyed by the RUF/AFRC alliance combatants in 1998. The destruction of my village was a direct consequence of the actions of one of my relatives Mr Lansana Koroma, a senior Kamajor<sup>2</sup> commander in the region, who firmly opposing the alliances' advances into the region. A culmination of these issues prompted me to investigate why Sierra Leoneans had become so violent during one of the most brutal conflicts in Africa's recent memory, and whether the reintegration of former combatants back into civilian society had been successful and at what cost.

Because of the devastating effect of the conflict on all sectors in the country, I hypothesised that Sierra Leone was a place where social capital was destroyed. It is evident from available literature such as Richards<sup>3</sup> and Keen<sup>4</sup> among others that there existed good inter-communal interactions, good relationships and bonding at micro-level before the onset of the conflict in the 1990s. References to normal life in the past usually referred to local communities where 'everybody knew everyone else', and during the conflict, all of these harmonious community relations disappeared, allowing family and community members to turn against one another.

Given the shared history of cordial social relations between communities, I am optimistic that the (re)establishment of social capital in post-conflict Sierra Leone will mean a return of social, physical, psychological and spiritual wellbeing of citizens and the Sierra Leonean society as a whole. Post-conflict Sierra Leonean society is frustrated, alienated and fragmented, due in part to the decade long civil-conflict and its corresponding effects on the breakdown of social relationship at various levels. Rebuilding social relations (social capital) through forgiveness, reconciliation and building trust,<sup>5</sup> as well as reintegrating former combatants and seeking a sustainable peace requires a tailored and appropriate range of processes that will deal with the past and envisage a better future by generating hope and

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<sup>2</sup> The Kamajors are predominantly Mende militia from the south and east of Sierra Leone, the largest and most powerful of a heterogeneous group of ethnic paramilitaries, loosely allied under the umbrella of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF) during the 11 years of civil-conflict. For further details on the Kamajor militia in Sierra Leone, see for example Ferme, M., C. and Hoffman, D. (2004) Hunter Militias and the International Human Rights Discourse in Sierra Leone. *Africa Today*, Vol. 50, No. 4, pp. 73 - 95.

<sup>3</sup> Richards, P. (2003) The Political Economy of Internal Conflict in Sierra Leone. *Netherlands Institute of International Relations*, pp. 37 - 38.

<sup>4</sup> Keen, D (2005) *Conflict and Collusion in Sierra Leone*. Oxford: James Currey.

<sup>5</sup> Despite the fact that it is a fundamental concept in post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation effort, trust, or the lack of it, has shown to be associated with the onset of violent conflict, the instability of negotiated settlement, and the sustainability of peace. Despite its proven importance, the question of how trust can be built after violent conflicts has not received much attention and has thus remained unanswered.

aspiration for all Sierra Leoneans, and for a 'new' Sierra Leone. I am convinced that the reintegration of former combatants cannot successfully occur without community reconciliation and their willingness to cohabit, so that rebuilding social capital becomes crucially significant and worthy for an academic investigation.

An investigation into Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) process, particularly from the perspective of the reintegration of Sierra Leone's former combatants back into civilian society following their demobilisation offers a practical and academic perspective to our understanding of post-conflict reintegration and the general DDR process.<sup>6</sup> An enquiry into post-conflict reintegration is more than merely the pursuit of understanding violence and human conflict, but rather explains how to promote cohabitation, reconciliation and durable peace and prevent the reoccurrence of conflict. From Anthropology and cultural studies to peace and post-conflict studies in the discipline of Politics and International Relations we are reminded that human conflict is a feature of all human societies.<sup>7</sup> A systematic investigation into the reintegration process of former combatants in post-conflict societies provides us with a better knowledge and understanding of how to solve human conflict without resorting to further violence.

This present investigation offers insights into the issues involved in the process of achieving durable peace through reintegration, reconciliation and cohabitation as an alternative to trust.

I am convinced that the social capital approach will illustrate important issues for research into post-conflict context. Conventionally, studies that deal with macro human conflict have taken either a liberal or realist perspective,<sup>8</sup> focussing mainly on the violent aspect of conflict over scarce resources or power struggles,<sup>9</sup> rather than focusing on those who directly take part in conflict, be they perpetrators or combatants and their welfare in the post-conflict society into which they are reintegrated following their demobilisation. However, in the last few decades, post-conflict scholars have focused more on constructionist perspectives and challenged these traditional approaches for not taking into account culture, identity, and local

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<sup>6</sup> Humphreys, M., and Weinstein, J. (2007) *Demobilisation and Reintegration of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 51, No. 4, pp. 531 -567.

<sup>7</sup> Eller J., D. (1999) *From Culture to Ethnicity to Conflict: An Anthropological Perspective on International Conflict*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

<sup>8</sup> Nye, J. (2007) *Understanding International Conflicts: An Introduction to Theory and History*. New York: Pearson Longman, pp. 6 - 7.

<sup>9</sup> Avruch, K. (1998) *Culture and Conflict Resolution*. Washington: United States Institute for Peace, p. 24.



norms and values as crucial factors that determine the boundaries between ‘insiders’ and ‘outsiders’, the ways in which former combatants negotiate negative stereotypes in their everyday struggles after the formal conclusion of a conflict, and how the issues are linked to the overall project of post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation. Thus, this thesis adopts social capital as a theoretical framework through which to investigate the social norms, values and local relations that circulate and influence the reintegration of former combatants in the context of peace-building effort in Sierra Leone.

By focusing on former RUF combatants who directly participated in the conflict we gain more understanding of how the conflict was experienced by those who directly participated in it; its protagonists. An experiential perspective - it will be argued - is important to attempt to understand the conflict and how to guard against its recurrence in the future. In some ways it is common sense to try and hear the narratives from former combatants - the RUF themselves, the perpetrators. And yet during the conflict, and sixteen years since the conflict formally ended, very little space has been provided to secure unbiased narratives from former RUF combatants about what they perceived their current socio-economic and political status, the level of reintegration and reconciliation achieved, and the challenges they now face as civilians.<sup>10</sup> In fact, very little attention has been paid to experiences and interpretations of former combatants in general, whether they were Kamajors, Donsos, Gbinties, Kapras, Tamaboros,<sup>11</sup> The Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) or members of the RUF.

Focusing on former RUF combatants in this thesis was not just to ‘give the voiceless a voice’, but to enhance our knowledge and understanding of how their reintegration through reconciliation and cohabitation can help cement a positive peace in the ‘new’ Sierra Leone. Moreover, listening to the voices, and commentaries of those who participated in fomenting the peace will make a useful contribution to explanations of current and future intrastate conflicts.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Interview with J., A., D. Alie, Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone, Freetown, April 2015.

<sup>11</sup> Tamaboros, Donsos, Gbinties, Kapras and Kamajors all fought under the unified umbrella of the Civil Defence Forces (CDF), of which the Kamajors were the fiercest and most powerful. CDF fought with traditional hunter's guns, machetes, bows and arrows. Operated invisibly in familiar territory, CDF was a significant impediment to the rapidly advancing RUF forces during the civil-war. Recruited mainly from displaced and unprotected civilian population across the country, CDF was a means of taking up arms to defend towns, villages, families and homes from the ruthlessness of the RUF, due to the perceived incompetence of the Sierra Leone's national army.

<sup>12</sup> Intrastate conflict is the most common form of conflict today. It describes sustained political violence that takes place between armed groups representing the state, and one or more non-state groups. Conflict of this

## 0.2 Defining the Problem

The central aim of this research is to show that where social reintegration occurs without reconciliation built on trust, peaceful coexistence is an alternative. Roland Paris says that the nature of today's conflict has changed from that of interstate conflict (conflicts that occur between states) to intrastate (conflicts that occur within a particular state that involve various factions or armed groups), with a concurrent shift in the significant majority of war victims from combatants to civilians who endure a strategy of violence based on atrocities such as high level of destruction of property, sexual slavery and systematic rape, mass executions, hostage-taking, and ethnic cleansing.<sup>13</sup> This has led to dramatic increase in forced migration of people and the devastation of social structures. In addition, the spill-over effects of civil-conflict have ensured a regional element to some conflicts that has contributed to sustained local and regional insecurity as armed groups from one country threaten the security of other countries in a particular region.

The complexity of intrastate conflicts and the way in which they are fought has significant ramification for reintegration and reconciliation. The post-conflict society, characterised by high levels of socio-economic and political destruction, displacement of large number of people, high level of poverty, and diminished social cohesion - represents a melting pot of anger, hatred, resentment and fear in which the reconciliation of previously conflicting social identity groups presents the most vital and also most difficult challenge in the peace-building effort. As studies have shown, 'most societies emerging from civil-conflict face a staggering 44 percent risk of returning to full-scale violence within the first five years',<sup>14</sup> due in part to the lack of addressing the underlying factors that caused the conflict in the first place, as well as the inability to reintegrate and reconcile the conflicting parties. In addition, the process of reconciliation and reintegration in the aftermath of civil-conflicts has not received significant attention as compared to conflict resolution.<sup>15</sup>

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nature is usually confined within the borders of a single state, but usually has significant regional and international dimensions, and holds the risk of spilling over into neighbouring states. The conflict in Sierra Leone was no exception.

<sup>13</sup> Paris, R. (2004) *At War's End: Building Peace After Civil Conflict*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>14</sup> Collier, P, Elliot, V., L, Hegre, H, Hoerner, A, Reynal-Querol, N, and Sambanis, M. (2003) *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.83.

<sup>15</sup> Bar-Tal, D (2000) From Intractable Conflict through Conflict Resolution to Reconciliation: Psychological Analysis, *Political Psychology*, Vol. 21, No. 2, pp. 351-365.

In order for a successful transition from war to peace to take place, it is essential that there is valid social reintegration of former combatants back into society.<sup>16</sup> It is often argued that former combatants can be barrier to the achieving of sustainable peace due to the potential security threat they pose.<sup>17</sup> The reintegration of former combatants has the potential to contribute in a positive way to conflict transformation and peace-building effort.<sup>18</sup> Nonetheless, despite the acknowledgment that the reintegration of former combatants can make positive contributions to the general peace process, little is known as to how this can be achieved. As Gomes Porto and his colleagues point out:

‘Recognising this important point (that in the immediate post-conflict setting, societies may seldom have the ability to effect sustainable reconciliation) points us in the direction of long term reintegration as a critical component of processes of social reconciliation and cohabitation - and the need therefore to conduct deeper investigation into the underlying and subtle process by which identities affect and are affected by the reintegration process’.<sup>19</sup>

Therefore, the central hypothesis for this research, based on our understandings of reconciliation and the contributions former combatants make to peace-building through their involvement in their own reintegration process, in terms of community development, both in theory and practice, is that where reintegration occurs without reconciliation built on trust, peaceful coexistence is an alternative. In fact, bridging and bonding social capital has evolved in the absence of trust, therefore, trust appears as some kind of transitional mechanisms that initiates with peaceful coexistence at the local level. Thus, even without trust peaceful coexistence is possible, and this operates through a number of mechanisms at the local level, which this thesis will unravel.

During data collection in Sierra Leone, it was evident in almost all the narratives that there was the willingness on the side of the civilian population to accept and to live again with former combatants in the same community as Sierra Leoneans, and to work together with those who were once their perpetrators. There was also little evidence identified in the

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<sup>16</sup> Colletta, N. J, Kostner, M, Weidehofer, I. (1996) Case Studies in War-to-Peace Transition: The Demobilisation and Reintegration of Ex-Combatants in Ethiopia, Namibia, and Uganda, Washington: The World Bank.

<sup>17</sup> Ozerdem, A. (2002) Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration of Former Combatants in Afghanistan: Lessons Learned from a Cross-cultural Perspective, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No.5, pp. 961-975.

<sup>18</sup> Gifiner, J. (2003) Reintegration of Ex-combatants, in Malan, M. *et al* (Eds) (2003), Sierra Leone: Building the Road to Recovery, ISS Monograph Series 80, March 2003.

<sup>19</sup> Gomes Porto, J, Parsons, E. and Alden, C. (2007) *From Soldiers to Citizens: The Social, Economic and Political Reintegration of UNITA Ex-Combatants*, Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing Ltd, p.147.

narratives that referred to former combatants as enemies or the unwillingness on the part of the general public to accept them back into society. This shows that trust can evolve through peaceful coexistence.

### **0.3 The Scope of the Study and the Research Question**

As noted above, the central hypothesis of this study is that where the reintegration of former fighters occur without reconciliation built on trust, peaceful coexistence is an alternative. In addition, the thesis seeks to examine the impact civil-conflicts have on social capital, especially bonding and bridging social capital, and the implications this may have for reintegration and reconciliation in a post-conflict context. It is anticipated that an understanding of the ways in which such conflicts impact on social capital will facilitate a more comprehensive consideration of how DDR programmes may promote the rebuilding of social capital and the ways in which such programmes may contribute to enhance reintegration and reconciliation in the aftermath of conflict. In this way, this thesis will broaden our understanding of how DDR policies can best be designed and implemented in order to achieve successful reintegration and reconciliation in the aftermath of civil-conflict.

This thesis adopts social capital as a concept rather than other theoretical concepts for various reasons. Firstly, the key doctrines of social capital - those of cooperation, communication, reciprocity, trust, and coordination combine in many ways to explain ways in which groups within communities, and the state interrelate. Thus, the application of social capital in this thesis is important because it serves as a linking concept between reconciliation, social reintegration and cohabitation. I am aware that other concepts such as clientelism<sup>20</sup> or participatory approach could have been adopted; however I was convinced that social capital approach went beyond what other concepts could offer, as it provides an ideal way through which we can better understand social reintegration itself, and the links it has with reconciliation and cohabitation. Social reintegration, and for that matter reconciliation, entails far more than the patronage relationships between those in power and those not, or kinship networks between nuclear or extended families. The successful social reintegration of former combatants relies on more than just those in power or the family, although these are both important, and this is where social capital can provide a more appropriate lens through which

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<sup>20</sup> Clientelism describes the distribution of selective benefits to individuals or clearly defined groups in exchange for political support. See for instance Hopkin, J. (2006) Conceptualizing Political Clientelism: Political Exchange and Democratic Theory. 'Concept Analysis: Unpacking Clientelism, Governance and Neoliberalism'. Document Available on line at: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/41475709>. Document Accessed on 29/09/2016.

social reintegration can be observed. Social capital as a concept enables our understanding of the various interactions that have an impact on social reintegration, as well as introduce indicators for measurement, thus making it more practical for use. Understanding how communities collectively function at all levels, and how they establish social cohesion, is important in explaining the effects of violent conflict and how such effects can be avoided or dealt with, in this case through the reconciliation and social reintegration of former combatants into civilian society. Therefore, social capital is the preferred concept in this thesis.

Much of today's reconciliation and reintegration initiatives are modelled on the understanding of Eurocentric ideologies and policies, which have limited bearing to the developing world where most of today's conflicts take place. Such Eurocentric approaches do not necessarily capitalise on the positive attributes other approaches can bring to the table, nor do they always result in the most positive outcomes. By prioritising local initiatives to reintegration and reconciliation, both in terms of definition and methodology, we can develop our understanding of the process, thus making it more possible to design and implement reintegration and reconciliation initiatives that translate into more meaningful results.

Traditionally speaking, successes of DDR programmes have been evaluated in terms of economic reintegration with indicators such as levels of employment or enrolment on training courses. This thesis criticises such an approach because it does not place enough emphasis on the issue of social reintegration, which is vital for effective reconciliation and, therefore, sustainable peace in the aftermath of civil conflicts. Thus, this thesis aims to offer an alternative perspective from which to view the process of reintegration and reconciliation that addresses the impact of civil-conflict on social capital, and considers the ways in which DDR policy may create and develop social capital and promote effective reconciliation, rather than focusing on conventional commitments to economic and political indicators.

#### **0.4 Research Aim and Objectives**

As pointed out in the preceding section, the aim of this thesis is to offer an alternative perspective from which to view the process of former combatants' reintegration that does not rely on conventional measures of reintegration such as economic indicators, instead assessing the impact of conflict on social capital and exploring ways in which the effective social reintegration of former combatants may facilitate the restoration of social capital destroyed

throughout the course of the civil-conflict, and promote the achievement of sustainable reintegration and reconciliation. It aims to widen our knowledge of social capital dynamics and how it can be implemented in future DDR programmes that fully respond to the changing dynamics of social capital as a result of civil-conflict, and generate functional conclusions that develop our understanding of the reconciliation process and how this process can be augmented. Thus, the aim and objectives of this thesis also include:

1. To explore the linkages between reintegration, reconciliation, trust and social capital through the analysis of data obtained from the Sierra Leone case study and compare them to linkages identified within the wider DDR literature.
2. To investigate ways in which civil-conflict transforms social capital and how the successful social reintegration and reconciliation through cohabitation may restore social capital in a post-conflict environment.
3. To show that where reintegration occurs without reconciliation built on trust, peaceful coexistence is an alternative.
4. To illustrate that the account of former combatants who directly participate in civil-conflict can add to our understanding of how conflict is experienced by its protagonists. In other words, how to understand civil-conflict from the perspective of those who take part in it, and how to guard against its recurrence.

## **0.5 Research Methodology**

The issues central to this thesis are of a very complex and dynamic nature, and as such it utilises a 'composite approach'<sup>21</sup> in order to enable an in-depth and focused understanding of the key issues and the factors affecting social capital, social reintegration, reconciliation and cohabitation in the aftermath of civil-conflict.

Adopting a range of research techniques, based around ethnographic research methods, I was able to triangulate the results, as well as generate a richer understanding of the various concepts and their interactions, hence increasing the credibility of the result.

The following research methods were engaged within the thesis, and they include: (1) workshops and training courses, (2) detailed literature review and (3) six-month fieldwork in Sierra Leone. During the course of my PhD, I attended various workshops and training courses related to the research in order to augment my understanding of the key issues. Initial

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<sup>21</sup> Barakat, S, Chard, M, Jacoby, T and Lume, W (2002) The Composite Approach: Research Design in the Context of War and Armed Conflict, *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 23, No.5, pp. 991-1003.

findings have been presented at an International Development Conference in London in 2015. Other findings were also presented at the Doctor College Conference at the University of Surrey, UK in 2014. In addition, I undertook courses at the University of Surrey in Post-conflict reintegration and development. Prior to formally starting data collection, I took part in some low-key fieldwork exercise in eastern Sierra Leone in 2013 just immediately before starting my PhD programme. This exercise empowered me to evaluate issues such as coexistence, how trust is built in a post-conflict environment, community interest in my research topic, willingness of people to participate, appropriateness of interview format and style (including nature of questions), and my ability to conduct the enquiry in English. All of these factors made me feel that this study had community and societal confirmation, and that there was the potential for respondents to cooperate with me during fieldwork. These were all useful in developing my knowledge of these issues and assisted in the development of the research project.

The main reason for conducting detailed literature review was to further develop my personal and individual understanding of the central issues within this investigation - civil-conflict, reintegration, coexistence, reconciliation, DDR, social capital, the Sierra Leonean context and key research methodologies, the emphasis being to be able to pinpoint important theoretical framework that could provide a structure through which it was possible to answer the research question.

The six-month fieldwork in Sierra Leone represented the central aspect of the practical research in this study. Despite the various limitations encountered in the fieldwork phase, as discussed in chapter four, the flexibility afforded to me through the composite nature of the data collection methods, and my approach to the research, ensured results rich in detail and highly relevant to the research question and the theoretical framework.

## **0.6 Structure of the thesis**

The thesis starts in Chapter 1, which addresses the literature associated with the economic dimensions of the Sierra Leone's post-conflict recovery in relation to the reintegration of former combatants. For any serious investigation into any post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation through cohabitation, there is the need to make an enquiry into the political economy of the conflict and the post-conflict recovery, and how it impacts on rebuilding the newly emerging society. Attention is also drawn to the role played by personalised rule and

poor political leadership, as well as structural factors such as deteriorating terms of diamond trade and the irrationality of post-colonial development strategy that led to the conflict in Sierra Leone.

The chapter presents a historical overview of the Sierra Leone conflict from the point of colonialism then addressing the key causes of the conflict concentrating firstly on the external influences and then on domestic factors. In so doing, it presents a conflict analysis of the Sierra Leonean case, necessary in order to fully comprehend what happened in Sierra Leone, and the subsequent effects of these events, in order to be in a more advantageous position from which to understand what can be done.

Chapter 2 analyses the roles of the Special Court and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in relation to retributive and restorative justice system with regards to post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation. Given the high levels of crime committed during the conflict by all factions, it is likely that restorative justice will be seen by some as being ‘soft on criminals’ and criminal organisations. In an effort to illustrate the benefits of alternative approaches to committing crime, the chapter sets out the arguments for and against retributive and restorative justice system in relation to post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation.

Chapter 3 introduces social capital as a theoretical framework in this study. Beginning by developing a comprehension of what social capital is and where it originated, the chapter considers the different approaches to the understanding of social capital in order to provide a vivid understanding of the concept. It goes on to analyse the transformation of social capital through violent conflict. The chapter is particularly important because it offers a technique through which we can better conduct conflict analysis, which potentially could translate into more effective policy. The concept is useful on questions about mechanisms that strengthen the reintegration of former combatants, and solidarity which create consensus and sustain the stable development of a post-conflict society.

Chapter 4 explains the research design, based around ethnographical research methods - a qualitative approach drawing on snowballing technique and semi-structured interview methods that followed up to six months in the field. Snowballing technique was adopted in identifying key participants, which together with semi-structured interview complement each



other. The results obtained from the 36 participants through the combination of various research techniques was the presentation of a balanced, contextualised account of the effects of social relationships on the reintegration of former combatants. The chapter is concerned with the logistics of the study, as it examines fieldwork phase, sampling, translations, data collection and recording and any other such issues. It addresses the methodological problems encountered throughout the study.

Chapter 5 presents the first important analysis of the data from fieldwork conducted as part of this study. The main function of this chapter is to develop an understanding of social reintegration and provide a foundation from which it is possible to appreciate the impact social reintegration may have on the restoration of social capital and reconciliation. The chapter is divided into two main parts: the first part looks at the experiences of reintegrating former combatants following their demobilisation. In other words, the difficulties they face after their guns are first removed. The second section looks at the ability of former combatants to effectively function in their 'new' civilian environment, and whether society is willing to accept and accommodate them. The chapter is subdivided into identity transformation: power and status; access to security, status, identity and the construction of self; evaluating the emotional well-being of former combatants and how reintegration is considered to be successful or failure.

Building on the analysis in the previous chapter, chapters 6 and 7 assess the implications social capital has on reconciliation and reintegration in relation to cohabitation. The chapters argue that for any social reconciliation to be meaningful there has to be first the establishment of cooperation and the willingness of former enemies to coexist and to be ready and willing to work towards developing their community. Without these, it will be difficult for sustainable peace to take hold. Where former combatants get involved in community activities positively, they may well serve as role models for the rest of the community into which they are reintegrated. The chapters highlight the role of the macro and meso elements of former combatant's reintegration in the ability of such reintegration in promoting reconciliation and reciprocity. They conclude that with increase in the restoration of social capital also comes increase in reconciliation, especially at local level, and that cohabiting promotes the regeneration of bridges and bonds that is composed of social capital. The two chapters are particularly important as they indicate how the social reintegration of former

combatants can have positive implication for reintegration and reconciliation, and thus underline the potential of this thesis of going some way to fill the identified knowledge gap.

Having detailed how former combatants successfully socially reintegrate in chapters 5, 6 and 7 the impacts this has on reconciliation and reintegration, the last section of the thesis seeks to provide a comprehensive conclusion. The first part of the conclusion draws together the argument running through the thesis and, relating the results back to the theories discussed in the literature review chapters and the theoretical framework (chapters 1- 3), provides an answer to the research question. The second part of the conclusion identifies potential future research areas arising from this investigation.

## **0.7. Concluding Remarks**

Social reintegration, reconciliation and cohabitation all offer different lens through which post-conflict peace-building effort can be observed following the termination of civil-conflict. Rather than seeing them as short-term approaches, the pursuit of reconciliation and reintegration are represented as the wider goals of conflict transformation and peacebuilding with the aim of securing sustainable peace and development in a post-war setting. In the last few decades in particular, the nature of conflict has changed dramatically from interstate to intrastate, with a concurrent shift in the significant majority of war victims from armed personnel to civilians, who endure a high level of violence. Thus, the need for reconciliation and reintegration have become greater with the changing nature of conflict. Instead of reconciliation and reintegration involving different states, it now involves many different identity groups within the same state. The challenges of reconciliation and reintegration have thus become more intense, and more difficult to achieve. This has led to dramatic increase in forced migration of people and the devastation of social structures. Sierra Leone was no exception.

One of the ways through which we can augment our understanding of today's conflict resolution is to engage in an in-depth conflict analysis as it is only through a full comprehension of how the conflict emerged, i.e., what broke in society, that we are able to design and implement effective reintegration and reconciliation initiatives to help that broken society that is emerging from civil-conflict. In the process of achieving durable peace and development in the aftermath of conflict, we must approach reconciliation and reintegration of former combatants in a holistic way, acknowledging the multifaceted complexity of the

social phenomenon that surrounds peacebuilding process. Whilst trying to achieve durable peace in a post-conflict environment, it is imperative that the identity of former combatants is recognised in order to ascertain the most suitable response.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## The Political Economy and Post-Conflict Recovery in Sierra Leone

### Introduction

Recent post-conflict studies have focused on the economic dimension of conflict, suggesting that all conflicts require monetary capital.<sup>1</sup> Many studies on African conflicts - in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Angola, Mozambique, Uganda, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Central African Republic, and Sierra Leone - and more recently in South Sudan and elsewhere suggest that combatants are poorly disciplined and poorly paid; and that unsurprisingly, much of the fighting is funded through loot and commercial opportunisms.<sup>2</sup> Before making an enquiry into the political economy of the conflict and the post-conflict recovery in Sierra Leone, and how it impacts on post-war reintegration and reconciliation, the main events to the conflict and the principal parties involved in it will be briefly discussed and analysed first.

### 1.1 Background: The Outbreak of the Conflict

The Republic of Sierra Leone is a constitutional Republic on the West Coast of Africa with a total land mass of almost 28,000 square kilometres, and has a total population of seven million people.<sup>3</sup> It is rich in natural resources such as diamond, rutile, bauxite, gold, iron ore and limonite. Founded by a group of British philanthropists in 1789 as a haven for freed African slaves, (hence the name of the capital, 'Freetown'), Sierra Leone boasts of being one of the oldest modern polities in Africa. At the time of independence in 1961 under the Sierra Leone's Peoples Party (SLPP) Government led by Sir Milton Margai, Sierra Leone had inherited as its legacy a Westminster-style parliamentary democracy that was the envy of the Sub-region. This was especially the case after the general elections of 1967 constitutionally handed the reins of government over to the opposition All Peoples' Congress (APC), led by Siaka Probyn Stevens.

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<sup>1</sup> Berdal, M, and Malone, D. (2001) *Greed and Grievance, Economic Agendas in Civil-Wars*. Boulder: Lynne Renner.

<sup>2</sup> Le Billon, P. (2000) *The Political Economy of War: What Relief Agencies need to Know*. Humanitarian Practice Network, paper 33. London: Overseas Development Institute.

<sup>3</sup> Recent official census in Sierra Leone indicates that the country's population grew from 4,976,871 in 2004 to 7,075,641 in 2015, with an average annual growth rate of 3.2 percent.

However, like all-too-many African leaders of his generation, Stevens was more interested in consolidating his personal power than in state-building effort. Stevens set about turning Sierra Leone's parliamentary democracy into a centralised presidential republic and, by 1978, he completed the country's transformation into a one-party state when a farcical referendum made his machine the only legal political organisation. Perhaps even worse than what Stevens did to the political system of Sierra Leone was what he did - or, as the case may be, failed to do - with the country's economy. Upon assuming office, Michael Chege notes that Stevens inherited a sound, economy based on diamond and iron mining as well as agriculture, mainly coffee and cocoa production that expanded between 1965 and 1973 at the respectable, annual rate of 4 percent against an annual population growth rate of 1.9 percent.<sup>4</sup> However, the 1973 global oil crisis and financial meltdown coincided with a decline in diamond and iron ore prices, creating a deficit in the country's international balance of payments. The conventional response to such an economic downturn would have been to cut public spending and devalue the national currency in the short term and, over time, attempt to diversify exports. But, as Chege points out, the Stevens regime did the opposite, opting to finance the deficit by borrowing from the central bank - effectively, printing more money - as well as from international governmental and commercial institutions and extending state control of the economy.<sup>5</sup> Not surprisingly, the country experienced high inflation, averaging 50 percent per annum in the 1980s where it had been 2.1 percent between 1965 and 1973.<sup>6</sup>

Dwindling revenues, compounded by institutionalised corruption and profligate spending on nonessential 'prestige state projects,' accelerated the sharp economic decline. In the words of Paul Richards, Sierra Leone under the Stevens regime went from being a nation of democratic governance and economic prosperity to being the exemplar of Africa's post-colonial 'neo-patrimonial' malaise, whereby national resources were distributed as 'marks of personal favour to party supporters and followers who respond with loyalty to the leader instead of the institution that the leader represents'.<sup>7</sup> This was particularly evident in the country's diamond industry. As John Hirsch points out, before the APC took over governance in the country, the diamond trade constituted one-third of national output and contributed

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<sup>4</sup> Chege, M. (2002) "Sierra Leone: The State that Came Back from the Dead." *Washington Quarterly*, Vol. 25, No. 3, pp. 147-160.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Richards, P. (2002) *Fighting for the Rain Forest: War, Youth and Resources in Sierra Leone*. Oxford: James Currey, p.34.

over 70 percent of the country's foreign exchange reserves.<sup>8</sup> By the mid -1980s, less than US\$100,000 worth of the diamonds passed through legal, taxable channels. Large amount of the country's diamond was misappropriated by Stevens and his associates, who also embezzled profits and other assets from various state enterprises, including the oil and rice monopolies.<sup>9</sup>

Having looted an estimated US\$500 million and leaving a balance of barely US\$196,000 in foreign reserves in the Bank of Sierra Leone upon his retirement from office in 1985,<sup>10</sup> Stevens appointed Major General Joseph Saidu Momoh as his successor.<sup>11</sup> Unfortunately for Sierra Leone, Momoh's presidency proved to be more corrupt than his predecessor.

However, the future of the country was thrown into disarray on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1991, when an armed group of non-state combatants, the RUF, under the leadership of Foday Saybana Sankoh,<sup>12</sup> crossed into eastern Sierra Leone from Liberia seeking to topple the one-party government of President Joseph Saidu Momoh of the APC.<sup>13</sup> Directed by few politicians and others who had grievances against those in power, Sierra Leone was driven into eleven years of devastating and brutal conflict between 1991 and 2002. Foday Sankoh, the RUF leader was a former political dissident,<sup>14</sup> who in the 1970s and 80s had spent time in exile in Libya, where he came under the influence of the late Libyan leader, Muammar al-Qaddafi. While in Libya, Sankoh also met Charles Taylor, who he would later join in Liberia to launch a cross-border armed invasion into Sierra Leone.<sup>15</sup> Taylor and Sankoh founded the RUF, which on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March 1991 began carrying out attacks on towns along the country's south-eastern

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<sup>8</sup> Hirsch. J., L. (2001) *Sierra Leone: Diamonds and the Struggle for Democracy*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.

<sup>9</sup> Hayward, F. (1989) 'State Consolidation, Fragmentation, and Decay,' In Donal Cruise O'Brien, John Dunn, and Richard Rathbone (eds.), *Contemporary African States*, 2nd ed. New York: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>10</sup> Pham, J., P. (2005) *Child Soldiers, Adult Interests: The Global Dimensions of the Sierra Leonean Tragedy*. New York: Nova Science Publishers.

<sup>11</sup> In October that year, instead of presidential election, a referendum to confirm the presidential candidate Joseph Momoh was held. The country was a one-party state under the APC, and only one candidate from the ruling party was allowed to contest. Momoh's candidacy was approved by 99.85% of the votes.

<sup>12</sup> Keen, D. (2005) *Conflict and Collusion in Sierra Leone*. Oxford: James Currey.

<sup>13</sup> The conflict in Sierra Leone was supported by Charles Taylor of Liberia, because the Momoh regime in Sierra Leone had supported ECOMOG's operation against his forces. Taylor was therefore determined to destabilise Sierra Leone and also to gain access to its diamond deposits.

<sup>14</sup> Foday Sankoh was a former corporal in the Republic of Sierra Leone Military Forces (RSLMF), and a television cameraman who was briefly imprisoned for his firebrand politicking in Sierra Leone. Sankoh later joined a group of exiles in Libya, where Muammar Gadhafi was eagerly spreading his crackpot revolutionary ideas among West African dissidents.

<sup>15</sup> Charles Taylor later would become president of the Republic of Liberia following eight-years of civil-war. Taylor is currently serving 50 years imprisonment in the UK for his involvement in the civil-war in Sierra Leone.



border with Liberia. Within a short period of time, the RUF had taken control of a sizeable region of the south and eastern parts of the country, and was on track to overthrow the APC government that had been in power for nearly three decades.<sup>16</sup>

In April 1992, a small military group, led by Captain Valentine Strasser, unconnected to the RUF movement, which later became the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC), deposed the country's president, Joseph Saidu Momoh, who has been in power since 1985. The RUF continued its campaign against the new military regime, committing atrocities against civilians across the country, and thousands fled to neighbouring countries, including the Republic of Guinea. By 1994, the RUF had systematically eliminated many rural workers in the country's diamond mining areas of Tongo and Kono in the east. By then, the strength of the national army was dwindling because of its clumsy handling by the APC government and the RUF successfully continued to exploit many of the diamond mines to fund its campaign.<sup>17</sup>

By mid-1995, the RUF had commandeered nearly all the country's economic resources, including the rutile mines in the south of the country. With several thousands in its ranks, the RUF moved within few miles of Freetown, the country's capital city. Until this stage, what remained remarkable was that the civilian population, as well as the international community did not fully understand the motives of the RUF,<sup>18</sup> as was the case with the identity of Foday Sankoh, the movement's leader. The movement's manifesto produced in early 1995, 'Footpaths to Democracy: Toward a New Sierra Leone,'<sup>19</sup> gave the civilian population, and indeed the international community their first insight into the movement's aims, objectives and goals.<sup>20</sup> The manifesto decried the country's 'state sponsored poverty and human degradation' created by 'decades of autocratic rule and militarism', and claimed that the RUF's goal of creating 'equal opportunity and access to power to create wealth' through armed struggle was important, and therefore remained the only option for the people of Sierra Leone.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> Venter A., J. (1996) Sierra Leone's Mercenary War, Battle for the Diamond Fields, *International Defence Review*, Vol. 11, No. 96, pp. 65 - 70.

<sup>17</sup> Adebajo, A. and Rashid, I. (2004) *West Africa's Security Challenges: Building Peace in a Troubled Region*.

<sup>18</sup> Ganda, A. (1998) 'The Degradation of Sierra Leone' *Focus on Sierra Leone*, Vol. 3, No. 1, pp. 1 - 5.

<sup>19</sup> Revolutionary United Front, *Footpaths to Democracy: Toward a New Sierra Leone*. Document Available on line at: [fas.org/irp/world/para/docs/footpaths.htm](http://fas.org/irp/world/para/docs/footpaths.htm). Document Accessed on line on 23/10/2015.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

With the RUF literally knocking on the doors of Freetown by mid-1995, the NPRC military regime hired the private military company, Executive Outcome (EO),<sup>22</sup> to help in its fight against the advancing RUF forces. A South African mercenary firm, EO had once assisted the Angolan Government in its fight against the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola (UNITA) rebels. EO troops first arrived in Sierra Leone in May 1995, and within days, they had repelled the threat posed by the RUF forces especially from around Freetown. In a short period of time, they had regained control of the diamond mines in Kono and Tongo. EO continued its assault on the RUF, and by 1996, the RUF was weakening and called for a cease-fire.

The NPRC government was under pressure from the international community, regional organisations such as the Organisation of African Unity (OAU) now African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), civil society organisations as well as the civilian population to conduct elections and to hand over power to democratically elected civilian government. The election in February 1996 brought Ahmed Tejan Kabbah of the SLPP to power.<sup>23</sup> Early that year, the contract with EO ended; Kabbah distrusted the national army; security vacuum was created; the RUF advances continued and Kabbah's stay in power was short-lived. In May 1997, there was an army mutiny by The Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) led by Major Jonny Paul Koroma, and Kabbah was forced into exile in neighbouring Guinea. With little prospect of any regional and international recognition, the AFRC allied itself with its old enemy, the RUF whom it had fought since March 1991.

The AFRC regime was unreliable, ruthless and inherently unstable. With pressure from regional and international organisations such as the AU and the United Nations to restore back to power the democratically elected government of Tejan Kabbah, the Nigerian-led ECOMOG forces launched an attack to drive the AFRC junta out of Freetown in February 1998. Although the ECOMOG contingent succeeded in its mission, it however struggled in mopping up the AFRC/RUF remnants from the bushes around the capital, Freetown. One of the reasons for the struggle was because most ECOMOG commanders were more engaged in

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<sup>22</sup> The Executive Outcome was a private military contractor which offered 'Security management' and operated during the 1990s across Africa. Its military advisers and personnel were largely drawn from the South African Civil Cooperation Bureau.

<sup>23</sup> The SLPP, which Tejan Kabbah represented has not been in governance for nearly three decades.

diamond mining,<sup>24</sup> a confirmation of Berdal and Malone's argument that 'all conflicts are underpinned by economic motives'.<sup>25</sup> However, the final removal of the AFRC/RUF forces from around Freetown by ECOMOG forces paved the way for the return of the Tejan Kabbah regime. On 17<sup>th</sup> October 1998, the restored civilian government of Tejan Kabbah executed twenty-three former national army officers for what it called 'treasonable complicity in the AFRC coup', despite strong regional and international pleas for clemency. President Kabbah's term of office ended in November 2007, following the landslide victory of the opposition APC party, which brought Ernest Bai Koroma to power.

A UN backed Special Court for Sierra Leone set up in 2002 indicted five leading members of the RUF movement - Foday Sankoh, Issa Sesay, Sam Bockarie, Morris Kallon, and Augustine Gbow - for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and other serious violations of international humanitarian law. Sankoh and Bockarie died before their trials; Sesay, Kallon and Gbow were tried together, and in February 2009, they were found guilty and are currently serving their prison terms in Rwanda.

## **1.2 The Political Economy and Reintegration in Sierra Leone**

Eleven years of violence in Sierra Leone significantly affected economic, political, social, cultural and psychological aspects of the Sierra Leonean society. This section presents an overview of post-conflict development strategies in Sierra Leone and compares it with the pre-war economy from a political economic perspective.

Following the end of the conflict in 2002, the Government of Sierra Leone has pursued rapid economic development as the answer to reintegration and post-conflict development strategy, although the conflict was mainly due to issues of social inequality, bad governance, and corruption. During the eleven years of civil-war, Sierra Leone was one of the least developed countries in the world, with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of around 1.9 billion US dollar. Since the end of the conflict in 2002, the economy is gradually recovering with a GDP growth rate of between 4 and 7 percent per year between 2004 and 2009, which increased to

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<sup>24</sup> Keen, D. (2005) *Conflict and Collusion in Sierra Leone*. London: James Currey.

<sup>25</sup> Berdal, M. and Malone, D. (2001) *Greed and Grievance, Economic Agendas in Civil Wars*. Boulder: Lynne Renner.

20.1 percent in 2013, one of the highest in the world.<sup>26</sup> Economic growth has mostly been driven by an increase in iron ore production resulting from the ramping up of mining operations at the Marampa and the Tonkolili Mines and the improved performance of the agriculture, private sector, construction, and service sectors. Before the outbreak of Ebola in 2014, nominal GDP was estimated to be \$4.9 billion.<sup>27</sup>

However, the outbreak of Ebola in 2014 and global lower commodity prices have had adverse fiscal effects on the country's economy leading to falling revenues, increased Ebola-related spending and widening deficits. The deficits in 2015 was estimated at 4.8 percent. The recent World Bank's report suggests that Sierra Leone's GDP in 2015 was estimated to have contracted by -21.5 percent.<sup>28</sup> This was mainly due to the shutdown of iron ore operations and a nascent recovery in non-iron ore GDP led by agriculture and buoyed by a partial resumption in services especially construction, including the resumption of donor financed capital projects. The recovery process has been slow in 2017/18 with a projected 0.1 percent growth per year.

### **1.2.1 Post-Conflict Recovery and Development Plan**

During the civil war, human lives, infrastructures and public institutions were badly destroyed and more importantly the psychological trauma among former combatants and the civilian population has been immeasurable, especially in the rural areas of Sierra Leone. At the same time, road transport network was annihilated. The destruction of assets, social fabric, family structures, financial markets and the migration of people negatively impacted the daily lives and the livelihoods of the population, especially in the rural areas. However, following the end of the conflict, the Government of Sierra Leone highlights resettlement of displaced persons within five years, and gradually closing down all displaced camps around the country.

It is important to point out that the post-war situation helped Sierra Leone to achieve moderate economic growth despite the global recession that began in 2008 and the recent

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<sup>26</sup> World Bank (2016) 2014-2015 West Africa Ebola Crisis: Impact Update. Document Available on line at: [www.worldbank.org/.../macroeconomics/.../2014-2015-west-africa-ebola-crisis-impac](http://www.worldbank.org/.../macroeconomics/.../2014-2015-west-africa-ebola-crisis-impac). Document Accessed on line on; 16/08/16.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Bermudez-Lugo, O. (2015) The Mineral Industry of Sierra Leone. United States Department of the Interior Geological Survey. Document Available on line at: [www.eisourcebook.org/cms/.../Sierra%20Leone%20Minerals%20Yearbook%202013](http://www.eisourcebook.org/cms/.../Sierra%20Leone%20Minerals%20Yearbook%202013). Document Accessed on line on; 22/10/16.

Ebola outbreak in 2014. However, after ending the conflict in 2002, economic growth rose significantly reflecting a peace dividend.

Although government authorities dominate the post-war recovery efforts, United Nations Development programme (UNDP), DfID, World Bank, African Development Bank, World Food Programme (WFP), United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and bilateral donors were engaged directly and through nongovernmental and civil society organisations in the country, none-state actors extended their support to the government's post-war recovery plans.

At a glance the Government of Sierra Leone made significant strides in post-war recovery, rehabilitation, resettlement and reintegration. However, upon close examination there are flagrant political economic issues that undermine post-war recovery and development in the country. The absence of war, huge investment on infrastructure, immense spending on establishing the country's image with foreign lobbying groups after 2002 has not succeeded in delivering stable economic growth. At the same time, performance of household income and income disparities are also weak in post-war Sierra Leonean society. These indicate that Sierra Leone has not fully reaped the post-war dividend.

### **1.2.2 Obstacles Facing Post-Conflict Achievements in Sierra Leone**

As pointed out earlier, post-conflict achievements in Sierra Leone have been thwarted by various factors; among them, the impact of colonialism on development, the domestic politics in the immediate post-colonial era and what has generally been referred to by many as 'diamond politics'.

#### ***The Implications of Colonialism for Post-war Sierra Leone***

This section traces the flawed polity Sierra Leone inherited from the British colonial rule, the steady institutional decline of the postcolonial state, and the subsequent impact it has had on post-conflict political and economic development. The colonial history of Sierra Leone set a distinctive pattern to which the country's socio-economic and political culture continue to cohere, where in the creation of a spatial and political divide along regional and tribal lines<sup>29</sup> - first between Western Area, occupied by the Creoles and the settler community, and the rest

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<sup>29</sup> Michalopoulos, S, and Papaioannou, E. (2011) Divide and Rule or the Rule of the Divided? Evidence from Africa. *National Bureau of Economic Research*. Document Available on Line at: [www.dartmouth.edu/~elias/Michalopoulos\\_Papaioannou.pdf](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~elias/Michalopoulos_Papaioannou.pdf). Document Accessed on line on 09/02/17.

of the country i.e., the protectorate occupied by the three modern provinces (south, east and northern provinces). This divide later shifted to be divided between Mendes of southeast and Temnes of the north and northwest, which has continued to affect the socio-political divides even in post-conflict Sierra Leonean society today.

Sierra Leone is today made up of seventeen tribes, but Mende and Temne together make up around 60 percent of the present day population.<sup>30</sup> Although these two tribes have influence over small tribes, the Limba - the third largest tribe in the country have traditionally coordinated with the Temnes.<sup>31</sup> Since independence, the Limbas have also been influential in national politics, as three of the former leaders: Siaka Stevens (1968 - 1985), Joseph Saidu Momoh (1985 - 1992) and Jonny Paul Koroma (May 1997 - February 1998),<sup>32</sup> were all from the Limba tribe. However, as Kandeh reminds us, the Creoles of Freetown, although in their minority, were the dominant tribe, and were more politically active than many other ethnic groups in the country.<sup>33</sup> But why were the Creoles so dominant and influential in terms of the immediate post-colonial politics? Various reasons have been advanced by scholars. Firstly, the Creoles were regarded as the 'elites' as they were the most educated set of people in Sierra Leone, and because of their closeness to the colonial administration, and for this reason, they were appointed to high-ranking positions therein. As Fyfe discusses, the appointment of Creoles to high-ranking positions was also because of their knowledge of the English language, their allegiance to Christianity, their successful trading activities as well as their ownership of land in and around the Freetown peninsula before and during the colonial era.<sup>34</sup> However, the ambition of the Creoles and the 'new' settler community of any self-rule during the nineteenth Century were hindered due, in part to the competitive nature of Europeans and Syrian traders, who almost entirely took over trade from them, and thus ruined them economically.<sup>35</sup>

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<sup>30</sup> Jackson, P. (2006) 'Reshuffling an Old Deck of Cards? The Politics of Local Government Reform in Sierra Leone,' *African Affairs*, Vol. 106, No. 422, pp. 95 - 111.

<sup>31</sup> Bangura, Y. (2000) 'Policy Failure and Governance in Sierra Leone,' *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 38, No. 4, pp. 551 - 577.

<sup>32</sup> Major Johnny Paul Koroma was the leader of AFRC, the military junta that ruled Sierra Leone from May 1997 to February 1998 after the Sierra Leone army overthrew the democratically elected government of Ahmed Tejan Kabbah. The Sierra Leone army which Koroma was part of teamed up with the RUF rebels, whom they had fought against for six years earlier.

<sup>33</sup> Kandeh, J., D. (1992) 'Politicisation of Ethnic Identities in Sierra Leone,' *African Studies Association*, Vol. 35, No. 1, pp. 81 -99.

<sup>34</sup> Fyfe, C. (1964) *Sierra Leone inheritance*: West African history series, p. 295.

<sup>35</sup> *Ibid*, p. 96.

Although the British established Freetown in early 1787 to serve as a settlement for freed slaves, who later became known as the Creoles, it was a century later before the wider hinterland could become a British protectorate.<sup>36</sup> Since then, there was an emergence of tension between the Creoles of Freetown, who saw themselves as direct British subjects, and the indigenous peoples of the hinterland, whom the Creoles saw as 'ordinary natives' or local people.<sup>37</sup> Prior to the arrival of the settler community, there were already indigenous people living along the Freetown peninsula, but these indigenous people were ignored and excluded by the settler community. This differentiation and segregation of ethnic and tribal groups during this period formed a platform for 'divide and rule',<sup>38</sup> and for the future ethno-politicisation of the state of Sierra Leone, as different tribes lived in close proximity. One of the factors that created tension between the settler community and the rest of the indigenous people was that the settler community enjoyed the influence of direct rule from the colonial administration, while the combine natives of the hinterland were subjected to indirect rule and what the TRC describes as 'mediated hegemony and judicial practices'.<sup>39</sup>

By the 1920s, there was increased tension between the Creoles and the natives. Although this was a kind of politicisation of ethnicity by the colonial administration, the chiefs and tribal leaders in the interior were also privileged in one way or the other. As the tension between the Creoles and the natives grew, it developed into what Kandeh describes as 'class domination to ethno-political dynamics'.<sup>40</sup> By 1924, the colonial administration in Freetown had appointed three paramount chiefs to the colonial administration in Freetown, which gave the natives of the hinterland some form of acknowledgement for the first time in history, but the Creole domination remained significant. By 1945, the colonial administration opened various industries in the interior, which increased development as well as sense of entitlement

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<sup>36</sup> Porter, A., T. (1963) *Creoledom: A Study of the Development of Freetown Society*. London: Oxford University Press.

<sup>37</sup> Kup (1975) note that the hinterland enclosed a number of ethnic groups, chief among them the Mendes and the Temnes; the two largest tribal or ethnic groups in Sierra Leone today. It is also noted that the hinterland- the Mende land in particular (South and east) provided substantial mineral deposits and agricultural resources. Thus, the hinterland was considered by the colonisers as 'significant' for development. For more on this, see Lewis, R. (1954) *Sierra Leone: A Modern Portrait*. (Corona Library Series) London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, pp. 207- 208.

<sup>38</sup> Jusu-Sheriff, Y. (2000) *Sierra Leonean Women and the Peace Process*. London: Conciliation Resources.

<sup>39</sup> Truth and Reconciliation Commission ((TRC 2004: Vol. 2, Chapter 1, pp. 11 - 12)) defines mediated hegemony as the co-option of protectorate elites in the form of bribes and other favours for the control of their population. According to TRC, these two separate legal systems survived for so long and have spilled over into the post conflict peace-building and reconstruction processes, making the reform of the judicial reform in particular even more problematic and complicated.

<sup>40</sup> Kandeh, J., D. (1992) 'Politicisation of Ethnic Identities in Sierra Leone,' *African Studies Association*, pp. 81 -99.

to the natives in the hinterland. By then, formal education has also increased in the interior. However, according to Porter,<sup>41</sup> the natives of the hinterland, at this stage emerged to challenge the superiority of the Creoles for the first time in history, and by 1951, the newly drafted constitution of Sierra Leone gave the natives new opportunity to challenge the power structures dominated by the Creoles in the past.

As independence approached in 1961, the relationship between the settler community and the protectorate, and within the protectorate itself between the Mendes of southeast and Temnes in the north, became subject to various political manipulations by politicians. The cleavages at this stage now operated at two different levels; the first level been the decline of Creole domination towards postcolonial era. The ‘educated’ creoles who initially occupied the socio-economic and political positions were still important. In addition to the reasons highlighted earlier, key nationalists who pioneered and played important roles for independence in Sierra Leone also came from the ranks of the Creoles. Therefore, they retained important positions in the immediate post-independent cabinet. But since they were small in number, they were immediately underscored and marginalised by the sharp decline of their influence in the civil service and other professional services including the judiciary. When for instance general elections were held on a one-man one-vote basis throughout the country, the Creoles lost representation in the legislative assembly. Another fundamental political divide was ethnicity and regionalism. While the Mendes from the southeast has always supported the SLPP, the Temnes and Limbas from the north are drawn to the APC.<sup>42</sup> This tribal and regional divide and the resultant political setup has continued to affect post-conflict political progress in modern Sierra Leone.

### ***Domestic Politics in the Immediate Post-Colonial Era***

As pointed out earlier, Sierra Leone achieved independence under the leadership of Sir Milton Margai of the SLPP, but the country only enjoyed relative ‘political peace’ from 1961 to 1964. After the sudden death of Sir Milton Margai in 1964, came the beginning of political disagreements and rivalry. It started with the political infighting within the ruling SLPP which had formed a coalition government with People’s National Party (PNP) to negotiate the political future in the immediate post independent era. This has been highlighted by many

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<sup>41</sup> Porter, A., T. (1963) *Creoledom: A Study of the Development of Freetown Society*, pp. 63 - 64.

<sup>42</sup> See Kandeh, J., D. (1992) ‘Politicisation of Ethnic Identities in Sierra Leone,’ *African Studies Association*, pp. 81 - 99.



post-colonial scholars such as Alie<sup>43</sup> as the beginning of the political cleavages in the country, which has continued to dictate the political destiny of Sierra Leone for the decades that followed.<sup>44</sup>

The sudden death of Sir Milton Margai created a power vacuum which needed to be filled immediately, and the decision to give the half-brother of Sir Milton Margai, Albert Margai the opportunity to succeed his late brother was not accepted by many within the ruling SLPP. Thus, the appointment of ‘another Margai’, according to Alie laid the foundation for political fragmentation between the north and the southeast.<sup>45</sup> John Karefa-Smart,<sup>46</sup> a northerner who was the next in rank was to be the one to succeed Sir Milton to complete the remaining term, but he was deprived of the opportunity. Hence, the northern tribes led by the Temnes rallied around Siaka Stevens, a northerner himself, a trade unionist and a charismatic politician, who ended up becoming the country’s leader. As discussed earlier, Stevens established a one-party dictatorship that ruled the country for seventeen years, killing many of his political opponents and imprisoning many more.<sup>47</sup>

Alie<sup>48</sup> has made the point that the institution of a highly centralised, corrupt, inefficient administrative system and the seventeen years of one-party dictatorship of Siaka Stevens in the 1970s and 1980s, effectively crumbled the fabric of the state, contracted its economic space and significantly reduced the government’s ability to generate enough revenue and adequate services for its citizens.<sup>49</sup> This forced most of the people, especially the youth to become disillusioned, and hence most of them migrated to mining towns of Kono and Tongo, and became ready recruits for any armed insurgency if they did not succeed in making quick money. Those who could not make it to the mining areas resorted to petty trading; some

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<sup>43</sup> Alie, J., A., D. (2006) *Sierra Leone since Independence: History of a Post-Colonial State*, Sierra Leone Writers Series.

<sup>44</sup> Rosenbaum, A. and Rojas, M., V. (1997) ‘Decentralisation, Local Governance and the Centre-Periphery conflict in Sierra Leone’ *Public Administration and development*, Vol.17, pp. 529 - 540.

<sup>45</sup> Alie, J., D. (2006) *Sierra Leone since Independence: History of a Post-Colonial State*, Sierra Leone Writers Series.

<sup>46</sup> John Karefa-Smart was a Sierra Leonean politician, a medical doctor and a University professor. He served as the first Foreign Minister of Sierra Leone under Prime Minister Milton Margai. He was also an ordained Elder of the United Methodist Church.

<sup>47</sup> See for example Koroma, A. (2011) Siaka Stevens, The Good, the Bad and the Ugly: How much did he Destroy Sierra Leone Politically and Economically? Document Available on Line at: [www.thisissierrealeone.com](http://www.thisissierrealeone.com) › Politics. Document Accessed on Line on 10/10/14.

<sup>48</sup> Alie, J., A., D. (2006) *Sierra Leone since Independence: History of a Post-Colonial State*, Sierra Leone Writers Series.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

became petty thieves while others became armed robbers - most of whom were to become area and regional commanders of the RUF movement during the war era.<sup>50</sup>

### ***Diamond Politics***

Sierra Leone's mineral wealth, especially diamonds, has served to distort the country's economy and politics, and also helped to fuel the conflict that lasted for over a decade, and hence the widely-acclaimed term 'Blood or conflict Diamonds'. In other words, Sierra Leone has suffered from a virulent form of the 'resource curse'.<sup>51</sup> Diamonds would appear to be a robust foundation upon which Sierra Leone could rebuild its post-conflict economy and derive state revenues for development as the price for diamonds on the world market appears to be relatively stable, unlike most other mineral resources. However, the ease with which Sierra Leone's alluvial diamond is mined, and exported has continually undermined the state's ability to direct diamond revenues through government channels. This has undermined the state's revenue base and foreign reserve, thereby impairing the state's ability to build government's capacity and deliver public goods and services.<sup>52</sup> The scale of the illicit mining and smuggling also helped to foster an informal 'shadow' economy, which ultimately overcame the formal economy.

William Reno gives a vivid scholarly account of the level of corruption in the diamond sector in the country. In his book entitled 'Corruption and the State Politics in Sierra Leone', Reno's assessment focuses particularly upon the ties between foreign firms and the political elites in Sierra Leone, where politicians use private networks that exploit relationships with international businesses to enrich themselves, and to extend their powers of patronage,<sup>53</sup> and in the process, however they undermine the state institutions. Reno goes on to suggest that as the post-colonial state is eroded, there is a return to what he describes as the "enclave economies and private armies" that characterised the pre-colonial and colonial arrangements between colonial administrators and some western businessmen and African political elites.<sup>54</sup>

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<sup>50</sup> Abdullah, I. (1998) Bush Path to Destruction: The Origin and Character of the Revolutionary United Front/Sierra Leone, *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 36, No. 2, pp. 203 - 235.

<sup>51</sup> Resource curse argument suggests that a state that is in possession of abundant and valuable mineral resources may result in poor governance and feckless economic behaviour by the elites. Sierra Leone is no exception.

<sup>52</sup> Wilson, S., A. (2013) Diamond Exploitation in Sierra Leone 1930 - 2010, *Geojournal*, Vol.78, pp. 997 - 1012.

<sup>53</sup> Reno, W. (2008) *Corruption and the State Politics in Sierra Leone*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Available on line at: [www.cambridge.org/.../politics...politics/corruption-and-state-politics-sier](http://www.cambridge.org/.../politics...politics/corruption-and-state-politics-sier). Accessed on line on 22/03/16.

<sup>54</sup> For further analysis on diamond politics, corruption and the shadow state in Sierra Leone, see the introduction chapter of this thesis.

The exploitation of diamond resources has been an important facet of Sierra Leone's political economy before and after independence, which helped fuel the decade long conflict. In other words, struggles over access, control and utilisation of diamond proceeds by various political elites have been evident for decades.<sup>55</sup> While the general influences of diamond exploitation by the elites was positive to some extent, a manifestation of resource blessing, was later transformed into a resource curse.<sup>56</sup> As I will discuss later in this present chapter, diamond wealth in Sierra Leone has always benefited politicians and foreigners the most. Diamond resources have therefore had very little tangible benefits for the local people and the nation as a whole despite increased export over time.<sup>57</sup>

According to Sierra Leone's government records for 2007/2008, a Lebanese diamond exporter, Hussein Makie exported the greatest amount of diamonds from Sierra Leone, with more than 269.499 carats, worth around US \$55 million, and Koidu Holdings exporting around 147.376 carats with an estimated value of around US\$28 million.<sup>58</sup> What is remarkable is that Hussein Makie, the main diamond exporter, and Beny Steinmetz, who own the largest share of Koidu Holdings, are regarded by many as crooked foreign investors engaged in the diamond business in Sierra Leone.<sup>59</sup> Whatever the final tax they paid to the government from the diamond trade, which has proved impossible to quantify by researchers and government alike, at least more than 75 percent of the proceeds did not go to the local communities, nor to the central government.<sup>60</sup>

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<sup>55</sup> Reno, W. (1995) *Corruption and State Politics in Sierra Leone*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>56</sup> In the context of this thesis, resource blessing means the prudent utilisation of diamond resources for socio-economic development at both local and national levels, while resource curse, on the other hand means negative paradoxical relationship between resources derived from diamond and socio-economic performance.

<sup>57</sup> Campaign for Just Mining Press Release (2008) Document Available on line at: <http://www.nmjd.org/press%20releases/CJM%20PRESS%20RELEASE%20MAY%202008.pdf>. Document Accessed on line on 17/10/2015.

<sup>58</sup> Graynberg, R., and Mbayi, L. (2015) *The Global Diamond Industry*. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

The table below shows the Sierra Leone's diamond export revenue flow between 1999 and 2008.

	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008
Value US \$000s	1.24 4.8	10.06 6.9	26.022 .5	41.732 .1	78.969 .8	126.652. 6	141.838, 6	125.304. 8	141.56 5.7	98.772 .2
Tax Revenue % US\$ 000	37.3	302.0	780.7	1.252. 0	2.279. 1	126.652. 6	4.255.0	3.759.1	4.247. 0	2.963. 2
Volume/Carats	9.32 0	77.37 2	222.52 1	351,85 9	506.72 3	668.636	603.566	603,566	603.62 3	371.26 1
US\$/Carats	<b>134</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>117</b>	<b>119</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>212</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>266</b>

Table 1

Source: Cubitt, P., C. (2012) *Local and Global Dynamics of Peace-building: Post-conflict Reconstruction in Sierra Leone*. New York: Routledge.

This section has advanced some of the factors that have impacted the post-conflict achievements in Sierra Leone; among them, the domestic politics in the immediate post-colonial era, and the “diamond politics” of Sierra Leone. The next section discusses the concept of good governance and the politics of macro-economic reform, and how they impacted the post-conflict political economy of Sierra Leone following the end of the conflict.

### 1.3.1 Good Governance as a Concept

The concept of good governance emphasises the continued implementation of sound political economic policies to attain macro-economic stability within a given system.<sup>61</sup> ‘Good governance’ (especially democratic governance) was a key component to the reintegration of former combatants in Sierra Leone when the conflict officially ended in 2002. It was also important for peace-building effort, because the civil-conflict was as a result of socio-economic and political breakdown, repression and dysfunctional governance system and the marginalisation of the youth population, (most of whom were to become rebels) for nearly three decades. Moreover, ‘democratic governance’ was necessary to absorb aid in order to

<sup>61</sup> GOVSL (2001) *Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*. Freetown: Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone. Document Available on line at: <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/scr/2008/cr08250.pdf>. Document Accessed on line on 10/10/2015.

promote and satisfy reintegration and development outcomes,<sup>62</sup> and the effort of rebuilding social capital.

Despite some improvement in terms of good governance, corruption remains a concern in Sierra Leone. Corruption is both the cause and the consequence of political turbulence, human rights abuses and under development. Corruption remains a challenge to post-war development and reconciliation effort. It is estimated that African countries lose as much as \$148 billion annually to corruption, amounting to approximately a quarter of their individual GDPs.<sup>63</sup> In Sierra Leone, like in many other African countries, corruption has been entrenched in post-war society, often through systems of patronage and nepotism.

The World Bank Worldwide Governance Indicators (WWGI) below are designed to indicate good governance and how it should operate. It includes among other things, political stability and the absence of violence; rule of law; voice and accountability; control of corruption; regulatory quality; and government effectiveness (not necessarily in order of importance). The figure also compares governance indicators for 1998, 2003 and 2008 in Sierra Leone.

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<sup>62</sup> Mani, R. and Krause, J. (2009) Democratic Governance. In: Chetail, V. (Ed.) *Post-Conflict Peace-Building: a lexicon*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>63</sup> Hilal, A., W. (2014) Constraints and Impediments of Good Governance in Africa: Future Prospect. *Afro Asian Journal of Social Sciences*, Vol. 5, No. 5, pp. 2229 - 5313.

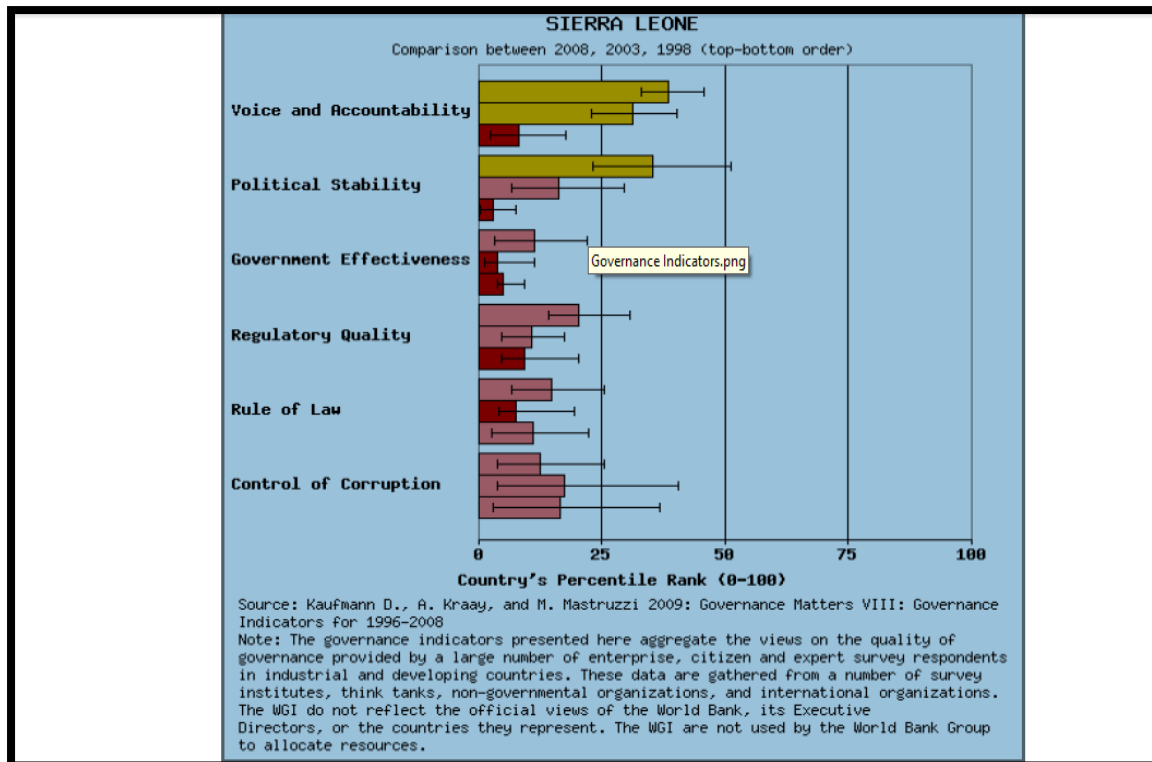


Figure 1, WWGI: 2008, 2003 and 1998.

The figure above indicates that within a period of ten years, Sierra Leone showed considerable improvement against two governance indicators. On the one hand, political stability in the country improved dramatically, partly because the violent conflict that has been going on since 1991 officially ended in 2002, followed by four free, fair, credible and peaceful local and national elections in 2002, 2004, 2007 and 2012. In addition, there has also not been any military coup in the country since 1997. The figure also shows that there was a significant improvement in 'voice and accountability' due, in part to the return of multi-party democracy after nearly three decades of one party dictatorship and intermittent military rule. Sierra Leone illustrates that, where the government and its people are ready to undertake reform programmes, significant improvements in governance can and do occur in a short period of time.

Figure two below also shows that between 1998 and 2009, various countries in different regions around the world, including Sierra Leone showed some improvements in governance, some of them starting from very low levels. In addition, there was also some form of transfer of political power from the central government to local governments in the form of decentralisation. Perhaps most importantly, a peaceful transfer of power from the ruling

SLPP to the main opposition APC following the 2007 Presidential and Parliamentary elections, the first in the history of Sierra Leone suggest major improvement in governance indicator in the country. In addition, there was some improvement in rule of law in comparison to the immediate post-conflict period. There was also a firm establishment and growing civil society institutions, as well as improved freedom of both broadcast and print media in Sierra Leone. One of the main areas of concerns however was corruption, in which there was a significant deterioration over the period under consideration.

Due to continued violence across the developing world, the IMF and the World Bank have defined what constitutes ‘good governance’, and further created a system of measures to monitor it.

The figure below shows selected countries with changes in the voice and accountability between 1998 and 2009 including Sierra Leone.

**Selected countries showing changes in Voice and Accountability, 1998-2009**

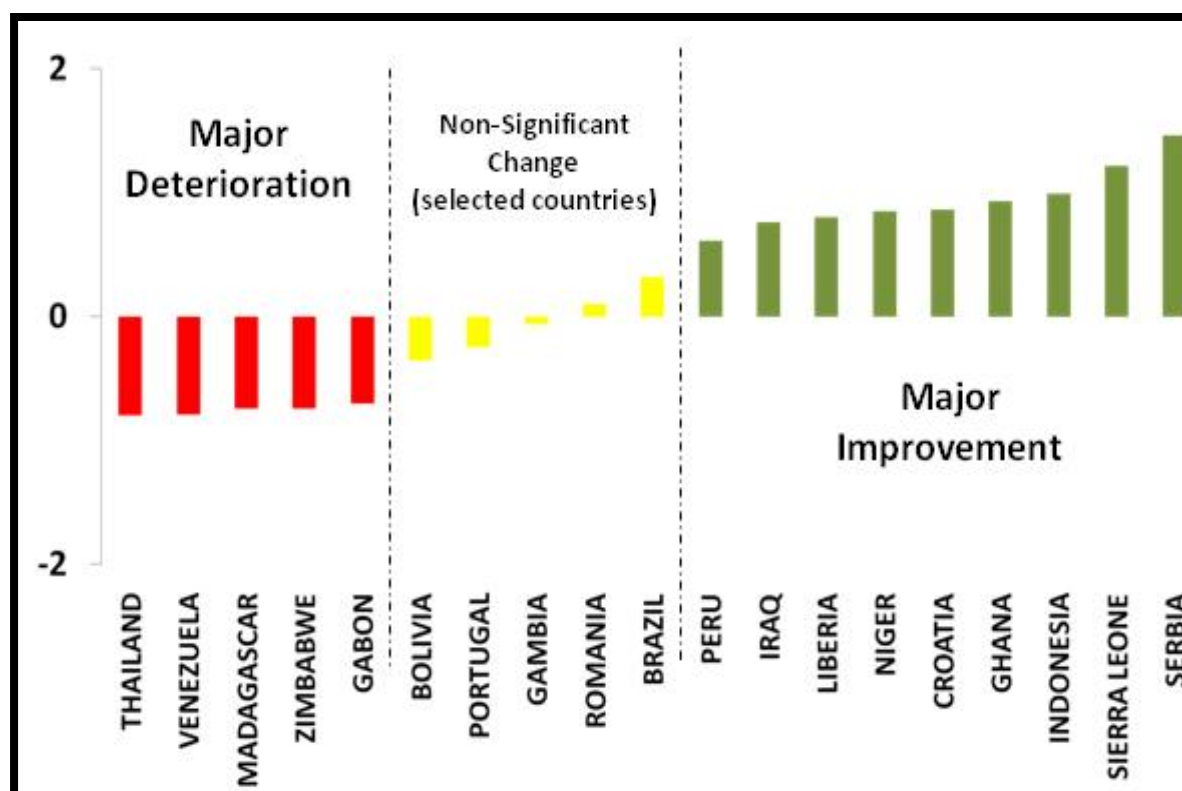


Figure 2 showing improvements in governance in Sierra Leone, 1998 - 2009

Source: Kaufmann, D. (2010) Governance Matters: Worldwide Governance Indicators Highlight Governance Successes, Reversals, and Failures.

But why was the WWGI developed or created by the International Financial Institutions in the first place? To start with, the International Financial Institutions made it clear that there was the need for ‘good governance’ in managing the state’s economy and for post-conflict economic recovery and stability, which directly have significant impact on the reintegration of former combatants following their demobilisation. Thus, the IMF and the World Bank made these conditionalities part of their policy when providing financial support, advice and other technical assistance for countries emerging from conflict. Although IFIs limited these conditions to economic aspect of governance, they argued that these conditions could lead to significant macro-economic impact in terms of performance indicators.<sup>64</sup> In fact, transparency and accountability became prerequisites for monitoring macro-economic reforms in post-conflict societies. Hence, the reintegration of former combatants back into society, general peace-building effort, anti-corruption, poverty alleviation and ‘good governance’ were equated to ‘rediscovering’ democracy and rebuilding social capital<sup>65</sup> that had disappeared in the country for over three decades and particularly during the conflict.

The figure below summarises programme resources to various sectors of society by percentage in Sierra Leone between 2002 and 2007. It further shows the political nature of aid to Sierra Leone by DFID, in which 41 percent (\$69 million) of the total DFID budget spent in Sierra Leone was directed to governance reforms.

Summary of programme resources to various sectors by percentage from 2002 - 2007

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<sup>64</sup> According to IMF report, the ‘IMF’s approach to promoting good governance and combating a guide’ (2005), there has been significant improvement in managing state resources in Sierra Leone following the end of the war. The report also indicates that there is an improvement in transparency and accountability, as well as stable economic regulation in the country, and that Sierra Leone was conducive to efficient private sector initiative. Further details on this are available on line at: <http://www.imf.org/external/np/gov/guide/eng/index.htm>.

<sup>65</sup> Abdellatif, A., M. (2003) *Good Governance and its Relationship to Democracy and Economic Development*. UNDP. Document Available on line at: <ftp://pogar.org/LocalUser/pogar/publications/governance/aa/goodgov.pdf>. Document Accessed on line on: 12/04/16.



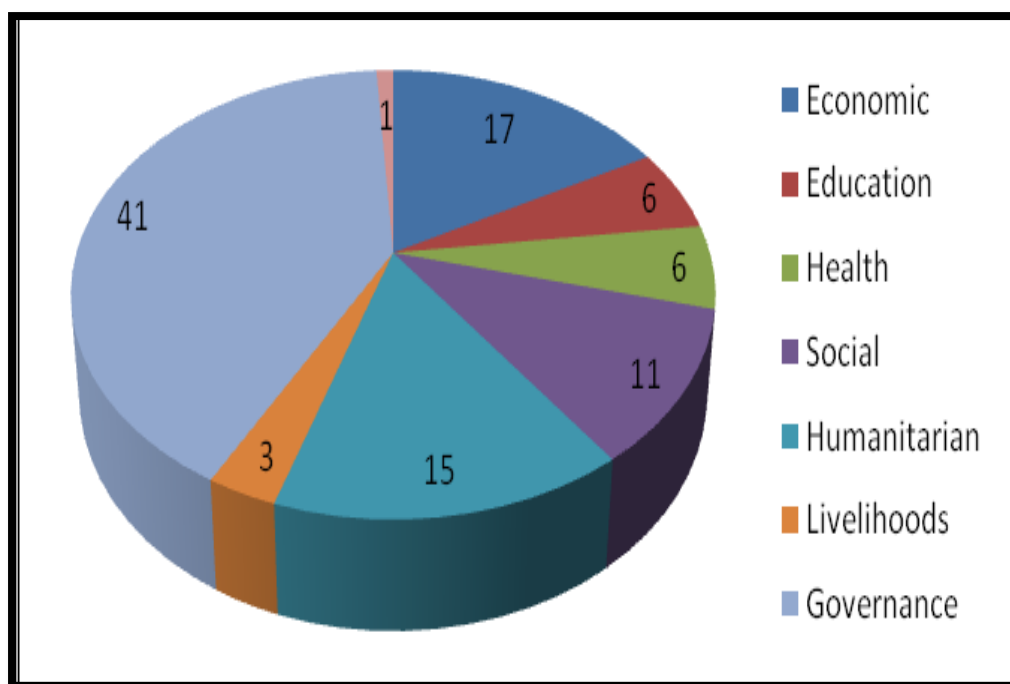


Figure 3: Sources of programme funding by sectors and by percentage in Sierra Leone between 2002 and 2007

Source: Poate, *et al* (2008) Evaluation of DfID country programme: Sierra Leone, OECD

### 1.3.2 The Politics of Macro-Economic Reform

‘For Sierra Leone to achieve long-term debt sustainability, it is of the utmost importance that the country achieves high and sustained growth through the maintenance of macro-economic stability, continued pursuit of structural reforms, ... prudent debt management policies and avoiding a new build-up in debt’.<sup>66</sup>

As in other post-conflict environments around the world, one of the issues that needed to be addressed following the end of the conflict in Sierra Leone in 2002 was the reform of the national economy to improve the management of the national economy through good governance and good leadership,<sup>67</sup> with the goal of creating employment facilities and extracting profits from national wealth for equitable distribution to the local populace.

For this reason, a loan of around US\$51 million was drafted for Sierra Leone through IMF’s post-conflict reconstruction programme, which was aimed at the rehabilitation and resettlement of former combatants, the rehabilitation of state infrastructure, the effective

<sup>66</sup> IMF/IDA (2002) *Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative Decision Point Document*. Washington: International Monetary Fund and International Development Association.

<sup>67</sup> Berewa, S., E. (2011) *A New Perspective on Governance, Leadership, Conflict and Nation Building in Sierra Leone*. Bloomington: AuthorHouse.

economic management and institutional capacity building.<sup>68</sup> In addition, the World Bank also loaned Sierra Leone around US\$250 million between 2000 and 2004 to deal exclusively with the rising post-conflict health issues, such as teenage pregnancy and HIV/AIDs.<sup>69</sup> Moreover, the Bank's loan was to target the rehabilitation of education sector, social action and institutional reform as well as to improve privatisation in the country. However, the conditionalities that came along with these loans were the reduction of government's role in the economy, to encourage the participation of the private sector in the economy and to increase the role of the private sector in the management of public enterprises.<sup>70</sup> These conditionalities were seen as the most prudent ways of delivering macro-economic reform for poverty reduction, economic stability and growth.<sup>71</sup>

Following a series of promises made by the National Revenue Services (NRS) together with the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) to the donor community, which of course were successful to some extent in terms of bringing about some positive changes in Sierra Leone's eligibility for Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) status,<sup>72</sup> there was some progress in attracting funds from the donor community for the reconstruction and reintegration processes. The IMF and the World Bank first launched the HIPC initiative in 1996, following an exclusive campaign and lobbying from various international institutions and INGOs. The initiative provides debt relief and low-interest loans to write off or to reduce external debt repayments to sustainable levels. This implies that HIPCs can repay debt in a timely fashion in the future.<sup>73</sup> To be eligible for the initiative, countries are expected to face an unsustainable debt burden that cannot be managed with traditional means of loan repayment. Eligibility is thus conditional on the national government of countries meeting a

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<sup>68</sup> Riddell, B. (2005) Sierra Leone: Urban-Elite Bias, Atrocity and Debt. *Review of African Political Economy*, pp. 120 - 122.

<sup>69</sup> Cheru, F. (2007) The Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative: Old Wine in a New Bottle? In: McGrew, A. and Poku, N., K. (Eds.) *Globalisation, development and human security*. Cambridge and Malden: Polity Press.

<sup>70</sup> IDA and World Bank (2005) *Country Assistance Strategy for the Republic of Sierra Leone for the period FY 2006 - 2009*. World Bank.

<sup>71</sup> DFID (2004) *Poverty Reduction Framework Arrangement between the GovUK and GovSL*. London: Department for International Development.

<sup>72</sup> IMF/IDA (2002) *Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative decision point document*. Washington: International Monetary Fund and International Development Association.

<sup>73</sup> Debt Relief Under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiatives: IMF Factsheet. Document Available on line at: [Factsheet: Debt Relief Under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries \(HIPC\) Initiative](#). Document Accessed on line on 28/01/2016.

range of economic management, socio-economic reform programmes as well as performance targets.<sup>74</sup>

At the termination of the conflict, there was great expectation of economic growth, following the reopening of the diamond fields in Kono, Tongo and other areas around the country; the reopening of rutile mines in Moyamba and Bonthe districts; the expansion of fishing industry; the recovery of agricultural activities in rural areas and the improvement of the service industry through construction programmes.<sup>75</sup> All of these together improved both private and public investments in the country. In addition, the government promised to commit itself to open, transparent economic and governance processes, good fiscal policy management, increased incentives for investment in the private sector and the creation of a social security system.<sup>76</sup>

Other assurances that were made by the Government of Sierra Leone to the donor community included the introduction of new trade policy, which was expected to reduce protectionism by the state and to facilitate greater privatisation to take place. These promises made by the government secured from the IMF and World Bank an estimated fund of around US\$ 21 million between 1999 and 2001 as an emergency fund, with the approval of further US\$169 million between 2002 and 2004. A further US\$ 46.3 million over a three-year period (2006 to 2008) was also released to the government,<sup>77</sup> all of which were to be implemented under the Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility (PRGF) initiative. The PRGF initiative released further funds totalling around US\$18.8 million in 2009/10. The three most important measures of macro-economic programme for stability include: 1.9 months import cover in reserves; reduce inflation to below five percent per year, and to achieve sustained economic growth of between 6 - 7 percent per year.

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<sup>74</sup> In November 2006, Sierra Leone reached HIPC completion point, and thus qualified for debt relief under the Tejan Kabbah-led SLPP government.

<sup>75</sup> GOVSL (2001) *Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper*. Freetown: Government of the Republic of Sierra Leone, pp.19 - 20.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid, pp.19 - 20.

<sup>77</sup> IMF/IDA (2008) *Enhanced Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC) Initiative Decision Point Document*. Washington: International Monetary Fund and International Development Association.

## **1.4 Concluding Remarks**

This chapter has examined the economic dimensions of the Sierra Leone's post-conflict recovery in relation to the reintegration of former combatants. It has argued that the fundamental factors of the conflict and its poor socio-economic recovery are historical, including post-colonial and what many call diamond politics. Attention is drawn to the role played by personalised rule of the APC leadership, as well as structural factors such as deteriorating terms of diamond trade and the irrationality of post-colonial development strategy. Attention is also drawn to the structural adjustment programmes, which were implemented by the World Bank and the IMF that resulted in creating a group of socially excluded young men and women, who could not find employment opportunities either within the state or private sector.

In the light of Sierra Leone's unfortunate past, the prospect of the country's present and its future political economy, driven by mineral resources raises understandable apprehensions over the capacity of government and the elites to obtain the best deals for the country, and to utilize revenues in an accountable and transparent way. But it also generates significant optimism that there is a real opportunity to propel Sierra Leone forward in terms of development and poverty reduction. Clearly, there is a need at this stage for a detailed institutional and political analysis of the extractives sector to support Sierra Leone's government and its citizens. There is also the need to show the country's international development partners that revenues are successfully managed and channelled into development and poverty reduction agendas. But how successful will this be depends on the ability of the country's current leadership.

The next chapter analyses the role of the Sierra Leone Special Court and the TRC, which were set up following the end of the conflict. It discusses the concept of retributive and restorative justice system in relation to post-conflict reintegration in the context of Sierra Leone. It then considers the importance of adopting each of these approaches in the justice environment in a post-war environment like Sierra Leone.

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## CHAPTER TWO

### Restorative Justice and Identity Transformation: A Critical Evaluation

#### Introduction

The civil-conflict in Sierra Leone began in March 1991, when members of the RUF crossed the boundary into Kailahun and Pujehun Districts in South-eastern Sierra Leone from Liberia. The conflict in Sierra Leone was the direct result of varied interactions between structural problems<sup>1</sup> in society, such as inequality, bad governance, repression and exploitation, which led to grievances<sup>2</sup> among citizens and, accordingly, led to the emergence of the rebel forces. Although diamonds seemingly played an important role in financing the civil-conflict once it started, diamonds more likely contributed to corrupting state institutions in the pre-war period,<sup>3</sup> thereby increasing grievance, rather than directly triggering the conflict itself. The problems of marginalised youth following the collapse of patrimonial society were also serious issues: without proper education and increased unemployment among the youth population in the country, many young people were left vulnerable to be easily recruited into the various armed movements.<sup>4</sup>

The eleven-years of civil-conflict in Sierra Leone formally ended in 2002, following the involvement of the international community, and the British military in particular to suppress the advances of the rebel forces. However, the conflict has not completely ended yet, because some features of brutality and viciousness in the conflict are still fresh in the minds of most citizens. The forced recruitment of child soldiers by the rebel forces<sup>5</sup> and the atrocities they inflicted upon the civilian population are the most frequently featured aspects of the conflict.

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<sup>1</sup> See for instance Galtung, J. (1996) *Peace by Peaceful means: Peace and Conflict Development and Civilization*. London: Sage Publications.

<sup>2</sup> Collier, P. and Hoeffler, A. (2000) Greed and Grievance in Civil War. World Bank Policy Research Working Paper No. 2355. *Centre for the Study of African Economies*. University of Oxford. Document Available on line at: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=630727>. Document Accessed on line on 01/01/16.

<sup>3</sup> Gberie, L. (2005) *A Dirty War in West Africa: The RUF and the Destruction of Sierra Leone*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

<sup>4</sup> Peters, K. (2011) *War and the Crisis of Youth in Sierra Leone*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>5</sup> Children and young adults faced some of the gravest abuses in Sierra Leone's civil-war. The RUF in particular targeted children for recruitment as child soldiers, forced labour, and sexual exploitation. See for instance Denov, M. (2010) *Child Soldiers: Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front*. Montreal: McGill University Press.



Indeed, many young Sierra Leoneans were conscripted into the conflict by the rebels as well as the government forces.<sup>6</sup>

Despite the gravity of crimes committed during the eleven-years of sustained violence, there has hardly been a critical analysis of transitional justice mechanisms, which were set up to investigate and address crimes that were committed by various factions as well as individuals. This chapter analyses the internationally sponsored Special Court<sup>7</sup> and the TRC that were set up following the end of the conflict. The chapter discusses the concept of retributive and restorative justice system in relation to post-conflict reintegration in Sierra Leone. It considers the importance of adopting each of these approaches in the justice environment following the end of the conflict. Given the high levels of crime committed during the conflict by all factions, including the RUF, and particularly of crime against humanity, it is likely that restorative justice will be seen by some as been 'soft on criminals' and criminal organisations. In an effort to illustrate the benefits of alternative approaches to wrong doing, the chapter sets out the arguments for and against retributive and restorative justice system.

## **2.1 Restorative justice and the TRC**

Following the end of the conflict in Sierra Leone, two transitional justice mechanisms were set up to investigate and address crimes that were committed by various factions, as well as individuals: The internationally sponsored Special Court and TRC. The Special Court was charged with the responsibility to adjudicate the cases of those accused of bearing greatest responsibility for war crimes and crimes against humanity. It was the core institutional means of addressing impunity. The TRC, on the other hand was mandated to create 'an impartial, historical record of the conflict', 'address impunity; respond to the needs of victims; promote healing and reconciliation; and prevent a repetition of the violations and abuses suffered.'<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) 2004, Witness to Truth: Report to Sierra Leone Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Vol. 3B. Document Available on line at: <http://www.sierra-leone.org/Other-Conflict/TRCVolume3B.pdf> . Document Accessed on line on: 12/05/15.

<sup>7</sup> The Sierra Leone's Special Court was set up in 2002 at the request of Sierra Leone's Government to the UN to address serious crimes against civilians and UN peacekeepers committed during the civil-war. Negotiations between the Government of Sierra Leone and the UN on the mandate and structure of the court, produced the world's first "hybrid" international criminal tribunal, mandated to try those "bearing the greatest responsibility" for crimes committed in Sierra Leone after 30 November 1996, the date of the failed Abidjan Peace Accord. It was the first modern international tribunal to sit in the country where the crimes took place, and the first to have an effective outreach programme on the ground.

<sup>8</sup> See for instance Evenson, E. (2004) Truth and Justice in Sierra Leone: Coordination between Commission and Court. *Columbian Law Review Association*, Vol. 4, No. 3, pp. 730 -767.

Unlike its South African predecessor,<sup>9</sup> the Sierra Leone TRC had little authority to grant amnesty. In addition, it was smaller, with fewer staff and commissioners.

Within the present DDR environment, the traditional Western justice system of accountability for crimes committed promotes an adversarial, prosecutorial, retributive model of formal legal justice.<sup>10</sup> Retributive model is a system of justice which holds that the best response to a crime is a 'proportionate' punishment, inflected for its own sake rather than to serve an extrinsic social purpose, such as rehabilitation or deterrence of the offender. Those who believe in retributive model hold that when an offender breaks the law, justice requires that the offender suffers in return. Since the 1990s, the international community has pursued prosecutions of war crimes through *ad hoc* international criminal tribunals, such as the International Criminal Court (ICC).<sup>11</sup>

The literature contains various ideas about what restorative justice system actually is. It has been argued, for example that restorative justice is a kind of talking therapy,<sup>12</sup> and that it is a way of thinking and behaving in society.<sup>13</sup> Although there is no universally agreed definition of restorative justice, at least two ideas about its nature have been common since the end of the Cold War. One of the key ideas about restorative justice is that it is both a *theory* and a *process*. The following analyses are some of the places where restorative justice occur as a theory and as a process.

It is a theory of justice that emphasizes repairing the harm caused by criminal behaviour. Restoration means reinstating a right or making reparation or bringing back a practice, or a situation, which is best accomplished through cooperative processes that include all stakeholders'.<sup>14</sup> Restorative justice is proactive rather than reactive.<sup>15</sup> It deconstruct the idea

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<sup>9</sup> Priscilla, H. (2002) *Unspeakable Truths: Facing the Challenge of Truth Commissions*, pp. 40 - 45.

<sup>10</sup> Findlay, M. and Henham, R. (2005) *Transforming International Criminal Justice: Retributive and Restorative Justice in the Trial Process*. Uffculme: Willan Publishing.

<sup>11</sup> See for example Schiff, B., N. (2008) *Building the International Criminal Court*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>12</sup> Zedner, L. (2006) 'Punishment and the Plurality of Privacy Interests', in: Claes, E., Duff, A. and Gutwirth, S. (eds.). *Privacy and the Criminal Law*. Antwerpen: Intersentia, p. 171.

<sup>13</sup> Allena, T. (2004) 'Restorative Conferences: Developing Students Responsibility by Repairing the Harm to Victims and Restoring the University Community', in: Karp, D., R. and Allena, T. (eds.). *Restorative Justice on the College Campus: Promoting Student Growth and Responsibility and Reawakening the Spirit of Campus Community*. Illinois: Charles C. Thomas, p.57.

<sup>14</sup> Burkhead, M., D. (2009) *A Life for a Life: The American Debate Over the Death Penalty*. North Carolina: McFarland and Company, Inc., Publishers, p. 116.

of retribution by recognising the need for community healing; in such a way, as to evaluate the hurts in terms of the values of the socio-economic justice perspectives that community must adopt in order to obtain the best possibility of preventing future crime'.<sup>16</sup> It is a theory that believes that instead of society punishing criminals by putting them in prison for example, they [the criminals] should be given the chance to correct the wrong they have done. Once those who caused havoc have done this, they can be brought back into society. The victim plays important part in the process and may receive some type of restitution from the offender'.<sup>17</sup> It emphasises repairing the harm caused, which is best accomplished through inclusive and cooperative processes'.<sup>18</sup>

Understood as *a process*, on the other hand, restorative justice involves bringing together all the stakeholders (offenders, victims and community members) in pursuit of a justice that heals the hurt of wrongdoing, instead of responding to the hurt of the crime by using punishment to hurt the offender'.<sup>19</sup> It is regarded as a 'process to involve, to the extent possible, those who have a stake in a specific offense and to collectively identify and address harms, needs, and obligations, in order to heal and put things as right as possible'.<sup>20</sup> The most general meaning of restorative justice is that it is 'a process where stakeholders affected by an injustice have an opportunity to communicate about the consequences of the injustice and what is to be done to right the wrong'.<sup>21</sup> It involves a process whereby all the parties with a stake in a particular offence come together to resolve collectively how to deal with the aftermath of the offence and its implications for the future'.<sup>22</sup> This brings in the argument of the Sierra Leone TRC. As I will discuss later in the thesis, it usually takes the form of victim-offender mediation either through direct contact between the victim and the offender or indirect communication involving third parties.

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<sup>15</sup> Stamatakis, N., and Beken, T., V. (2010) 'Myths and Reality in the History of Restorative Justice', in: Cools, M. et al. (eds.). *Safety, Societal Problems and Citizen's Perceptions*. Antwerpen: Maklu, p. 289.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid, p. 289.

<sup>17</sup> Pressler, S., Saner, J., S. and Wasserfall, I. (2009) *Criminal Justice Structure and Mandates*. FET College Series, L3. Cape Town: Pearson Education South Africa. *Promotion of National Unity and Reconciliation Act*, No. 34 of 1995. *S v Makwanyane and Another* (CCT3/94) [1995] ZACC 3; 1995 (6) BCLR 665; 1995 (3) SA 391; [1996] 2 CHRLD 164; 1995 (2) SACR 1 (6 June 1995).

<sup>18</sup> Van Ness, D., W. (2005) 'An Overview of Restorative Justice Around the World'. Address Delivered at the *Eleventh United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice* in Bangkok, p.3.

<sup>19</sup> Dorpat, T., L. (2007) *Crimes of Punishment: America's Culture of Violence*. New York: Algora Publishing, pp. 236 - 7.

<sup>20</sup> Zehr, H. (2002) *The Little Book of Restorative Justice*. Intercourse: Good Books.

<sup>21</sup> Braithwaite, J. and Strang, H. (2002) 'Restorative Justice and Family Violence', in: Strang, H. and Braithwaite, J. (eds). *Restorative Justice and Family Violence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p.4.

<sup>22</sup> Marshall, T., F. (1999) *Restorative Justice: An Overview*. London: Home Office Research Development and Statistics Directorate, p. 5.

Currently, scholars who argue in favour of restorative justice promote the customary mechanisms, the TRC,<sup>23</sup> which focuses on rebuilding and restoring relationships at community level<sup>24</sup> following the end of a civil-conflict. More recently, the international institutions, such as the human right groups, the ICC and the United Nations have recognised that Western legal trials and a truth commission, perhaps incorporating traditional, indigenous rituals, may be seen as complementary strategy to support both retributive and restorative justice in societies emerging from violent civil-conflicts like Sierra Leone. However, as Lutz argues, this mixed solution may not be adequate because it fails to break out of the dominant Western worldview of justice, and thus question the ‘standardisation of transitional justice goals and methods’ driven by external interventions and actors.<sup>25</sup>

Other scholars, like Braithwaite who support restorative justice model, suggest that there is the need to build on the traditional local model of communitarian justice practised by local peoples, especially in the African context such as in Rwanda.<sup>26</sup> However, some DDR scholars such as Dinnen have argued that the distinction between retributive and restorative justice practice by local peoples and traditional justice mechanisms is oversimplified and serves to mask rather than illuminate the multiple, complex human needs, expectations and experiences in relation to post-conflict reintegration through justice delivery in the context of reconciliation.<sup>27</sup> And as Dinnen further comments, not only do the traditions of different societies vary in the relative weight placed on restorative and retributive components of justice system, in many ways these distinctions may in fact be conceived in very different terms.<sup>28</sup> Conventional informal justice mechanisms and local reconciliation rituals can thus be seen as examples of approaches that treat restorative and retributive justice as interdependent rather than mutually exclusive processes. And as Molenaar found out, the traditional gacaca<sup>29</sup> community justice in Rwanda for example required offenders to

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<sup>23</sup> Different versions of TRC in different post-conflict societies following the end of conflict are discussed elsewhere in this thesis.

<sup>24</sup> Tutu, D. (1999) *No Future without Forgiveness*. London: Rider.

<sup>25</sup> Lutz, E. (2006) ‘Transitional Justice: Lessons Learned and the Road Ahead’ In Roht-Arriaza, N. and Mariezcurrena, J. (Eds.) *Transitional Justice in the Twenty-First Century: Beyond Truth versus Justice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, p. 333.

<sup>26</sup> Braithwaite, J. (2003) ‘Restorative Justice and a Better Future’ In McLaughlin, E. et al (Eds) *Restorative Justice: Critical Issues*. London: Sage Publications.

<sup>27</sup> Dinnen, S. (2003) *A Kind of Mending: Restorative Justice in the Pacific Islands*, Canberra: ANU/Pandanus Press.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Gacaca, loosely known as ‘justice amongst the grassroots’ was a community justice system inspired by Rwandan tradition following the end of the 1993/4 Genocide. It particularly focused on community rebuilding while placing justice in the hands of trusted Rwandan citizens. This traditional, communal justice was adapted

‘appreciate the seriousness of the damage their action had caused’ and the agreed outcome was interpreted as a form of punishment albeit not one so severe that it would interfere with the primary goal of reconciliation.<sup>30</sup> As such, the Rwanda gacaca community justice system could be seen as an example of both retributive and restorative justice at the same time. As Quinn remarks, ‘while the more formalized Western model often allows for only one form of justice system - retributive or restorative - traditional institutions like the gacaca or the Sierra Leone’s TRC seek to combine different forms of these and other elements in keeping with the values of the community’.<sup>31</sup>

Thus, scholars who support restorative justice system believe that traditional customary justice practices might be more appropriate as a justice model for crimes against humanity. On the other hand, imposing primarily retributive legal justice mechanisms may also be seen as inadequate, because, for example the Sierra Leone’s Special Court failed to take into account local community needs for reconciliation. There is the need therefore to look at creative and locally relevant ways to incorporate principles of both restorative and retributive justice in accountability mechanisms, as well as structures and relationships to support future respect for human rights and the rule of law following the end of a violent conflict, such as Sierra Leone’s conflict. Rather than following the pluralist approach of separate institutions, I argue that a more meaningful approach might be to take a lead from indigenous traditional customary practices in order to design a more workable transitional justice mechanism that combines Western retributive and traditional restorative elements of justice system.

My argument in this section, and those of other scholars who investigate traditional justice in different cultural contexts in a post-conflict setting, is that a hybrid approach in societies emerging from violent conflict like Sierra Leone is possible and indeed relevant. This syncretic approach to justice following the end of violent conflicts is incorporated in the model of transformative justice, placing transitional justice in the context of conflict transformation, reconciliation and general peace-building effort.

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in 2001 to fit the needs of Rwandan people in the wake of the Genocide. The courts were credited with building the foundation for peace, reconciliation and unity in Rwanda. The Gacaca courts officially finished their work in June 2012. See for instance Molenaar, A. (2005) *Gacaca: Grassroots Justice After Genocide: The Key to Reconciliation in Rwanda?* African Studies Centre Research Report No. 77, Leiden: *African Studies Centre*, pp. 14 - 15.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid, pp. 14 - 15.

<sup>31</sup> Quinn, J., R. (2005) ‘*The Role of Informal Mechanisms in Transitional Justice*’, paper presented at Canadian Political Science Association Annual Meeting, June 2005. Document Available on line at: <<http://cpas-acsp.ca/papers-2005/Quinn.pdf>> Document Accessed on line on 12/12/2015.

In the next section, I discuss some of the factors responsible for sustainable reintegration in the aftermath of violent conflict. I argue that all reintegration programmes are different by nature and should therefore be implemented differently according to the needs of the local people as well as those of former combatants.

### **2.1.1 Reparative Justice, Reconciliation and Reintegration**

Achieving justice is by far one of the most contentious issues within the reintegration context. This is because justice is both a conceptual problem (of who is morally entitled to be helped), and a practical one (for example, the payment of reparations ordered by TRC for low level offenders). These issues are strongly felt by beneficiaries of reintegration programmes and implementing organisations alike, as it is one of the main obstacles to the successful cohabitation of former prisoners and the civilian population who suffered in the hands of the rebels.

A number of problems have emerged in Sierra Leone with regards to justice. The TRC has been concluded since 2010, and there are fears that some cases were not properly addressed through more formal justice processes, that the totality of the crimes committed during the conflict have not yet been fully judged, and that some cases will remain unsolved. In addition, the implementation of the decisions given by TRC has been problematic in itself. For instance, cases such as property destruction and theft have to be paid by the perpetrators. In many cases, the perpetrators are either unable to pay or refuse to pay. In effect, poverty is an obstacle to the payment of reparations, and as a consequence, an obstacle to justice and reconciliation.

There is a direct connection between justice, reconciliation and reintegration.<sup>32</sup> Nevertheless, this connection is linked to different narratives, depending on who you speak to. For some, justice, and the payment of reparations, is a prerequisite to reintegration. Without the acknowledgement of guilt by the perpetrators, the payment of reparations and the forgiveness of victims, there cannot be social cohesion in the new Sierra Leonean society. While reconciliation can be understood as a process, the reparative justice element of reconciliation

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<sup>32</sup> When asked about the benefits of the reintegration programmes, some former combatants, and indeed community members often explained how they had helped in bringing about reintegration and reconciliation, especially at local level. It was very clear to them how the dialogue elements in particular had helped create physical and psychological safe spaces for them to discuss reconciliation and justice questions.

(the payment of TRC reparations) is a trigger for this process. Without this payment, the process is flawed. Therefore, the TRC process and the implementation of the decisions taken by the Court are a first step towards reconciliation, without which reintegration is impossible.

Other respondents also reported that people affected by the conflict can only start the process of reconciliation once their basic needs are met. They should feel secure, and have access to ways of fulfilling their demands in terms of livelihood, shelter or health before they can participate in dialogue about the conflict, recognise wrongs and attempt to put them right. A certain level of financial stability would ease the process of justice and the payment of reparations. If perpetrators had the financial means to pay back their dues, and felt physically secure in their communities, they would be more able and willing to fulfil the obligations set by TRC. Therefore, justice and reconciliation are seen more as a process than a fixed point in time or as a step which needs to be completed before reintegration can begin. Justice, reconciliation and reintegration are linked, and programmes should seek to implement them together, rather than sequentially.

Both of these theories of change are valid, and it is difficult to validate one and not the other. However, what remains is a practical, problematic situation with regards to justice and reintegration.

For many reintegration programmes, the issue of reparations remains problematic, particularly for former combatants. Different approaches have been tried to solve the problem, such as mediation between prisoners and survivors to lower the amount of compensation to a reasonable level.

In general, more research needs to be carried out into the issue of reparative justice and its links to the wider situation in Sierra Leone. There remain different concepts/ terms /practices which need to be investigated and clarified. It was not very clear at community level during this research what was understood by ‘pardon’. Testimonies seemed to link it strongly with the payment of reparations, rather than the moral pardon for the crime committed. Indeed, victims’ accounts of what they meant by ‘pardon’ were often related to the payment of reparations, suggesting you could grant your ‘pardon’ for a lower amount than the one decided by the TRC. It would, therefore, appear to be important for people to link moral forgiveness to some degree of material compensation.

## 2.2 What Determines Successful Reintegration?

The question of whether post-conflict reintegration is successful does not require a generalised or unique answer, because all post-conflict reintegration programmes differ by nature, depending on local needs, and the needs of the former combatants.<sup>33</sup>

While a number of post-conflict scholars have made positive analysis of DDR projects around the world,<sup>34</sup> others have scrutinised DDR programmes through the evaluation of specific projects.<sup>35</sup> A study undertaken by Humphreys and Weinstein in 2007 for instance revealed that there is still no single explanation or answer to suggest which particular reintegration strategy or programme is the most convincing or best suited.<sup>36</sup> Most DDR programmes, and indeed much of the DDR literature concentrates more on programme design and programme implementation, providing information that is technocratic, and simply quantifying number of weapons collected, and the number of combatants who took part in a particular conflict.<sup>37</sup> One of the reasons for this quantification lies with the problems associated with the evaluation of such projects. Hence, Humphreys and Weinstein conclude that far from being able to determine that DDR programmes are sustainable, there are not enough cases or confounding variables to identify what contributes to sustainable DDR programmes in the aftermath of violent conflicts, like the case of Sierra Leone.<sup>38</sup>

Despite the difficulties involved in measuring the success or failure of DDR projects, there is at least one factor that has been highlighted for sustainable post-conflict reintegration. This is the ability and the willingness of former combatants to be able to find or get into payable employment following their demobilisation.<sup>39</sup> Apart from gaining payable employment, Humphries and Weinstein discovered during their study in Sierra Leone that there were three other criteria that helped with the reintegration of former combatants back into civilian

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<sup>33</sup> Humphreys, M., and Weinstein, J. (2007) Demobilisation and Reintegration. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 51, No. 4, pp. 531 - 567.

<sup>34</sup> Doyle, M., and Sambanis, N. (2000) International Peace-Building: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis. *American Political Science Review*, Vol. 94, No. 4, pp. 779 - 80.

<sup>35</sup> Theidon, K. (2009) Reconstructing Masculinities: The Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration of Former Combatants in Colombia. *Human Rights Quarterly*, pp. 2 - 3.

<sup>36</sup> Humphreys, M., and Weinstein, J. (2007) Demobilization and Reintegration. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 51, No. 4, pp. 531 - 567.

<sup>37</sup> Theidon, K. (2009) Reconstructing Masculinities: The Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration of Former Combatants in Colombia. *Human Rights Quarterly*, p3.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid, p. 553.



society at the termination of conflict. Among them the readiness, willingness and the ability of the receiving community to accept them also remain important.

Traditionally, 'successful' reintegration has been defined by programme practitioners' ability to effectively disarm and demobilise former combatants from conflict and subsequently reintegrate them into civilian society. This basic definition enables practitioners to justify their 'success' of programmes to the national government, the civilian population, the regional institutions, the donor community and other funding organisations. However, relying on numeric or minimal definition of 'success' such as counting the number of former combatants processed through DDR projects as well as weapons collected during these exercises deflects practitioners from strengthening national policies of reconciliation and socio-economic development. Utilizing limited definitions of success in defining post-conflict reintegration has given what Karazsia describes as 'cannon fodder'<sup>40</sup> to opponents in attacking the ineffectiveness of such policies.

DDR programmes are comprehensive and involve complex operations, usually undertaken in some of the most difficult socio-economic and political environments. Determining the success or failure of a programme is also complex. The ability of governments, the donor community and practitioners to effectively and efficiently achieve the desired goals and objectives of reintegration requires a long commitment on the part of the local community, the government as well as the former combatants themselves.

Conflict outcomes or context is an essential determinant for a sustainable DDR process, as indeed is the reintegration of former combatants. Civil conflicts that conclude with a victory over an opponent often undergo DDR process for a short period of time, mainly for two particular reasons. Firstly, the victor engages in DDR process to show to the donor community and the rest of the international community as well as the local population that it is not only willing but also capable to include the remaining or defeated military factions under a unified command structure. Secondly, the victor uses DDR process to dismantle internal political competition that threatens the ruling elites' authority and removes existing threats to their domestic supremacy. Following the implementation of the Lome Peace

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<sup>39</sup> Garibay, D. (2006) A Peace Built on Forgetting Demobilised Combatants in Post-War El Salvador. *International Social Science Journal*, p. 467.

Accord in Sierra Leone,<sup>41</sup> in a conflict in which there was no decisive military victory on either side of the conflict, a  $1+1=3$  formula<sup>42</sup> was adopted in transforming the country's national army. Neither of the existing force structures, personnel or cultures dominated the new national army, at least in theory. For any DDR project to be successful or to contribute to a positive national outcome of reconciliation and economic development, it is important that practitioners must move beyond the basic accounting of guns and bullets (the disarmament phase) and enhance the reintegration training and short and medium term transitional support for participants.<sup>43</sup>

It follows that if we want to operationalise reintegration programmes "successfully", we may perhaps need to examine three particular domains beyond the programme specifics of counting arms and ammunitions. It must be remembered that DDR programmes (of which the reintegration of former combatants are part of) has been mistakenly or wrongly blamed for the failures of peace agreements and security sector reforms in many occasions, at least in the past. Therefore, before undertaking reintegration programmes and seeking to achieve sustainable peace, DDR practitioners and the donor community should examine various domains to confirm programme's viability of achieving "success".

First, practitioners and the donor community must all be aware that trust between formerly warring factions and the civilian population must be maintained at all cost. The social trust deficit of a post-conflict environment is one indicator of social commitment to reintegration processes and alternative national umbrella programmes aimed at resolving socio-economic and political violence. Given the fact that arms and ammunitions are easily trafficked into many poor societies around the developing world, the supply of weapons to armed actors remains difficult to eradicate even long after a peace agreement has been reached. It is therefore imperative for practitioners to fully engage with the demand side of the equation and foster socio-economic cooperation for the provision of livelihood for former combatants, and indeed other groups of people in the receiving community to take hold. If the trust deficit

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<sup>40</sup> See for instance the work of Karazsia, Z. (2015) Evaluating the 'Success' of DDR Programmes: The Case of Congo - Brazzaville. *Journal of Interdisciplinary Conflict Science*, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp. 1 - 34.

<sup>41</sup> See for example the Lome Peace Accord, Document Available on line at: [www.parliament.gov.sl/.../0/.../1-The%20Lome%20Peace%20Agreement%201999.pdf](http://www.parliament.gov.sl/.../0/.../1-The%20Lome%20Peace%20Agreement%201999.pdf). Document Accessed on line on: 27/12/16.

<sup>42</sup> The  $1+1=3$  formula means that at the end of the conflict, two separate armed groups - the non-state armed actors or the rebel factions on the one hand and the national army on the other were integrated together to form a fusion of a new third national army - the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF).

<sup>43</sup> Zena, P., N. (2013) 'The Lessons and Limits of DDR in Africa,' *Africa Security Brief: A Publication of the Africa Centre for Strategic Studies*. No. 24, pp. 1 - 8.

remains high, it is likely that social support for the reintegration project will be difficult or impossible to achieve.

Second, and perhaps most importantly, strong leadership, personality and power dynamics determine the extent to which reintegration programmes are conceived from the peace agreement; they determine how post-conflict reintegration programmes are designed and implemented; and who undergoes or takes part in what programmes. Donors, programme facilitators and practitioners should therefore be aware of local or community power dynamics and elites' intentions before the commencement of any reintegration programmes. Ignoring the intentions and motivations of community members/leaders and local politicians who agree to former combatants being brought into their communities may result in a difficult situation as we saw in Angola with the asymmetrical reintegration of MPLA and UNITA forces. This directly contributed to shifts in the militaristic capabilities of the opposing forces, which militated against the peace agreement as well as the reintegration project in Angola.<sup>44</sup>

In their analysis of sustainable reintegration of former combatants, Humphreys and Weinstein argue that outsiders (referring to the donor community in particular) and the international community have always defined sustainable reintegration. By outsiders, Humphreys and Weinstein also mean Western researchers, the IMF, the World Bank and other international financial institutions. There is little evidence in the literature to show the involvement of former combatants in drafting, directing or implementing their own reintegration projects following their demobilisation. Instead, the inputs provided by former combatants appear to be on how these projects, usually designed and implemented by 'outsiders' affect them as former combatants.<sup>45</sup> As I will discuss in the section below, it thus appears, in general, that economic reintegration, which deals particularly with the provision of employment and the provision of livelihood is the most preferred form of post-conflict reintegration because most

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<sup>44</sup> See for example Andersen, V. (2011) *Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration of Ex-combatants in Angola: Why did Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration only succeed in the third and last Peace Processes? Institute of Comparative Politics*. Available on line at: [bora.uib.no/bitstream/handle/1956/.../Master%20thesis\\_Vegard%20Andersen.pdf?1](http://bora.uib.no/bitstream/handle/1956/.../Master%20thesis_Vegard%20Andersen.pdf?1). Document Access on line on 02/02/16.

<sup>45</sup> Stovel, L. (2008) 'There's no Bad Bush to Throw Away a Bad Child': Tradition - Inspired Reintegration in Post-War Sierra Leone. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 2. pp. 305 - 324. See also Humphreys, M., and Weinstein, J. (2007) Demobilisation and Reintegration. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 51, No. 4, pp. 531 - 567.

of today's conflicts, and indeed post-conflict reintegration programmes are underpinned by economic motives.<sup>46</sup>

There has also been the emergence of large volume of DDR literature that focuses mainly on the needs and welfare of former female combatants when they emerge from violent conflict, such as the conflict in Sierra Leone.<sup>47</sup> Stovel discusses, one of the key challenges that is associated with the reintegration of former female combatants namely their devalued role as girls or women.<sup>48</sup> Lack of equal access to food and money following demobilisation are among the primary reasons that war-affected girls and women adopt high risk behaviour, including exchanging sex for money and food following their demobilisation. In Bosnia, East Timor, The DRC, Burundi, Ivory Coast, Haiti, Central Africa Republic, and Liberia, UN Peacekeepers have been accused of exchanging sex for food and money with former female combatants<sup>49</sup> as well as with refugees. A study conducted by World Vision in Northern Uganda found that 'girl night commuters' are known to exchange sex for money in order to pay for their School or College fees. During my research visit to Sierra Leone in 2015, one of my female respondents pointed out that she has been engaged in prostitution following her demobilisation simply to earn money to feed herself and her two children. There are similar cases like this in many countries emerging from violent conflict.

At least two former female combatants reported during my research visit to Sierra Leone in 2015 that their time in combat was characterised by equality and unprecedented respect by their male colleagues. However, upon their demobilisation, the wider civilian population appeared to recognise the former male combatants only. The implications rendered by the (im)possibility of female combatants are manifold. In general, combatants in war zones can be recognised as perpetrators of violence, which results in the blurring of gendered identities especially where perpetrators and victims are concerned. In consequences, both male and female combatants in combat zones risk not receiving proper psychological and physical support by not being considered as victims. Female combatants in war zones risk not being

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<sup>46</sup> Berdal, M. (1996) *Disarmament and Demobilization after Civil Wars*. London: International Institute for Strategic Studies.

<sup>47</sup> Edloe, L. (2007) Best Practices for Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR). *New Voices in Public Policy*, Vol. 1, pp. 1 - 28.

<sup>48</sup> Stovel, L. (2008) 'There's no Bad Bush to Throw Away a bad Child': Tradition – Inspired Reintegration in Post-War Sierra Leone. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, p. 317.

<sup>49</sup> Ndulo, M. (2009) The United Nations Responses to the Sexual Abuse and Exploitation of Women and Girls by Peacekeepers During Peacekeeping Missions, *Cornell Law Faculty Publications*.

acknowledged as active agents, and their capability in adapting to seemingly incompatible roles and situations - roles that defy the image of combatants as inherently violence - whilst they are 'not sufficiently paid' and undervalued is left unattended<sup>50</sup> and unrecognised even following their disarmament.

In the context of Sierra Leone, the DDR process and its accompanying transitional justice process remained largely separated, and as a result, reflect a 'quick-fix' approach to the social transition. In an attempt to provide a stable atmosphere for sustainable peace and development and to avoid a relapse into conflict, the gendered experiences of former combatants were largely ignored, and at best, explored only descriptively. The end of the conflict in Sierra Leone, albeit making the end of physical violence, therefore resulted in a contemporary Sierra Leonean society that remains unequal down along social, class and gendered lines.

The DDR process in Sierra Leone demonstrates the importance of reintegration as a conflict resolution mechanism. Without disarmament, demobilisation and the reintegration of combatants, sustainable peace is difficult to achieve. There are a number of factors that can cause DDR to fail; these include unstable strategic environment and the lack of support from the international community. However, there are some important factors responsible for successful DDR programmes such as the will for peace is the basis for the beginning of a successful reintegration. Accordingly, the greater the will for peace, the more likely the reintegration will be completed and the more successful the programme becomes.

Reintegration represents the most demanding phase of DDR process. In competition with unemployed civilians, returning refugees and IDPs, generating jobs for successful reintegration is only possible with the coordinated use of every available economic mechanism. This was simply the case in Sierra Leone as the country had weak infrastructure following the end of the conflict. Thus, the case of Sierra Leone supports the argument that the will for peace, a coordinated implementation with other conflict resolution mechanisms are necessary key factors for the implementation of successful DDR programme.

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<sup>50</sup> Kimberly, T. (2007) Gender in Transition: Common Sense, Women and War'. *Journal of Human Rights*, Vol. 6, No. 4, p. 463.

In the section below, I present a detailed analysis of the literature on the achievements of DDR projects, in particular the reintegration phase in series of post-conflict societies in Africa, including Sierra Leone. In the first part of the section, I discuss some of the most important literature in which objective or an etic viewpoint is highlighted.

### **2.3 Economic Reintegration**

The 2004 study undertaken by Humphreys and Weinstein in Sierra Leone regarding the reintegration of former combatants questioned the effectiveness of post-conflict reintegration and the general DDR programme, arguing that little is known about the factors that facilitate effective post-conflict reintegration at the micro level.<sup>51</sup> Following the identification of this gap in the literature, Humphreys and Weinstein carried out a quantitative study involving more than one thousand former combatants from all armed factions across Sierra Leone. During their analysis, they constructed four different variables, based mainly on the evaluation of DDR programming and the accumulated study to measure what successful reintegration appeared to be. The four variables they took into account were: dismantling former combatant's network on termination of conflict; increasing the confidence of former combatants in democratic process; allowing former armed actors to take part in political process;<sup>52</sup> and increasing their income or earning capability as well as creating the atmosphere for reconciliation between them and their families.

In addition, Humphreys and Weinstein discovered that economic reintegration was the most successful component of reintegration package for former combatants when the conflict in Sierra Leone ended in 2002, as evidenced in their analysis. One of the key challenges that faced Sierra Leone's reintegration project is poverty and the corresponding lack of employment facility for even the civilian population. Generally, it was the increase in rural poverty and poor governance and their corresponding negative effects that drew young disenfranchised men and women into the combat role.<sup>53</sup> Based on Humphreys and Weinstein's findings in Sierra Leone, the implementation of reintegration project in a society that devastatingly suffered from poverty and the lack of economic opportunities for majority of the population is a difficult process to undertake. Such analysis can be applied to the

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<sup>51</sup> Humphreys, M., and Weinstein, J. (2007) Demobilisation and Reintegration, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, pp. 531- 532.

<sup>52</sup> For further details on the transformation of RUF armed movement into a political party, the RUF-P, see Mitton, K. (2008) 'Engaging Disengagement: The Political Reintegration of Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front.' *Conflict, Security and Development*. Vol. 8, No. 2, pp. 193 - 222.

reconstruction and reintegration projects in Nicaragua,<sup>54</sup> Liberia and Sierra Leone,<sup>55</sup> and El Salvador<sup>56</sup> among many others around the world. As opposed to the cases mentioned above, Metsola suggests that the success that Namibia achieved during its economic reintegration process was through a unique reintegration programme, in which former combatants were provided with ‘converted’ civilian employment facilities.<sup>57</sup> This practice provided an additional achievement by measurably improving the former combatants’ confidence and loyalty in the central state.<sup>58</sup> Hamber also notes that in the reintegration exercise in Northern Ireland, which, unlike other examples elsewhere in Africa and across the developing world, boasts a highly developed economy, yet unemployment (partly due to legal barriers to employment) among former combatants after the DDR project was still higher than the national average.<sup>59</sup> Although Humphreys and Weinstein acknowledge the difficulties involved in the economic reintegration project, they argue that former combatants that take part in DDR process are more likely to be successfully reintegrated than those who do not.<sup>60</sup> Humphreys and Weinstein claim for improved individual’s success are questionable, as gender, and age were not taken into account as predictors of the reintegration variable.<sup>61</sup>

Another important factor employed by practitioners and researchers alike in determining successful reintegration is the acceptance of former combatants by the community following demobilisation. Although it appears to be particularly difficult to measure, the level of acceptance of former combatants into civilian society after they are demobilised have been investigated by post-conflict scholars such as Humphreys and Weinstein. Evidence from the DDR process in Sierra Leone for instance suggests that former combatants who were not involved in serious crimes, war crimes and crimes against humanity were better accepted back into society than those who were involved in serious crimes and violation of human rights. One of the key reasons advanced by scholars for this has been that the serious nature

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<sup>53</sup> Keen, D. (2005) *Conflict and Collusion in Sierra Leone*. Oxford: James Currey Publishers.

<sup>54</sup> Paris, R. (2004) *At War’s end: Building Peace after Civil Conflict*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>55</sup> Hamber, B. (2007) Putting the ‘R’ back into DDR. *KOFF Centre for Peace Building Newsletter*, Vol. 62, pp. 4 - 6.

<sup>56</sup> Garibay, D. (2006) A Peace Built on Forgetting Demobilised Combatants in Post-War El Salvador. *International Social Science Journal*, Vol. 58, No.189, pp. 467 - 478.

<sup>57</sup> Metsola, L. (2006) Reintegration of Ex-Combatants and Former Fighters: A lens into state formation and citizenship in Namibia. *Third World Quarterly*, p.1126.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Hamber, B. (2007) Putting the ‘R’ Back into DDR. *KOFF Centre for Peace Building Newsletter*, Vol. 62, pp. 4 - 5.

<sup>60</sup> Humphreys, M., and Weinstein, J. (2007) Demobilisation and reintegration. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, p. 549

<sup>61</sup> Ibid, p. 564.

of their crimes against the civilian populations may have influenced on the unwillingness of the civilians to accept them, or because they may have committed violent abuses against the civilian population or their family members, or as a result of the psychosocial impact of the conflict on individual combatants.<sup>62</sup> This argument presented by Humphreys and Weinstein suggests that the problem emanates, to some extent from the individual combatants themselves.

The literature discussion in this section has focused primarily on objective and measurable outcomes of DDR programmes in post-conflict societies, including Sierra Leone. It has also focused on the provision of economic opportunities for former combatants when conflict ends, suggesting that economic opportunities in the form of employment and others such as 'Weapons for Cash' programme are key in achieving successful post-conflict reintegration, at least in the short term. It is nevertheless evident that increased poverty, poor governance and poor leadership plus poor coordination reduce the chance of sustainable reintegration.<sup>63</sup>

In the section below, I review the literature on how identity is considered as a component in the psychosocial reintegration of former combatants. In addition, I discuss how outsiders or external actors construct the identity of combatants, usually in negative terms and how these identity construction impacts reintegration and peace-building efforts in the context of the wider DDR process.

## **2.4 Identity, Representation and Sentient Reconciliation**

Almost all of today's DDR programmes are designed, directed and implemented by external actors, led by the UN, within the terms of peace agreements and economic opportunity, with little inputs from the beneficiaries, who are supposed to be at the centre of any DDR process. Lett for instance gives a comprehensive summation of emic and etic understanding with regards to today's DDR programming using the macro-insecurity framework.

The macro-insecurity framework supports economic opportunities for the benefit of former combatants as individuals and as groups, as well as the community into which they reintegrate, to the extent that it prevents or deter them from re-engaging into armed conflict

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<sup>62</sup> Ibid, pp. 547 - 548.

<sup>63</sup> Humphreys, M., and Weinstein, J. (2007) Demobilisation and Reintegration, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, pp. 549.



or other criminal activities.<sup>64</sup> Moreover, former combatants have been viewed even by DDR practitioners as irrelevant, dangerous, and in some cases being labelled as ‘obstacles to peace, progress and development’<sup>65</sup> ‘belligerents’,<sup>66</sup> or ‘spoilers’.<sup>67</sup> Stovel for example states that former combatants are sometimes negatively labelled as terrorists and as enemies to progress and human development.<sup>68</sup> In the case of Liberia, for instance, Boas and Hatloy claim that former combatants were regarded as ‘uprooted urban youth with a history of violence, uselessness and idleness’. The best description of former combatants according to Boas and Hatloy in the context of Liberia was underemployed and unemployed youth.<sup>69</sup> In describing the Sierra Leone’s RUF, Abdullah made similar claims as Boas and Hatloy, despite contrary evidence gathered from the former combatants themselves. However, Metsola gives a vivid summary of the reasons why former combatants are being negatively labelled, including those of the RUF. Metsola assesses that the fear that former combatants have the skills and the organisational capability, strategic knowledge, and military skills which will enable them to engage in violence against the state or the elites is one of their reasons.<sup>70</sup>

Wide sections of society frequently have negative views about former combatants after their demobilisation. As such, tensions may lead to communal violence between returning former combatants and the civilian population. This has been identified as one of the major obstacles to the peace process in Angola.<sup>71</sup> One of the reasons for this is that the factional identities of former combatants are often influenced by perceptions of society. In many post-conflict societies, people continue to label former combatants according to the armed group they used to belong to. As Themner discusses, in some cases, such identification can have a positive connotation, due to the role former combatants played in defending local communities that

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<sup>64</sup> Knight, M., and Ozerdem, A. (2004) Guns, Camps and Cash: Disarmament, Demobilization and Reinsertion of Former Combatants in Transitions from War to Peace. *Journal of Peace Research*, p. 502.

<sup>65</sup> Hauge, W., and Thoresen, B. (2007) The Destiny of the Ex-Combatants in Guatemala: *Obstacles or Agents of Change?* Guatemala: North-South Institute.

<sup>66</sup> Krampe, F. (2009) *Changing Identity–Belligerents’ Transformation towards Reconciliation: An explorative study on Zimbabwe and South Africa*. Master’s Thesis, Department of Peace and Conflict Research, Uppsala University.

<sup>67</sup> Stedman, S. (1997) Spoiler Problems in Peace Processes. *International Security*, Vol. 22, No. 2, pp. 5 - 53.

<sup>68</sup> Stovel, L. (2008) ‘There’s no Bad Bush to Throw Away a Bad Child’: Tradition-Inspired Reintegration in Post-War Sierra Leone. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, p. 310.

<sup>69</sup> Boas, M., and Hatloy, A. (2008) ‘Getting in, Getting out’: Militia Membership and Prospects for Reintegration in Post-War Liberia. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, p. 33.

<sup>70</sup> Metsola, L. (2006) Reintegration of Ex-Combatants and Former Fighters: A Lens into State Formation and Citizenship in Namibia. *Third World Quarterly*, Vol. 27, No. 6, pp. 119 - 135.

<sup>71</sup> International Crisis Group (2003) ‘Dealing with Savimbi’s Ghost: The Security and Humanitarian Challenges in Angola’, Africa Report No 58. Document Available on line at: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/file/2788/download?token=TuKQFyny>. Document Accessed on line on: 02/01/14.

were under their control.<sup>72</sup> However, more often than not, such labelling has negative overtones. This can for instance, be the case when former combatants have committed serious atrocities against the civilian population in a particular region during the conflict. One such frequently cited example is that of former child soldiers of The Lord's Resistance Army's (LRA) who were subjected to resentment and verbal abuses when they returned to their local communities after their demobilisation.<sup>73</sup> Throughout the conflict the community had suffered serious violence and intimidation at the hands of the LRA.

A number of post-conflict scholars, among them Paul Collier, also hold negative views about former combatants in relation to their reintegration back into civilian society following their demobilisation. Collier argues that the engagement of former combatants in armed conflict serves as a major obstacle to socio-economic and political development in poor countries, regardless the length of their engagement in conflict.<sup>74</sup> Collier puts all former combatants in the same category regardless the nature of the conflict in which they are engaged, and assumes that all guerrilla movements have dubious motives, because, according to him they all use what he calls 'noble war tactics'.<sup>75</sup> Collier cites the case of Sierra Leone as an example, and argues that fighters were recruited from 'teenage drug addicts, easily controlled and not excessively inhibited by moral principles'.<sup>76</sup> He goes on to claim that supposed demands for social justice by former combatants are quickly appeased with simplistic materialistic achievements such as expensive wristwatches, and valuable cars...,<sup>77</sup> thus placing them on the moral level of a petty street or a drug gang. While Collier's assessment appears to have some credibility for many conflict situations in Africa and elsewhere in South America, it does not hold for every combat situation or for every individual former combatant. Collier also draws for his assessment from Oyefusi's study of the Niger delta in Nigeria.<sup>78</sup> However, Oyefusi's analysis is based on the decision-making among Delta region's youth who joined non-state armed organisations to resist the state. Oyefusi argues that

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<sup>72</sup> Themner, A. (2011) *Violence in Post-Conflict Societies: Remarginalization, Remobilizes and Relationships*. London: Routledge.

<sup>73</sup> See for example Eichstaedt, P. (2009) *First Kill Your Family: Child Soldiers of Uganda and the Lord's Resistance Army*. Chicano: Lawrence Hill Books.

<sup>74</sup> Collier, P. (2007) *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and What can be done about it*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid, p. 24.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid, pp. 24 - 25.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid, p.20.

<sup>78</sup> Oyefusi, A. (2007) *Oil and the Prosperity to Armed Struggle in the Niger Delta Region, Post-Conflict Transitions Working Paper No. 8*. Document Available on line at: <http://www.csae.ox.ac.uk/conferences/2006-eoi-rpi/papers/csae/oyefusi.pdf>. Document Accessed on line on 19/03/16.

perceived grievance was not a justification for taking part in an armed conflict. Oyefusi argues that being a youth and at the same time unemployed, uneducated, untrained and unqualified were perceived as more important explanations for taking part in an armed movement in poor countries with dysfunctional governance system. Collier infers that 'it is difficult to reconcile these characteristics of recruitment with an image of a vanguard of fighters for social justice'.<sup>79</sup>

Having come into close contact with some former RUF combatants during fieldwork, and living with some of them in places like Koribondo in southern Sierra Leone, I have formed a different assessment, knowledge and understanding of this constructed identity of former combatants by agencies or external actors. Avruch argues that getting involved with peoples' personal lives, and analysing their narratives will unavoidably leads to emic (deep) level of understanding of their lives,<sup>80</sup> whether they are former combatants, policy makers, interlocutors, academics or community members. Evidence from around the world, mainly from the perspective of agencies, has tended to portray former combatants as not only 'bad guys', but as threat to human progress and indeed to their own nation's development and progress. However, as indicated above, my experience with former RUF combatants in Sierra Leone suggests that this perspective is inconsistent with the way I as a researcher see former combatants. In her analysis of the peace process in Sierra Leone, Stovel explains how the external actors (the mediators, and DDR administrators in general) proposed reconciliation process in the country as 'sustainable', but through her interviews with former combatants themselves revealed a contradictory perspective.<sup>81</sup> This disparity between outsider's views and narratives and the views of former combatants themselves is further explored in the rest of the thesis.

As conflict comes to an end, the initial transformation of combatants from their combat role to civilian lifestyle is a difficult process, one that affects their identity. The newly constructed identity is manifested individually. It may also, especially at the early stages of their reintegration process, internally embody the heroic images of the warrior fighting for a just

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<sup>79</sup> Collier, P. (2007) *The Bottom Billion: Why the Poorest Countries are Failing and what can be done about it*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p. 31.

<sup>80</sup> Avruch, K. (1998) *Culture and Conflict Resolution*. Washington: United States Institute for Peace.

<sup>81</sup> Stovel, L. (2008) 'There's No Bad Bush to Throw Away a Bad Child': Tradition - Inspired Reintegration in Post-War Sierra Leone. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, p. 307.

cause, while externally embodying a threatening and fearful image.<sup>82</sup> This identity formation in itself appears to be a straightforward process for former combatants who rebel against the state for a cause that they strongly believe in to be just.<sup>83</sup> Nevertheless, in cases where armed groups abduct young boys and young girls and use them as child soldiers, like the RUF in Sierra Leone and the LRA in northern Uganda for instance, their participation in serious crimes and crimes against humanity and against international humanitarian law has in recent times led to identity breakdown and confusion among the former combatants. The RUF for instance, is said to have forced children to commit violent crimes against their own parents and other family members as a way of showing their loyalty to the armed movement.<sup>84</sup> In his essay 'Rebels in a Rotten State: Understanding Atrocity in Sierra Leone Civil War', Mitton notes that those children who committed grave atrocities against their own parents faced rejection during DDR process and were forced to face their own families and members of their communities, hence facing their own contradictory identities as child killers - identities that were constructed during the conflict.<sup>85</sup> In any case, it is clear from this perspective that identity is tied to our basic psychological need for our sense of belonging - but one that has not been taken seriously in traditional DDR process.<sup>86</sup>

While a small number of post-conflict literature has viewed the identity of former combatants as victims, a large proportion of the traditional literature still views them as perpetrators of violence. Former members of the Uganda's LRA are a good example here. One of the only few ways in which former combatants are seen as victims is when they are classed as child soldiers. But even in this context, former child combatants are sometimes seen as both perpetrators and victims of violence. Although the literature is focused on issues such as the lack of socio-economic and identity, victimhood is mostly absent. It remains to be seen whether former combatants will regard themselves as victims of circumstance or perpetrators.

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid, pp. 307 - 308.

<sup>83</sup> Garibay, D. (2006) A Peace Built on Forgetting Demobilised Combatants in Post-War El Salvador. *International Social Science Journal*, Vol. 58, No.189, pp. 467 - 478.

<sup>84</sup> Mitton, K. (2015) *Rebels in a Rotten State: Understanding Atrocity in Sierra Leone Civil War*. London: Hurst and Company.

<sup>85</sup> Veale, A., and Stavrou, A. (2007) Former Lord's Resistance Army Child Soldier Abductees: Explorations of Identity in Reintegration and Reconciliation. *Peace and Conflict Journal of Peace Psychology*, Vol. 13, No. 3, pp. 273 - 292.

<sup>86</sup> Theidon, K. (2009) Reconstructing Masculinities: The Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration of Former Combatants in Colombia. *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 31, No. 1, pp. 1 - 34.

In discussing how external actors construct the identity of former combatants, often in negative terms, I believe that the literature is limited in that the perspective of the former combatants is under-represented in the traditional DDR literature. The Eurocentric notion of cultural sensitivity is also limited in research by the power relationships, where the researcher is the expert, but at the same time the Western perspective is viewed as superior to the views of the former combatants themselves,<sup>87</sup> despite being at the centre of the reintegration process. The fact that most of today's DDR programmes are designed, directed and implemented by external agencies, so that there is the tendency for lack of cultural sensitivity and power imbalances, external actors have, until recently started to adopt local cultural, norms and values in relation to post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation following demobilisation. Stovel notes that the internationally supported DDR project in Sierra Leone adopted the notion of a traditional slogan: 'There is no bad bush to throw away a bad child', suggesting that there was a greater need to accommodate every individual in the new post-conflict Sierra Leonean society, no matter the level of violence or crime they might have committed during their war years.

## **2.5 Concluding Remarks**

This chapter has analysed the internationally sponsored Special Court and the TRC that were set up in Sierra Leone following the end of the conflict. The chapter has also discussed the concept of retributive and restorative justice system in relation to post-conflict reintegration in Sierra Leone. It considers the importance of adopting each of these approaches in the justice environment. The Special Court was mandated to prosecute those individuals who bear the greatest responsibility of serious crimes under international humanitarian and Sierra Leone laws, including the leaders who had threatened the peace process. The TRC's mandate was to create an impartial historical record of abuses and violations of human rights and international humanitarian law, to respond to the needs of the victims, to address impunity, to promote healing and reconciliation and to prevent a repetition of the violations and abuses suffered by the people of Sierra Leone.

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<sup>87</sup> Potts, K., and Brown, L. (2005) Becoming an Anti-Oppressive Researcher. In L. Brown and S. Strega (Eds.), *Research as resistance: Critical, indigenous and antioppressive approaches*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.

Given the increased levels of crime committed during the conflict by all factions, it is likely that restorative justice will be seen by some as being ‘soft on criminals’ and criminal organisations. In an effort to illustrate the benefits of alternative approaches to offending, the chapter sets out the arguments for and against retributive and restorative justice system in Sierra Leone.

The next chapter analyses and justifies the application of social capital as the best concept for this study as it has the features that enable a far more comprehensive understanding of conflict and post-conflict issues. It then concludes that the application of social capital concept in this present study enhances our understanding of conflict and post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation.

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## CHAPTER THREE: SOCIAL CAPITAL

### Introduction

Social capital, which is the ‘features of social organisation such as norms, cooperation, trust and networks that facilitate cooperation for mutual benefit’,<sup>1</sup> is shown to be an important prerequisite for social cohesion and post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation. This chapter will show that social capital is a complex concept but significant in contributing to a sophisticated understanding of many spheres of social life, which is particularly applicable to understanding the dynamics of conflict and post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation.

Social capital approaches to post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation have, since the 1990s increasingly gained momentum among policy makers, practitioners, academics and researchers. It is certain that for a post-conflict society to be successful in development terms, its social capital must be rebuilt or renewed, positively transformed or catalysed so that both former combatants and the community into which they are reintegrated can benefit from the multiple networks of association and projects.

When we apply social capital concept to examine conflict and post-conflict society, it can be seen to contribute to the causes of conflict as well as conflict resolution mechanism and DDR process in general. It is evident that societies characterised by high levels of cooperation have significant higher investment rates, while low cooperation societies - typically characterised by poverty, inequality, poor governance and conflict may have low level of trust.<sup>2</sup> In addition, the application of social capital in DDR programme stimulates cooperation and social cohesion through more trustful relationships between those who are to be reintegrated and their receiving community, which increases output.<sup>3</sup> These positive linkages between social capital, social cohesion and cooperation are confirmed by studies conducted in countries emerging from violent conflict.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Putnam, R.D. (1995) Bowling alone: America's declining social capital, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 6, No. 1, p. 67.

<sup>2</sup> Zak, P., J. and Knack, S. (2001) Trust and growth, *Economic Journal*, Vol. 111, No. 470, pp. 295 - 321.

<sup>3</sup> Akcomak, I., S. and ter Weel, B. (2009) Social Capital, Innovation and Growth: Evidence from Europe, *European Economic Review*, Vol. 53, pp. 544 - 567.

<sup>4</sup> Grootaert, C. and van Bastelaer, T. (2002) *The Role of Social Capital in Development: An Empirical Assessment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

By adopting social capital concept, this study will find a deeper and a more meaningful explanation of what holds or brings society and its people together in order to foster social relationship after conflict has divided them. This chapter begins by explaining social capital as a concept. It then goes on to explore the reasons why people join armed groups and argues that for any reintegration to be successful, former combatants must relinquish ties with armed groups to which they formerly belong, and make themselves ready for a new social structure within the civilian community into which they wish to be reintegrated. It then argues that societies emerging from violent conflict need to transform ‘bonding social capital’ into ‘bridging social capital’,<sup>5</sup> an indication that post-conflict reintegration programmes and policies can only be sustainable, if they convert exclusive intra-group cohesion and unity into inclusive inter-group cohesion and unity.<sup>6</sup> It goes on to explore how social capital is measured and evaluated before ending with an analysis of why it is a useful tool for analysing events in Sierra Leone.

### **3.1 Social Capital as a Concept**

Social capital is a multidimensional phenomenon that has recently been highly regarded by several social scientists as important, pointing particularly to human actions and relationships as a resource of capital that is as important as human and monetary capital in terms of community cohesion. Paul Collier outlines three types of positive externalities that social capital may create. Firstly, he says that knowledge is transmitted through exchanging and pooling information in social interactions and through copying the observed behaviour of better informed persons.<sup>7</sup> Secondly, information on the trustworthiness and reliability of agents is gathered.<sup>8</sup> This contributes to building trust and reduces transaction costs. Thirdly, it enhances collective action. While the importance of social capital has recently been recognised, there are a number of approaches operationalising the concept that vary across disciplines, between theoretical and empirical studies, and with the unit of analysis used. In terms of the unit of analysis adopted, three key dimensions are identified<sup>9</sup>: Firstly, macro approaches following an institutions perspective to explore how processes shape norms;

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<sup>5</sup>Colletta, N., J. and Cullen, M., L. (2000) ‘The Nexus between Violent Conflict, Social Capital and Social Cohesion: Case Studies from Cambodia and Rwanda’. Social Capital Initiative Working Paper No. 23. Washington: World Bank, Social Development Department.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Collier, P. (1999) On the Economic Consequences of Civil War, *Oxford Economic Papers*, Vol. 51, No. 1, pp. 168 - 183.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid, pp. 51 -52.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid.

secondly, micro-level studies in which groups benefit from positive externalities; and thirdly, meso interpretations focusing on vertical structures of hierarchy and power within institutions.

One of the greatest pioneers of social capital has been Lyda Judson Hanifan<sup>10</sup> who, in her work 'the community centre' defines social capital 'as those tangible assets that count for most in the daily lives of people: namely fellowship, sympathy, goodwill, and social intercourse among the individuals and families who make up a social unit....'<sup>11</sup> She goes on to argue that If an individual comes into contact with their neighbour, there will be an accumulation of social capital, which may directly satisfy their social needs, and which may bear a social potentiality sufficient to improve the living conditions of people in the community.<sup>12</sup> Her work inspired others to develop interest in social capital.

Following Hanifan's earlier effort, work on social capital subsided for at least a decade, and only re-emerged in the 1950s and 60s by a team of urban sociologists.<sup>13</sup> Other great pioneers in the field include Jane Jacobs,<sup>14</sup> Pierre Bourdieu,<sup>15</sup> Jean-Claude Passeron<sup>16</sup> and Glenn Loury.<sup>17</sup> In particular the seminal research of James Coleman on education<sup>18</sup> and those of Robert Putnam on civic participation and institutional performance<sup>19</sup> have provided the inspiration for most of the current work in the field of social capital. Their works have also become some of the most cited names in the current literature on social capital. Robert Putnam for instance defines social capital as 'a set of horizontal associations between people that foster cooperation for the mutual benefit of the community'....<sup>20</sup> However, Putnam's definition of social capital appears to be narrow by Coleman's standard. Thus, he [Coleman]

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<sup>10</sup>Hanifan, L., J. (1916) *The Rural School Community Centre. Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Sciences*, Vol. 67, pp. 130 - 38.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Seeley, J. R., Alexander R. S., and Loosley, E., W. (1956) *Crestwood Heights: A Study of the Culture of Suburban Life*, New York: Basic Books.

<sup>14</sup>Jacobs, J. (1961) *'The Life and Death of Great American Cities'*. New York; Vintage Book.

<sup>15</sup> Bourdieu, P. (1986) 'The Forms of Capital', in J. Richardson, (ed). *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*. Westport: Greenwood Press.

<sup>16</sup> Jean-Claude P. (1970) *Reproduction in Education, Society and Culture*. New York: Sage Publication.

<sup>17</sup> Loury, G. (1977) 'A Dynamic Theory of Racial Income Difference' In Wallace, P., A and Lemound, A (Ed.) *Women, minorities and Employment Discrimination*. Lexington: Lexington Books.

<sup>18</sup> Coleman, J. (1988) 'Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital' *American Journal of Sociology*, Vol. 94, pp. S95 - S120.

<sup>19</sup> Putnam, R., D. (1993) 'The Prosperous Community - Social Capital and Public Life.' *The American Prospect*, Vol. 4, No. 13, pp. 35 - 42.

<sup>20</sup> Putnam, R. (1993) *Making Democracy Work*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press.

expanded Putnam's definition of social capital to include vertical relationships characterised by a hierarchical structure and unequal power distribution within a given community....<sup>21</sup> Coleman also says that social capital could even yield harmful effects for society depending on a particular circumstance.

A broader concept of social capital which encompassed formalised institutional relationships and structures such as government, political regime, rule of law, and judicial system was put forward by Douglass North. In his essay 'institutions, institutional change and economic performance',<sup>22</sup> North argues that it is institutional change at a particular magnitude that shapes the way societies evolve over time.<sup>23</sup> With reference to cooperation and collaboration among people, North says that historically, 'the emergence of institutions create a hospitable environment for cooperative solutions to complex exchange that provides for economic growth and human development.'<sup>24</sup> A historical perspective on social capital was also undertaken by Olson in his 1982 edition - 'the rise and decline of nations'. Olson's thesis suggests that if a society experiences political stability for a long period, that society is likely to develop 'strong special-interest groups' that in turn decrease the efficiency of a society from an economic standpoint.<sup>25</sup> Robert Bates<sup>26</sup> also advances North's perspective in his work 'institutions as investments,' by arguing that the interaction between the search for capital and the reforms that post-conflict states undertake to restructure their economies in order to enhance their standing in international capital markets was important. Therefore, by Bates' standard, economic recovery for any post-conflict society like Sierra Leone, though challenging but remains significant.

Others scholars like Bourdieu<sup>27</sup> argues that social capital can be converted from one form into another, and further suggest that social capital was an important part of development strategy in any post-conflict society in achieving durable peace. In his literature 'forms of capital,' Bourdieu points to the differences between social, cultural and economic capital, and goes on

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<sup>21</sup> Coleman, J. (1988) 'Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital' *American Journal of Sociology* Vol. 94, pp. S95 - S120.

<sup>22</sup> North, D., C. (1990) *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Olson, M. (1982) *The Rise and Decline of Nations*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

<sup>26</sup> Bates, R., H. (1996) 'Institutions as Investments'. Harvard Institute for International Development, Discussion Paper 527.

<sup>27</sup> Bourdieu, P. (1986) 'The Forms of Capital', In J. Richardson, [Ed]. *Handbook of Theory and Research for the Sociology of Education*. Westport: Greenwood Press.

to argue that they are all different from one another according to how easily they are transmitted.<sup>28</sup>

The mainstream concept and the role of social capital in post-conflict recovery and development were addressed by Ismail Serageldin<sup>29</sup> in his study 'sustainability as opportunity and the problem of social capital in terms of its contribution to sustainability and development'. Christiaan Grootaert<sup>30</sup> also examines Serageldin's argument in his work 'social capital: the missing link' in which he distinguishes between micro and macro-level institutions. Both Grootaert and Serageldin later took an integrating view of these different approaches by combining several of these concepts and focusing on their complementarity.

More recently, Francis Fukuyama<sup>31</sup> built on Coleman's concept of social capital and advanced the idea for the establishment of large, democratic, and capitalistic organisations to achieve economic success in post-conflict environments. In his study 'in trust: the social values and the creation of prosperity', Fukuyama says that the importance of trust, which he uses as a measure of social capital, is embedded in cultural factors such as ethics and moral values and the behaviour of people in society.<sup>32</sup> He also says that trust arises when a community shares a set of moral values in such a way as to create expectations of regular and honest behaviour among people in a given community. The motives necessary to sustain trust that foster it are further examined by other scholars like Diego Gambetta.<sup>33</sup> In his literature 'in trust: making and breaking cooperative relations', Gambetta explores a range of historical case studies of cooperation and its breakdown in society.

Another school of thought that plays important role in the conceptualization of social capital is championed by Mark Granovetter,<sup>34</sup> who argues that economic transactions are embedded in social relations. The concept of 'embeddedness', as he describes it focuses on how personal relationships and networks of connections generate trust and discourage what he

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid, pp. 241-258.

<sup>29</sup> Serageldin, I. (1996) 'Sustainability as Opportunity and the Problem of Social Capital,' *Brown Journal of World Affairs*, Vol. 3, No.2, pp. 187 - 203.

<sup>30</sup> Grootaert, C. (1997) 'Social Capital: The Missing Link?' In *Expanding the Measure of Wealth: Indicators of Environmentally Sustainable Development*. Monographs Series No. 7, The World Bank.

<sup>31</sup> Fukuyama, F. (1995) *Trust: The Social Virtues and the Creation of Prosperity*. New York: Free Press.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Gambetta, D. (1988) *Trust: Making and Breaking Cooperative Relations*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

<sup>34</sup> Granovetter, M. (1985) *Economic Action and Social Structure: the Problem of Embeddedness*, Vol. 91, No. 3, pp. 481 - 510.



calls ‘malfeasance’ in economic life.<sup>35</sup> Granovetter’s argument further suggest that, ‘once you take people’s social relationships into account, there is a different view of the economy, because much of what happens in the economy happens through peoples’ social relationships, where people carryout most of their economic activities through social relationships....’<sup>36</sup>

To complete the theoretical argument of the social capital concept, and to put it in the perspective of post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation, it is important to look at the definitions adopted by some important post-conflict reconstruction agents for their operational purposes. In its practical and theoretical analysis, the World Bank defines social capital as a combination of cognitive (micro), structural (meso) and institutional (macro) elements. The World Bank explores the ways social capital operates in specific DDR situations through a number of small-scale case studies. Therefore, ‘given the variety of organisational, cultural, political, and other contexts in the countries of intervention, the World Bank’s preferred model for addressing social capital has largely been based on the importance of the contextual variables as a determinant factor for collective action.’<sup>37</sup> The National Centre for Development Studies (NCDS) at the Australian National University also says that social capital exists within levels or scales as one feels belonging to family, profession, community or a country concurrently.<sup>38</sup> Adler and Kwon<sup>39</sup> supported this argument by stating that the sources of social capital lie in the social structure within which the actor is located. Thus, social capital can be thought of as having an individual and an aggregate component.<sup>40</sup> Hence, social capital belongs to the group and can be used by the group or individuals within the group.<sup>41</sup>

The Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) uses social capital as a marker of well-being, measured in turn through four major indicators - social participation,

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid, pp. 493 - 494.

<sup>37</sup> Grootaert, C., and van Bastelaer, T. (2001) *Understanding and Measuring Social Capital: A synthesis of Finding and Recommendations from Social Capital Initiatives*, SCI Working Paper No. 4.

<sup>38</sup> Kilby, P. (2002) ‘Social Capital and Civil Society.’ National Centre for Development Studies at ANU, Canberra.

<sup>39</sup> Adler, P., S, Kwon S., W. (2002) Social Capital: *Prospects for a New Concept*, Vol. 27, No.1, pp. 17 - 40.

<sup>40</sup> Newton, K. (1997) Social Capital and Democracy. *American Behavioural Scientist*, Vol. 40, No. 5, pp. 575 - 586.

<sup>41</sup> Sander, T., H. (2002) Social Capital and new Urbanism: Leading a Civic Horse to Water. *National Civic Review*, Vol. 91, No. 3, pp. 213 - 221.

civic participation, social support, and social networks.<sup>42</sup> According to OECD, social capital refers to networks, together with shared values and norms and understandings that facilitate cooperation within groups.<sup>43</sup> This definition also presupposes that social capital can manifest differently depending on the context and the underlying issues.

This thesis adopts Robert Putnam's definition as well as his conceptualisation of social capital, which he defines as the redemptive driver for social cohesion and civic engagement.<sup>44</sup> It involves the process of networking, making new contacts and reinforcing old ones, exchanging information, and generally using - or accumulating for potential use - social connections that will help maintain and advances the community or society in various ways. Robert Putnam's explanations of social capital and its accompanying solutions have provided starting points for this research.

### **3.2 Social Capital and Armed Conflict**

During armed conflict, people usually join a new social unit that rewards them with social status and a means to provide for themselves and their families. In some cases, social capital is generated in the form of demanding the right to socio-economic and political equality<sup>45</sup> from elite sections of society. Like in many other armed conflicts around the world, this was the case in Sierra Leone during the conflict, where for example the RUF used socially-based common values to rationalise the killings of large number of people.

If this is one reason why it is often difficult for combatants to stop fighting, another is that the 'war family'<sup>46</sup> defines their identity and thus serves as a source of income and security for them. Moreover, hostility and other forms of violence contribute to further social fragmentation by polarising groups, tribes, communities, and regions, and at the same time forcing individuals to join, support or oppose certain groups during conflict. In this way, citizens are caught in the middle, and are likely to move to formal groups based on stronger alliances, such as tribe, ethnic, race, religion or region. This fragmentation is important for

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<sup>42</sup> Franke, S. (2005) *Measurement of Social Capital: Reference Document for Public Policy Research, Development and Evaluation*.

<sup>43</sup> Cote, S. and Healy, T. (2001) *The Well-Being of Nations: The Role of Human and Social Capital*, p. 47.

<sup>44</sup> Putnam, R. (1995) "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital" *Journal of Democracy*. Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 65-78.

<sup>45</sup> Colletta, N. and Cullen, M. (2000) *Violent Conflict and the Transformation of Social Capital*. Washington: The World Bank.

<sup>46</sup> Hazen, J. (2007) Social Integration of Ex-Combatants after Civil War, p.1. Document Available on line at: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/egm/paper/Jennifer%20Hazen.pdf>. Document Accessed on line on 27/10/2014.

survival, but has damaging effects on the local and national economy, as well as social capital.<sup>47</sup> For example, when social capital is no longer in existence in a particular society, transaction costs rise due to the extra measures that should be taken to ensure proper delivery of goods and services. In addition, tolerance levels of social cohesion decrease and discrimination grows as groups and communities lose the ability to interact with those who are not members of their own community or group.<sup>48</sup>

Societies that experience serious human rights abuses, such as mass killings and other serious atrocities are often left with damaged social capital and low levels of trust even after demobilisation.<sup>49</sup> Hazen, for instance, notes that during DDR process, former combatants are stripped of their sense of importance, their support network, and most importantly their economic income as well as their social status.<sup>50</sup> To make matters worse, communities may refuse or become reluctant to accept them back as members because of any act of violence they committed during conflict in the very communities that they wish to return to.

In Sierra Leone, like in other post-conflict societies for example, resentment, anger and distrust were widespread during the initial stages of disarmament and demobilisation process.<sup>51</sup> Communities were unwilling to accept the return of former combatants back into communities that had been terrorised by rebels for over a decade. This was also evident in Uganda, where the initial reintegration of former combatants led to serious alienation and hostilities in most of the communities where the reintegration authorities operated.<sup>52</sup>

For any reintegration process to be successful, former combatants themselves must relinquish ties with wartime social networks, and make themselves ready for a new social structure, which include unfamiliar norms, beliefs and values, and laws within the civilian community into which they wish to be reintegrated. Making this transition can be difficult

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<sup>47</sup>Fukuyama, F. (1999) Social Capital and Civil Society. *The Institute of Public Policy*. Available on line at: <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/seminar/1999/.../fukuyama.htm>. Document Accessed on line on 27/12/2015.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Colletta, N. and Cullen, M. (2000) *Violent Conflict and the Transformation of Social Capital*. Washington: The World Bank.

<sup>50</sup> Hazen, J. (2007) Social Integration of Ex-Combatants after Civil War, p.1. Document Available on line at: <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/egm/paper/Jennifer%20Hazen.pdf>. Document Accessed on line on: 04/04/15.

<sup>51</sup>Gberie, L. (2005) *A Dirty War in West Africa: The RUF and the Destruction of Sierra Leone*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

<sup>52</sup> Colletta, N., Kostner, M. and Wiederhofer, I. (1996) *Case Studies in War to Peace Transition: The Demobilization and Reintegration of Ex-Combatants in Ethiopia, Namibia, and Uganda*. Washington: World Bank.

and challenging, and psychologically it can be traumatic and confusing for most former combatants.<sup>53</sup> Thus, for a post-conflict reintegration, positive conflict resolution processes and social capital renewal need to be carefully addressed.<sup>54</sup> I am convinced that failure to conduct well-planned and a well-funded reintegration programme can lead to further deterioration in social capital, poor economic conditions for former combatants as well as the communities into which they are reintegrated. It can also lead to the resumption of violence on a greater scale.

In contrast, reintegration programmes that use existing community organisations enable communities to take ownership of peacetime development projects, while at the same time facilitating the reintegration of former combatants. Informal networks among former combatants such as former fighters' associations, discussion groups and business ventures are significant elements of sustainable post-conflict economic and social reintegration of former combatants. These networks are particularly important in post-conflict societies such as Sierra Leone where social capital is in short supply.<sup>55</sup>

It is therefore essential for former combatants to be fully engaged in the formation and operation of civil society organisations, which is not only a generator of social capital but also a by-product of it.<sup>56</sup> Socio-economic reintegration of former combatants should be embedded in a well-planned, and a well-coordinated process that addresses their needs within the development framework of their communities. As Colletta points out, without a society-focused approach that fosters new, and nurtures pre-existing types of social capital, the reintegration of former combatants will be difficult or almost impossible to achieve. In other words, it will also be difficult to secure sustainable livelihoods in peacetime.

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<sup>53</sup> Ibid.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Colletta, N. (1997) Demilitarization, Demobilization, and the Social and Economic Integration of Ex-combatants: Lessons from the World Bank of Africa. USAID Conference Promoting Democracy, Human Rights, and Reintegration in Post-Conflict Societies, pp. 30 - 31. Document Available on line at: [http://pdf.dec.org/pdf\\_docs/PNACD087.pdf](http://pdf.dec.org/pdf_docs/PNACD087.pdf). Document Accessed on line on 19/10/16.

<sup>56</sup> See for instance Tongeren, P., V. (2004) 'Role of Civil Society in the Prevention of Armed Conflict', *European Centre of Conflict Prevention*. Document Available on line at: [http://www.un.org/esa/peacebuilding/Action/DesaTaskForce/papers\\_egm20041115/Role\\_civil\\_society\\_PVanTongeren.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/peacebuilding/Action/DesaTaskForce/papers_egm20041115/Role_civil_society_PVanTongeren.pdf). Document Accessed on line on 01/03/2015.

### 3.2.1 Social Capital and Post-Conflict Reintegration: Bridges to Bonds

I have referred above to the importance of transforming ‘Bridging’ into ‘Bonding’ social capital - forging enduring links between like-minded individuals, and reinforcing homogeneity’.<sup>57</sup> Bonding social capital is associated with strong norms and trust which can have both positive and negative manifestations and implications for social exclusion. Bridging social capital, on the other hand, also known as vertical social capital refers to the ties between individuals which cross social divides or between social groups.<sup>58</sup> Bonding social capital exists between individuals with a relatively high degree of network closure,<sup>59</sup> and builds strong ties, but can also result in higher walls excluding those outside the bonds. Known also as horizontal social capital, it strengthens ties between individuals within the same social group. It is often associated with local communities where many people know many other people in the group or network closure. From a network perspective, bridging social capital is associated with reciprocity and ‘thin trust’.<sup>60</sup> It provides access to network resources outside of an individual’s normal circles, and as such it can provide significant individual (and group) benefits. Linking social capital refers to ‘norms of respect and networks of trusting relationships between people who are interacting across explicit, formal, or institutionalized power or authority gradients in society’.<sup>61</sup>

Community-Based Development (CBD) initiatives are regarded as one of the key mechanisms for transforming bonding social capital into bridging social capital because of their inclusive and participatory nature. Sustainable CBD approaches depend on local communities to use their social capital to organize themselves as units and participate in development projects in a given community.<sup>62</sup> In a post-conflict society like Sierra Leone, CBD approaches are expected to facilitate community participation and cooperation, meeting victims and thus promote inclusive collective action and problem-solving with regard to the reintegration of former combatants. Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) lend themselves to the utilisation of CBD projects and approaches. For this reason, they are

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<sup>57</sup> Payne, T., G., Moore, C., Griffis, S., E., and Autry, C., W. (2011) Multilevel Challenges and Opportunities in Social Capital Research. *Journal of Management*, Vol. 37, No. 2, pp. 491 - 520.

<sup>58</sup> Lin, N. (1999) Building a Network Theory of Social Capital. *Connections*, Vol. 22, pp. 22 - 51.

<sup>59</sup> Burt, R., S. (2000) The Network Structure of Social Capital: Research in Organisational Behaviour. In: Sutton, R., and Staw, B. (2000). London: JAI Press.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Schuller, T., Baron, S., and Field, J. (2000) Social Capital: A Review and Critic. In S. Baron, J. Field, and T. Schuller (Eds.). *Social Capital*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>62</sup> Mansuri, G. and Rao, V. (2004) ‘Community-Based and Driven Development: A Critical Review’, *The World Bank Observer*, Vol.19, No. 1, pp. 1 - 39.

sometimes referred to as ‘messiahs or agents of peace’.<sup>63</sup> The roles of CBOs in post-conflict environments include supporting groups that had previously opposed one another during conflict to live together again as a unit and addressing shared practical concerns following demobilisation. In sum, CBDs in post-conflict societies aim to address immediate community rebuilding needs - which include ‘peace dividends’ or tangible ‘quick wins’. At the same time, they serve as catalyst in empowering conflict affected communities by acting as a means of restoring trust, norms and values such as uniting community members, enabling them to work together and restoring social cohesion.<sup>64</sup>

### **3.3 The Argument of Bonding and Bridging Social Capital**

This section examines, through the use of theoretical and empirical evidence, the role of social capital throughout violent conflict, exposing both its positive and negative aspects during and after conflict.

Social capital plays an important role in the emergence of conflict due to the ways in which it contributes to the cohesiveness of society. As Berkman and Kawach explain:

Social capital is an important pillar of social cohesion. It refers to two broader interrelated features of society: (a) the absence of covert conflict whether in the form of income or wealth inequality, racial/ethnic tensions, disparities in political participation, or other forms of polarisation and (b) the presence of strong social bonds - measured by levels of trust and norms of reciprocity, the abundance of associations that bridge social divisions (civic society), and the presence of institutions of conflict management, for instance responsive democracy, and independent judiciary, and an independent media.<sup>65</sup>

As noted from Berkman and Kawach’s explanation, it is evident that bonding and bridging social capital play an important role in creating, developing and maintaining social cohesion. The inward-looking ties that bind (bonding social capital) provide the fundamental building blocks of society while the outward looking ties that link (bridging social capital) provide cross-cutting relations across different social groups. It is in the discussion of social cohesion that we may be reminded of Putnam's argument of bonding social capital as 'sociological

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<sup>63</sup>Varshney, A. (2001) ‘Ethnic Conflict and Civil Society, India and Beyond’, *World Politics*, Vol. 53, No. 3, pp. 362 -98.

<sup>64</sup> Cliffe, S., Guggenheim, S. and Kostner, M. (2003) ‘Community - Driven Reconstruction as an Instrument in War-to-Peace Transitions’. CPR Working Paper No. 7. Washington: World Bank, *Social Development Department*.

<sup>65</sup> Berkman, L., F. and Kawachi, I. (2000) *Social Epidemiology*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 175 - 176.

superglue<sup>66</sup> and Fukuyama's argument of bridging social capital as that which increases 'radius of trust' in society.<sup>67</sup> Nevertheless, the exact balance between bonding and bridging social capital is important when considering its impact on social cohesion. When there is strong bonding social capital in society, it can be detrimental to other groups or communities within that society in terms of promoting inequality and exclusion of other social groups.<sup>68</sup>

Despite the fact that strong bonding social capital is necessity for community cohesion, it is not sufficient for the breakdown of social cohesion and the descent of society into conflict because bridging social capital too plays its own part. The absence of cross-cutting ties between groups and communities (bridging social capital) poses greater threat to social cohesion than strong bonding social capital because the lack of such ties can serve to magnify the strength of bonding social capital through inadequate interactions between groups, as well as reducing the opportunity for societal conflict resolution mechanisms to evolve. 'For the collective good of society, a transition has to take place from exclusive loyalty to primary groups to networks of secondary associations whose most important characteristic is that they bring together individuals who in some ways are different from the self. Social relations underlie all societal institutions, and in turn reinforce the organisation and functioning of a country's formal and informal institutions.'<sup>69</sup> Narayan emphasises the importance of inter-community networks as symbolising 'agents of peace',<sup>70</sup> due to the role they play in building bridges, and managing tensions that arise, between social groups. When these interconnections are absent there is the possibility of increased violence to take place in society.

The above analysis of how bonding and bridging social capital may impact on community cohesion as it gives an explanation of the dynamics in the bonding-bridging balance within a local context, i.e., one that has not been manipulated. However when a society is characterised by strong and weak bridging social capital, the potential for pervasiveness of social capital in order to weaken social cohesion and polarise society for individual and group gain

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<sup>66</sup> Putnam, R., D. (2000) *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

<sup>67</sup> Fukuyama, F. (1999) *The Great Disruption. Human nature and the reconstitution of social order*. London: Profile Books.

<sup>68</sup> Putnam, R., D. (2000) *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

<sup>69</sup> Narayan, D. (1999) *Bonds and Bridges: Social Capital and Poverty*, Policy Research Working Paper 2167, Poverty Reduction and Economic Management Network, World Bank, p. 12.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid.

can be significant.<sup>71</sup> Putnam discusses this observation in a different way thus suggesting that, ‘social capital is often most easily created in opposition to something or someone else.’<sup>72</sup> And as Woolcock and Narayan point out, the argument that social capital can be manipulated and contribute to both conflict and peacebuilding exercise place emphasis on the need for a closer examination of the concept.<sup>73</sup> When synergy is apparent between the state and community social capital can be developed in a positive manner leading to the benefit of the general community.<sup>74</sup> However when synergy diminishes in society, the tendency for the perversion of social capital becomes greater. If an authoritarian regime exists in a given society this can result in the reduction of bonding social capital, which thus results in conflict if bridging social capital is not present in order to offset it.<sup>75</sup>

When synergy is also absent the tendency for such a breakdown in social cohesion may increase further. As the provider of public goods and services and enforcer of law,<sup>76</sup> the state has the ability to discriminate against certain social groups in support of others and if the state chooses to do so the absence of synergy between state and community will lead to unrest. As discussed so far when the level of bridging social capital is low in society this can lead to dormant conflict even if the state is functioning well. This dormant conflict then progresses into active conflict especially if the state becomes dysfunctional.<sup>77</sup>

From the argument thus so far, it is evident that vertical and horizontal social capital and synergy between state and community have potential to contribute to and prevent the emergence of civil-conflict. Where the emergence of civil-conflict does occur, it is possible that the society is characterised by high levels of bonding social capital, low or non-existent of bridging social capital, and a lack of synergy between state and community.

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<sup>71</sup> Colletta, N. and Cullen, M. (2000) *Violent Conflict and the Transformation of Social Capital*. Washington: The World Bank.

<sup>72</sup> Putnam, R., D. (2000) *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

<sup>73</sup> Woolcock, M. and Narayan, D. (2000) Social Capital: Implications for theory, *Research and Policy*, *The World Bank Research Observer*, Vol. 15, No. 2, pp 225 - 249.

<sup>74</sup> Evans, P. (1996) Government Action, Social Capital and Development: Reviewing the Evidence on Synergy, *World Development*, Vol. 26, No. 6, pp.1119 - 1132.

<sup>75</sup> Colletta, N. and Cullen, M. (2000) *Violent Conflict and the Transformation of Social Capital*. Washington: The World Bank.

<sup>76</sup> Woolcock, M. and Narayan, D. (2000) Social Capital: Implications for theory, Research and Policy, *The World Bank Research Observer*, Vol. 15, No. 2, pp 225 - 249.

<sup>77</sup> Colletta, N. and Cullen, M. (2000) *Violent Conflict and the Transformation of Social Capital*. Washington: The World Bank.



A micro level study of the discussions of how social capital may contribute to the emergence of conflict can be conducted using Fukuyama's concept of 'trust'.<sup>78</sup> As will be discussed later in this present thesis, a society that has the tendency for conflict is characterised by high levels of bonding social capital, low levels or non-existent of bridging social capital, and a weak vertical social capital. As such trust becomes important and has a higher tendency to influence as to whether society will descend into conflict or not. When bonding social capital is high and bridging social capital is low trust may be relatively high between members within the different social groups whereas the level of trust between these social groups may be relatively low. This increases the tendency for conflict, as social cohesion is low and division is high. However, when coupled with low level of trust between state and society, a consequence of the lack of synergy, the potential for conflict is increased.

As Colletta and Cullen remark:

Vertical relations plagued by inequality and an unequal distribution of power and opportunity (often accompanied by exclusion and indignity) can instigate conflict. The absence of horizontal relations (of cross-cutting ties between unlike groups in a multicultural society) can erupt into hostilities if one group is seen as monopolising resources and power to the disadvantage of the others. And if, within these groups, high levels of bonding social capital link only like members, difference in access to resources and power may further aggravate relations and heighten tensions between those in control and those excluded. Thus, conflict is triggered by the presence of strong exclusionary bonds and disempowerment combined with a lack of horizontal and vertical linking social capital.<sup>79</sup>

In this context therefore, trust has an important role to play in the emergence of conflict. However, trust is also an important notion when it comes to the effects of conflict on social capital. As Colletta and Cullen further say, 'trust is a grossly depleted commodity during conflict'.<sup>80</sup> Trust becomes such a depleted commodity for various reasons. In a society where conflict takes place; there is the tendency for identity to form along increasingly narrow lines based on units of identity such as clan, tribe, ethnicity or religion, in order for those within these groups to maintain some degree of security.<sup>81</sup> One of the reasons for this division of identity is due to the 'root causes of conflict such as long-standing distrust and

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<sup>78</sup> Fukuyama, F. (1999) *The Great Disruption. Human Nature and the Reconstitution of Social Order*. London: Profile Books.

<sup>79</sup> Colletta, N. and Cullen, M. (2000) *Violent Conflict and the Transformation of Social Capital*. Washington: The World Bank, p. 16

<sup>80</sup> Ibid, p. 11.

<sup>81</sup> Lederach, J., P. (1997) *Building Peace: Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*. Washington: United States Institute for Peace.

marginalisation of some sections of society, poor governance and inequality which are reinforced by the immediate experience of violence, division, and atrocities. This experience, in turn, further exacerbates the hatred and fear that are fuelling the conflict.’<sup>82</sup>

The absence of cohabitation, whether during or after conflict enables the perversion of bonding social capital thus leading to the increased breakdown in social cohesion. ‘Where there is deep, long-term fear and direct experiences of violence that sustain an image of the enemy, individuals become vulnerable and easily manipulated. As a result of fear, sub-group identities are often created, reinforced and used by ‘leaders’ to solidify their position and the internal cohesion of the groups behind them. Increased polarisation and divisions become functional for increasing cohesion, reducing ambiguity, and decreasing internal criticisms of leaders.’<sup>83</sup> The impact this has for the bonding-bridging dynamic is that bonding social capital within these sub-groups become strengthened and polluted due to fear and distrust whilst bridging social capital that is important for social cohesion, is reduced thus furthering the strengthening of negative bonding social capital. The effect for the conflict is to create greater polarisation and deeper social cleavages, which conspire to reinforce sub-group identity and potentially turn hostilities into a protracted violence.

Both bonding and bridging social capital play important roles in causing and continuation of violence. At the same time, they play an important role in societal cohesion following the end of conflict. As Colletta and Cullen point out, ‘social capital can be constructive and support social cohesion and the mitigation of conflict.’<sup>84</sup> This particularly becomes important because social capital is ‘a resource whose supply grows rather than decreases which (as opposed to physical capital for instance) becomes worn-out if not used.’<sup>85</sup> To this end it is important to examine how social capital is measured, and how it can help in transforming conflict as well as how it helps in post-conflict reconciliation and reintegration.

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<sup>82</sup> Ibid, pp. 13 -14.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid, p. 15.

<sup>84</sup> Colletta, N. and Cullen, M. (2000) *Violent Conflict and the Transformation of Social Capital*. Washington: The World Bank, p.16.

<sup>85</sup> Putnam, R., D. (1993) *Making Democracy Work. Civic Traditions in Modern Italy*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, pp. 37 - 38.

### **3.4 Measuring Social Capital and how it is Operationalised**

As discussed in section 3.1, social capital is relatively a new concept in terms of its applicability to post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation. Other forms of capital such as human and physical capital have, throughout their existence, developed ways through which they are measured and applied, though such development has taken place over time and have been rigorously tested in their application. At present this is not well established in the case of social capital.<sup>86</sup> As a result, it is in its early stages in terms of a clear or agreed definition of what it is and how it can and should be measured or applied to post-war investigations.<sup>87</sup>

Over the years a number of empirical studies in the field of social capital have contributed to the development of different proxy indicators of social capital and with them the debate as to which proxies are most effective and acceptable has emerged. Although it is important that the proxy indicators utilised within empirical research are accurate and do furnish us with accurate information pertaining to the level of social capital evident within a group, community, society or nation, it is not helpful to establish a closed list of indicators that can be applied to empirical research into social capital because it is difficult to establish a stable and enduring list of indicators for social capital.

Indicators used in this thesis have therefore been allowed to evolve as the conceptual definition and, more important, the operational definition of social capital emerges. This is seen as a useful approach for the following reasons:

First, the indicators chosen for any research study will be dependent on the type of social capital that is being examined, the nature of the research phenomenon as well as the geographical location where the study is being conducted. As noted also in section 3.1, studies dealing with social capital, in its present understanding, started in the United States and as a result the proxies used in these studies were applicable to the society in which they were applied. However, the proxies used in the United States studies may not be applicable in other areas of the world even if the study is looking at the same type of phenomena. This is true for developing societies where the use of ‘Eurocentric’ proxies of social capital may

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<sup>86</sup> Grootaert, C. and Bastelaer, T., V. (2001) Understanding and Measuring Social Capital: A Synthesis of Finding and Recommendations from the Social Capital Initiative, Social Capital Initiative Working Paper No. 24, The World Bank.

<sup>87</sup> Grootaert, C. (1998) Social Capital: The Missing Link? Social Capital Initiative Working Paper No. 3, The World Bank, p. 10.

result in different, and often inaccurate, research findings. As Krishna notes, ‘applying social capital concept outside a Western environment, its empirical referents will vary as different cultures manifest social capital differently’.<sup>88</sup> It is important therefore that an accurate and effective social capital proxy that relates to the community, society or culture being investigated is adopted.

Second, and as shown earlier in this section, there are various types of social capital and all of these different types will influence the measurement tool we seek to adopt. Studies that examine horizontal and vertical social capital for instance will differ in their indicators according to their focus. Horizontal social capital may use different indicators that are dependent on whether bonding or bridging social capital is being examined. In order to observe bonding social capital, one may look at indicators such as levels of community trust; types of reliance on community support; old-age dependency ratios; levels of crime in a given community, and kinship networks. On the other hand, proxies for bridging social capital may include the number and types of associations; membership of associations; community ethno-linguistic fragmentation; and social mobility rates. Vertical social capital, defined as the link between state and civil society, may be exemplified through trust in government, trade union membership, number of people facing political or economic discrimination, measure of political stability, voter turnout, and strength of democratic institutions.

Third, it is important to acknowledge that social capital indicators are proxy because they provide us with a superficial alternative of the phenomena we are investigating. As Jackman and Miller point out, ‘trust is not isomorphic with group membership’.<sup>89</sup> Jackman and Miller are not negating the use of trust in understanding social capital; instead they are reminding us that group membership does not always translate into trust or vice versa. In terms of how this impacts on our understanding and measurement of social capital it does not denote that the use of proxy indicators is ineffective but that it is important to know that proxy indicators provide an important substitute for what is a social phenomenon that is difficult to quantify. As a result, it is important that throughout our empirical research into social capital we employ triangulation techniques wherever possible. As Putnam points out, ‘No single source

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<sup>88</sup> Krishna, A. (2002) *Active Social Capital: Tracing the Roots of Development and Democracy*. New York: Columbia University Press, p. 56.

<sup>89</sup> Jackman, R., W. and Miller, R., A. (1998) Social Capital and Politics, *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 1, No.1, pp. 47-73.

of data is flawless, but the more numerous and diverse the sources, the less likely that they could all be influenced by the same flaw'.<sup>90</sup>

In the context of post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation, the application and measurement of social capital is clearly one such example of where careful consideration should be taken. Although the concept of social capital has been applied to the context of conflict much research has dealt with this subject in a superficial way only referring to the fact that conflict has an impact on social capital and vice versa with no real attempt to examine the dynamics between social capital and post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation. One of the most comprehensive studies into social capital in the context of conflict and post-conflict context is the study undertaken by Colletta and Cullen: *Lessons from Cambodia, Guatemala, Somalia, and Rwanda*.<sup>91</sup> Their investigation involves the dynamics between conflict and social capital in four different conflict-affected countries as noted above. In each of these countries a different range of social capital proxies were adopted. These indicators are dependent on the definition of social capital used.

In the Cambodia study the type of social capital examined was vertical and horizontal together with structural and cognitive social capital. The following proxies were used to identify the level of existing social capital: community associations, community events, local leadership, links with external agencies, and informal networks. Community events included those events that improved communication and promoted civic-mindedness and selfless behaviour, among others. Informal networks examined informal exchanges of information and resource exchanges as well as what shapes these exchanges. When looking at associations the researchers looked at the structures, roles, and rules within associations and the ways in which they nurture mutual help, self-help, cooperation, and solidarity. Investigations into local leadership centred on investigating the types of leadership and the role leaders played in political, social, religious and welfare activities and how they shaped networks within, and between communities. Finally, the external links investigated where external community links between the community and government, NGOs and the private sector.<sup>92</sup>

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<sup>90</sup> Putnam, R., D. (2000) *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon and Schuster, p.415.

<sup>91</sup> Colletta, N. and Cullen, M. (2000) *Violent Conflict and the Transformation of Social Capital*. Washington: The World Bank.

<sup>92</sup> Ibid.

The analysis of social capital in Guatemala and Somalia were carried out by CERFE, an Italian research NGO that has had prolonged field experience in both countries. In their findings, the aspect of social capital focused on was civil society's protective provision of basic survival needs and the creation of conditions for sustainable economic development. The study was essentially divided into social initiative and social responsibility. During the study, they viewed social initiative as civil society's engagement in efforts towards economic growth and development. On the other hand, social responsibility was characterised by civil society's ability to provide what they saw as 'social protection or welfare during crises such as lack of access to higher education, unemployment, and during conflict.'<sup>93</sup>

Social capital concept has been little applied to manage social cohesion and inequality in post-conflict environments.<sup>94</sup> Social capital approach in Sierra Leone's reintegration and reconciliation reinforces a dynamic in which structural barriers of class is reduced to individual characteristics rather than impediments that whole groups and communities experience.<sup>95</sup> As study has shown in socially deprived and segregated communities such as West Belfast in Northern Ireland,<sup>96</sup> social capital can be a useful concept to understand the different values of network relationships for a society emerging from violent conflict like Sierra Leone in a socio-political context.<sup>97</sup>

Further debate exists over whether social capital is an individual or a community concept,<sup>98</sup> or a function of both.<sup>99</sup> The position of this thesis is in the focus on the actions of individual former combatants in relation to the community into which they are reintegrated that the framework of social capital finds its greatest usefulness.

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<sup>93</sup> Ibid, pp. 53 - 54.

<sup>94</sup> DeFilippis, J. (2001) 'The Myth of Social Capital in Community Development', *Housing Policy Debate*, Vol. 12, No. 4, pp. 781 – 806.

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> Leonard, M. (2004) 'Bonding and Bridging Social Capital: Reflections from Belfast', *Sociology*, Vol. 38, No. 3, pp. 927 - 44.

<sup>97</sup> Lin, N. (2001) *Social Capital: A Theory of Social Structure and Action*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>98</sup> Carpiano, (2005) *Toward a Neighbourhood Resource-Based Theory of Social Capital for Health: can Bourdieu and Sociology Help?* Vol. 62, No.1, pp.165 - 75.

<sup>99</sup> Coleman, J. (1990) *Foundations of Social Theory*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

### **3.5 Social Capital Concept and its Application to Sierra Leone**

The aftermath of the conflict in Sierra Leone provides a unique opportunity to more closely examine how social capital is operationalised in a post-conflict environment - in which it could be its most useful. This examination is especially relevant when trauma is mixed with inequality, poverty and social exclusion. The present research is grounded in the assumption that social capital exists in people's lives, and that the important questions are what kinds of social capital exists and how do people use it? As I will discuss later in chapters 5 and 6, and again in the conclusion, bonding and bridging social capital were useful in helping former combatants to prepare for, endure and mutually aid one another during and after the conflict in terms of their reintegration and reconciliation.

The different conceptual types of social capital overlapped at times, but it was found that bonding social capital was especially relevant in everyday activities and for community cohesion following the end of the conflict. The usefulness of Putnam's bonding social capital was especially true for the economic status of the former combatants. We saw the strength of bonding social capital in facilitating the pooling of resources, as well as working together to survive the conflict, both emotionally and physically.

Bridging social capital, too, understood as social networks between socially heterogeneous groups that widen social capital by increasing 'radius of trust' in Fukuyama's terminology,<sup>100</sup> was important in helping former combatants survive the immediate aftermath of the conflict. Connections across social, cultural and economic lines provided access to essential resources for them. This type of bridging social capital was common and indispensable in a post-conflict environment in Sierra Leone. In addition to support offered to former combatants after their demobilisation, they were introduced to new ideas, and ways of life. This crossing of economic and social lines was especially important for them as they prepared to live as civilians again.

What is important however, is not just the existence of social capital, but how it operated in the lives of former combatants and their host communities. It is evident that bonding and bridging social capital are not compartmentalised, but are seen as experiences that rely on,

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<sup>100</sup> Fukuyama, F. (1999) Social Capital and Civil Society. *The Institute of Public Policy*. Document Available on line at: <https://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/seminar/1999/.../fukuyama.htm>. Document Accessed on line on 27/12/2015.

build upon and interact with each other. The interaction of bonding and bridging social capital resources played and continues to play an important role in the reintegration and reconciliation of the Sierra Leonean society.

It is clear from this and other similar studies such as Hawkins and Abrams,<sup>101</sup> and Colletta<sup>102</sup> that while bonding social capital provides one layer of security and connection, it alone may not sustain wellbeing in difficult times. Bonding helped former combatants to survive or plan for survival, but lack of community resources and support left many of them struggling to maintain their lives. Therefore, combining bridging and bonding social capital offers the best social chance.

As previously identified, and given the complexity of social capital conceptualisation, all studies must apply social capital concept in relation to the particular discipline, study level, and context. Many conceptualisations over simplify the concept to the point where much of the meaning and significance is lost. The other end of the spectrum is also problematic because operationalising the concept becomes almost impossible simply because of this complexity. However, this thesis uses Putnam's conceptualisation of social capital to examine the reintegration and reconciliation of former combatants in Sierra Leone following the termination of the civil-conflict. Defined in section 3.1 as 'the redemptive driver for social cohesion and civic engagement that involves the process of networking, making new contacts and reinforcing old ones, and generally using or accumulating for potential use - social connections that will help maintain and advances society in many ways, especially those societies emerging from violent-conflict.'<sup>103</sup>

Building on Putnam's concept of redemptive driver for social cohesion and civic engagement, as noted above, the concept helps in analysing how cohabitation helps to serve as an alternative in the absent of trust. Moreover, the concept provides insights into the nature of cooperation and human relations within the Sierra Leonean post-conflict society. It points out which set of social categories of people - IDP, former combatants, refugees, and

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<sup>101</sup> Hawkins, R., L. and Abrams, C. (2007) 'Disappearing Acts: The Social Networks of Formerly Homeless Individuals with Co-occurring Disorders', *Social Science and Medicine*, Vol. 65, pp. 2031 - 2042.

<sup>102</sup> Colletta, N., Kostner, M. and Wiederhofer, I. (1996) *Case Studies in War to Peace Transition: The Demobilization and Reintegration of Ex-Combatants in Ethiopia, Namibia, and Uganda*. Washington: World Bank.

<sup>103</sup> Putnam, R. (1995) "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital" *Journal of Democracy*. Vol. 6, No. 1, pp. 65-78.



community members are particularly affected by the post-conflict initiatives. The study reveals that social capital in Sierra Leone is shattered, with former combatants and their host communities pursuing social strategies of social reintegration, reconciliation and inclusion. While this benefits relatively most former combatants to settle in communities on the bases of what Stovel describes as “there is no bad bush to throw away a bad child”,<sup>104</sup> the achievement of mutual support, networks, and cooperation have positive ramification on achieving sustainable through cohabitation.

The application of Putnam’s concept of social capital in this study has two key implications. First, high levels of support for the former combatants, in terms of their identity, and a sense of belonging to the Sierra Leonean community render a way forward for achieving effective social reintegration and reconciliation. In an environment where social advancements of former combatants are observed with suspicion, marginalisation, and name-calling, and where immoral accusations are easily made, it is less likely that cooperation and cohabitation between the former combatants and community members are easily achieved. Thus, positive cohabitation and trust building are expected to be limited.

Second, given the serious impact left behind by the civil-conflict, and the fact that alignments with various armed groups did not follow clear ethnic/tribal or regional patterns, although class patterns were sometimes observed, there is virtually no immediate danger of Sierra Leone relapsing into civil-conflict again. However, the exclusion of a significant proportion of former combatants from political participation is likely to facilitate social discontent, with the state blamed for its failure to provide equal political platform for all citizens.

In order to properly examine and analyse community relations, in terms of the presence of former armed actors, exchange of goods and services, linkages, extended family, intermarriages, conflict-resolution mechanisms, building trust, and cooperation or collective responsibility toward achieving sustainable peace and development, Putnam’s concept was seen as the most appropriate conceptualisation.

Adopting Putnamian concept in this study also facilitated the examination of social responsibility, or the level at which former combatants were involved in community projects

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<sup>104</sup> Stovel, L. (2008) 'There's No Bad Bush to Throw Away a Bad Child': 'Tradition'-Inspired Reintegration in Post-War Sierra Leone. *The Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 2, pp. 305 - 324.

and development, as well as their interaction with community members. These were examined along with society's social initiative, or potential to have a positive effect on peace-building. The approach also helps in analysing the capacity of civil society, which encompasses both bonding and bridging social capital, within and between the civilians and the former combatants. In its quest to lump all social capital together under the rubric of civil society, the concept accepts the importance of bonding social capital manifested in relationship, association, and informal networks and groups.

### **3.6 Concluding Remarks**

Although social capital is relatively a new concept as compared to other concepts, it contributes an important way of examining conflict and post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation after conflict ends. In terms of post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation it has the capability to enable a far more comprehensive understanding of conflict and how former combatants are successfully reintegrated following their demobilisation.

Following its detailed examination and applying it within a conflict analysis, social capital enhances our understanding of how conflict can occur and its impact on social cohesion. The result of this is in two ways: firstly, by increasing our understanding of the factors that causes conflict we are more able to develop conflict prevention mechanisms and strategies that can diminish the likelihood of low level conflict advancing to full-scale, and also utilise available networks and associations that promote social cohesion. Secondly, by enhancing our understanding of the effect of conflict on social cohesion we are better able to design and implement post-conflict development strategies that result in more meaningful impacts for those affected by conflict.

Despite the fact that social capital was developed and first used in Western societies, it has recently been applied in societies emerging from conflict and in developing societies in general. As a result, social capital concept currently explains societal issues in developing societies better than in the Western context due to the communitarian nature of many of these developing societies. The importance of a robust consideration of the various methods that can be utilised for the measurement of social capital cannot be underestimated, because it is through such a consideration that we develop our ability to improve our knowledge of social capital. The application of social capital concept in this study enhances our understanding of

conflict and post-conflict reintegration. The notion of trust represents a central theme to both social reintegration and social capital, along with cooperation and coordination, and it is through observing these themes that we can develop our understanding of them in isolation and the way in which they may combine to contribute to reconciliation and social cohesion.

This study therefore concludes, in agreement with Schuller and his colleagues,<sup>105</sup> that social capital concept is unique in its ability to bridge the theoretical gap between individual former combatants and community that spans from the micro to the macro in an interactive and independent manner more effectively than many previous socio-economic and political theories.

The next chapter looks at the choice of methods and methodology adopted for this study. It discusses the ethical issues faced as well as the role of the researcher. The chapter then conclude that the results obtained through the combination of different research techniques was the presentation of a balanced, empirical study, and a well contextualised account of the effects of social relationships on the reintegration of former combatants, which added to the existing knowledge in the field.

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<sup>105</sup> Schuller, T., Baron, S. and Field, J. (2000) 'Social Capital: A Review and Critique', in S. Baron, J. Field and T. Schuller (Eds), *Social Capital: Critical Perspectives*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

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## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **Researching Former Combatants in Sierra Leone: Methods and Methodology**

#### **Introduction**

This chapter explains and justifies the choice of methods and methodology adopted for this study. The chapter begins by defining and providing an explanation of ethnography and why it was the most appropriate method for this research. It discusses the ethical issues and other difficulties that this research process has faced. Data collection and analysis is discussed including how data were collected, recorded and analysed. My own role as a researcher is also discussed.

#### **4.1 Qualitative Methodology**

Qualitative methodology allows for the exploration of people's feelings and thoughts.<sup>1</sup> The purpose of this research is to examine an alternative perspective to view the process of former combatant's reintegration and reconciliation that do not rely on traditional measures of reintegration, which in the past have been economic and political indicators. The thesis, will instead also assess the impact of conflict on social capital and explore ways in which the effective social reintegration of former combatants may facilitate the restoration of social capital destroyed during the course of the civil-conflict in Sierra Leone. In order to do this, the thesis will need to focus on the perspective of former combatants who directly participated in the conflict, which might help our understanding of how the conflict was experienced by those who participated in it.

In order to fully understand the complexity of post-conflict reintegration in Sierra Leone from a social perspective, the study proposes social capital concept, which deals with society and human actions. It composes of, among other things norms, networks, reciprocity, and trust. Norms are the standards of behaviour set from within the community itself, where community levies sanctions on those who do not behave according to the prescribed rules. Networks are systems of social linkages with other members of the community one can rely

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<sup>1</sup> Creswell, J., W. (2007) *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design - Choosing Among five Approaches*. London: Sage.

on such as family, neighbours and members of the same social or religious organisations. Reciprocity is where every member of the community has duties to every other member, usually known as the 'golden rule'. Trust is a sense that members of the same community conduct their relations in good faith and that no individual act solely out of self-interest.

The capacity to mobilise social capital centred on assessing how well members of the community are involved in improving actors' social and material well-being. Therefore, the application of social capital concept is of great significance to this study.

Social capital theory has traditionally been associated with attempts to explain cross- and sub-national variation in economic development, community cooperation, unity and the quality of democracy in societies after the termination of conflict.<sup>2</sup> The core proposition is that former combatants' participation in civic life builds a foundation of cooperation and mutuality between them and their receiving communities. Successful cooperation between former combatants and their receiving community has been found to underpin a network of functioning civil society in which members of society cooperate and work together in a peaceful environment.<sup>3</sup> Hence the application of qualitative research methods in combination with social capital concept provide further insight and rich data about the complex issue of social phenomenon like the reintegration of former combatants,<sup>4</sup> and will answer the research question posed earlier.

#### **4.1.1 Ethnography**

I have chosen ethnography because of its link to the study of social phenomenon. I wanted to explore the efficacy of alternative perspectives in the reintegration of former combatants as durable peace-building mechanisms in post-conflict Sierra Leone. By so doing, the thesis argues that where the reintegration of former fighters occurs without reconciliation built on trust, peaceful coexistence is an alternative. Interpretivism looks for patterns of meaning, describes meanings, and tries to understand the views of former combatants and others who were directly or indirectly involved in the reintegration and reconciliation exercise in post-war Sierra Leone.

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<sup>2</sup> Fukuyama, F. (1996) *Trust: The Social Virtues and The Creation of Prosperity*. New York: Free Press.

<sup>3</sup> Jackman, R., W., and Miller, R., A. (1996) A Renaissance of Political Culture? *American Journal of Political Science*, Vol. 40, No. 3, pp. 632 - 659.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.



Ethnography involves the study of a particular social group in naturally occurring settings.<sup>5</sup> One of the key aims of ethnographic research,<sup>6</sup> is to gain an understanding of the social phenomenon in a given community. Hobbs and May define ethnography as a way of ‘telling it like it is’<sup>7</sup>, describing the human action and looking at the social world being studied as seen from the inside.<sup>8</sup> Nevertheless, Davies points out that the researcher's understanding of the social phenomenon forms the basis of the findings, which come from the information provided by respondents.<sup>9</sup> Denzin acknowledges the point raised by Davies, and argues that, ‘There can never be a final representation of what was meant or said - only different textual representations of different experiences’.<sup>10</sup> The researcher has their own interpretation of an event and the participants may have a different view on a particular issue. The researcher attempts to uncover the participants' interpretation and draw their own conclusion about the event using the many versions that exist to try to make sense of the experience.

Researchers document their findings to become part of the phenomenon being investigated to gain understanding and insight. As noted in section 0.1, as a Sierra Leonean myself, who lived in the country before and during much of the conflict, and now as a researcher, I was already part of the phenomenon. However, in order to examine and understand the reintegration and reconciliation of former combatants in Sierra Leone following the termination of eleven years of violent conflict, I needed to undertake this research process. In ethnography the researcher needs to have direct and sustained contact with those being researched within their natural setting. This involves listening to their narratives; what they say and asking them questions.<sup>11</sup>

As Hammersley and Atkinson advocate, ethnographic investigation should take place by the researcher in an undisturbed environment.<sup>12</sup> Ethnography should also be undertaken over a period of time in order to reduce the impact of the researcher's presence on the situation being

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<sup>5</sup> Hobbs, D and May, T. (1993) *Interpreting the Field - Accounts of Ethnography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>6</sup> Spradley, J., P. (1979) *The Ethnographic Interview*. New York: Rinehart and Winston.

<sup>7</sup> Hobbs, D, and May, T. (1993) *Interpreting the Field - Accounts of Ethnography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> Davies, C., A. (1999) *Reflexive Ethnography - A Guide to Researching Selves and Others*. London: Routledge.

<sup>10</sup> Denzin, N. (1997) *Interpretive Ethnography - Ethnographic Practices for the 21st Century*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, pp. 5 - 6.

<sup>11</sup> Ricoeur, P. (1980) 'The Narrative Function', in W., J., T. Mitchell (Ed.), *On Narrative*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

<sup>12</sup> Hammersley, M, and Atkinson, P. (1991) *Ethnographic Principles in Practice*. London: Routledge.

investigated.<sup>13</sup> The researcher's presence may alter behaviour for a short period, but this will only continue for a while as 'real' behaviour re-emerges. Therefore, a period of adjustment is required in order for behaviour to return to normal as individuals can only maintain an act for a short period.

Ethnography utilises three main research methods; observation, interviews or focus groups and the study of written documents or artefacts.<sup>14</sup> The observation is normally carried out over a period of time with the researcher becoming part of the research process. Interviews or focus groups can either follow the observation or be carried out during the period of observation to explore issues further. Policy and other important documents relating to a particular issue under investigation are studied to find out about how information is recorded and transmitted.

Ethnographic design was adopted because I wanted to observe and interact with the participants, the former combatants in their real-life environment. Paul Richards claims that if you want to understand African farmers, it was best to observe, listen, and interact with them on their farm fields while they are farming.<sup>15</sup> Following Richards' perception, I listened and interacted with participants, then examined critically their narratives and views.

## **4.2 Ethical Considerations**

Any study that involves human subjects must seek, receive, and maintain good ethical approval from a recognised institutional ethics committee.<sup>16</sup> The question of whether sufficient information about a particular research process is provided to participants, whether the researcher abides by ethical consideration when undertaking a particular research, ethical approval from the necessary institution remains paramount. As such, this research was ethically approved by the University of Surrey Ethics Committee in November 2014.

My fieldwork involved interviewing a range of participants. During the interview process, high level of confidentiality and anonymity were maintained. Confidentiality and anonymity advocate that the identity of research participants should be kept secret or confidential to a

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<sup>13</sup>Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Hammersley, M, and Atkinson, P. (1991) *Ethnographic Principles in Practice*. London: Routledge.

<sup>15</sup> Richards, P. (1986) *Coping with Hunger. Hazard and Experiment in a West African Rice Farming System*. London: UCL Press.

<sup>16</sup>Morse, J., M. and Field, P., A. (1996) *Nursing Research: the application of Qualitative approach*, p.46.

third party. Berg<sup>17</sup> makes a distinction between confidentiality and anonymity. He defines confidentiality as an active attempt to remove from the research records of any elements that may indicate or reveal the subject's identity, and anonymity as where the subject remains nameless and unidentified<sup>18</sup> throughout a particular research process.

Respondents' social, physical, and psychological well-being were not affected as a result of their participation in this research be it physical harm, humiliation, exclusion, shame or death. As a researcher, I was able to deal with threats to my safety and well-being in the field, as I considered carefully how to avoid harm to participants or third parties, how to protect their rights, sensitivities, interests, and privacy as well as my own safety. Social Research Association's (SRA) ethical guidelines<sup>19</sup> say that social researchers should try by all means to minimise disturbance to the subjects and the subject's relationship with their environment.<sup>20</sup> As such, SRA's ethical guidelines were strictly adhered to throughout this study.

Since I was working with some respondents who were vulnerable and marginalised because of their direct role in the conflict, data collection was guided by the following ethical considerations: (1) confidentiality (2) voluntary participation (3) respondent's well-being and (d) identity disclosure. Before each meetings or interviews, I sought the participant's consent and also gave information about the nature and the reasons for my research (see Appendix 2 and 3). This include explaining confidentiality of their identities except if they consented to disclosure and asking them to read the participant information sheet (PIS), which explained the nature and purpose of the study. Although there were some instances where participants were not interested in reading the PIS, I decided to discuss the rationale for my research in a discursive manner with every participant.

I still had to utilize what Kovats-Bernat<sup>21</sup> describes as 'localised ethics principles' - which states that for every data collection to be successful, the advice and the recommendations of the local population, especially in closed localised communities, must be sought and taking seriously in relation to the type of conversations that were significant. For example, while conducting an interview with one of my respondents, this respondent was not comfortable in

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<sup>17</sup> Berg, B., L. (2001) *Qualitative Research Methods for the Social Sciences*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

<sup>18</sup>Ibid.

<sup>19</sup> Social Research Association (SRA) (2003) *Introduction to Ethical Guidelines*. London: SRA.

<sup>20</sup>Ibid.

discussing the role of the *poro* secret society in promoting post-conflict social reintegration and reconciliation. Being a cultural insider, I was aware that the *poro* secret society plays an important role in promoting social relations in local communities among Mendes and Temnes ethnic groups in particular. Being aware of the cultural sensitivity of the issue, I avoided raising questions relating to secret societies in all of the remaining interviews and instead relied on literature that have been written by other academics regarding the role secret societies play in peace-building and post-conflict community cohesion.

### **4.3 Access to the Field**

Conducting fieldwork in societies ravaged by war and poverty always presents a set of complex challenges. It is even more daunting when the focus of the empirical research is on both the victims and perpetrators. Jasini for instance states that it is not easy to gain access to a post-war society for the purpose of data collection because of the challenges those societies may pose.<sup>22</sup> Due to my link in Sierra Leone, I had easy access to most communities and to organise interviews. Before leaving for Sierra Leone in April 2015, I had already established contact with my would-be gatekeeper, Dr John Lamina Conteh, a Sierra Leonean academic, and a researcher in similar field. Dr Conteh has vast knowledge and experience in this area because of his long-term involvement for the cause. He was helpful in providing me with contacts of would-be participants for my research, which had a snowball effect (see Appendix 4). It was therefore easy for me to gain access to the participants. Jasini cites this as an advantage of doing research in a place that you are familiar with.<sup>23</sup> I considered myself fortunate to have chosen to conduct research in Sierra Leone.

However, because of the way in which I gained access to the field I was aware of coercion and made every effort to ensure that participants made an informed decision about taking part in the study and did not feel obliged to do so. In their article, Appelbaum and his colleagues discuss the impact of coercion on their own respondents. They were aware of the pressure that is placed on respondents during interviews. However, they point out that from their experience some respondents are not easily pressured into divulging information that they wanted to keep private. I agree with this notion, and I believe that the respondents that I was

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<sup>21</sup> Kovats-Bernat, C., J. (2002) 'Negotiating Dangerous Fields: Pragmatic Strategies for Fieldwork Amid Violence and Terror,' *American Anthropologist*, Vol.104, No.1, pp. 208 - 22.

<sup>22</sup> Jasini, R. (2015) From the Field: The Challenges of Conducting Research with Victims of Mass Atrocities. Document Available on line at: <http://bordercriminologies.law.ox.ac.uk/from-the-field-the-challenges-of-conducting-research-with-victims-of-mass-atrocities/>. Document Accessed on line on:17/05/16.

dealing with had the opportunity not to participate in my research and they also had many opportunities to discuss subjects that they did not want me to hear about or be aware of outside of my hearing.

Johnson discusses honesty and openness in research and gives examples of past research that was covert in which respondents were not correctly informed about their role in a study.<sup>24</sup> This is no longer permissible due to rigorous ethical requirements by the SRA, and ethics committees are very keen that researchers consider their position and do not misuse any power invested in them that they might have over the participants to coerce them into taking part.

#### **4.3.1 Informed Consent**

Before the start of any interviews, I informed the participant about the study and asked for their consent. Therefore, I spoke to all participants by providing each one of them with my contact details (in Appendix 3) and a PIS (also in Appendix 3 in p. 229). After participants had time to read about the study they were asked to voluntarily complete and sign the consent form. It allows them to opt out of the study at any time. Participant consent forms were collected by me before the start of every interview.

Like the SRA, the University of Surrey Ethic Committee mandates that all participants had consented to taking part in the research. This was achieved by asking all participants before the start of the interviews for permission, this was practiced by other similar studies such as Humphreys and Weinstein.<sup>25</sup> It is difficult for everyone taking part in a given study to give their consent, and as Johnson points out, ‘ethnographers in complex social situations are rarely able to gain consent from everyone they meet’.<sup>26</sup> However, I managed to convince all of my respondents to give their consent. The University of Surrey Ethic Committee was satisfied with the level of consent for this study as I was abiding by my professional code of conduct with regards to participant information.

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid.

<sup>24</sup> Johnson, M. (2004) *Real World Ethics and Nursing Research*. Nursing Times Research, p. 253.

<sup>25</sup> Humphreys, M., and Weinstein, J. (2007) Demobilisation and Reintegration. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 51, No. 4, pp. 531-567.

<sup>26</sup> Johnson, M. (2004) *Real World Ethics and Nursing Research*. Nursing Times Research, p. 253.

### 4.3.2 Ensuring no Harm

Before gaining access to the field, I decided how I would deal with problems of harm should it occur. It was decided in discussion with my supervisory team that I would intervene if necessary and that I would report any instances to Medecins Sans Frontieres, Connaught Hospital or the Sierra Leone Police. This was difficult for me as I did not feel that this was my role as a researcher to 'police' the respondents. But as Dixon-Woods reminds us 'ethical issues about when and how to intervene are not only common but very important in social research',<sup>27</sup> and other scholars such as Hobbs and May acknowledge the dilemma of not intervening when harm occurs during a research process.<sup>28</sup>

Johnson discusses few reasons why intervention is a difficult concept for researchers in societies emerging from violent conflict. One of those reasons is the 'wildebeest perspective',<sup>29</sup> which points to the nature of documentaries where the person filming does not intervene when the predator stalks and eats the vulnerable new born. It is believed that intervention would disturb or intervene with nature,<sup>30</sup> or in this case, the social setting in ethnography, where the researcher observes but does not intervene or change behaviour. However, Johnson argues that in some cases, researchers should intervene, for example to relieve mistrust. He goes further to argue that it is useful to consider where interventions or their avoidance can be planned for or predicted in research, but this does not reflect the turmoil of the real and messy world of social research. Considering intervention, I realised was not as simple as saying I would intervene if I thought participants were in emotional danger. This was fine in terms of semi-structured interviews, but there could be other occasions where there could be an emotional harm or risk of bodily harm, or maybe where I felt that the care of the participant was not ideal. I needed to decide where to draw the line. As a researcher I needed to abide by my professional code of conduct and this provided some guidance. SRA calls this an 'intervention dilemma' and advocates for the development of a personal 'bottom line' of care below which the researcher feels they must intervene.<sup>31</sup> In the context of this research, no one was at risk of physical or emotional harm.

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<sup>27</sup> Dixon-Woods, M. (2003) What can Ethnography do for Quality and Safety in Health Care? *Quality and Safety in Health Care*, Vol. 12, No.15, p. 326.

<sup>28</sup> Hobbs, D, and May, T. (1993) *Interpreting the Field - Accounts of Ethnography*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>29</sup> Johnson, M. (2004) *Real World Ethics and Nursing Research*. Nursing Times Research.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Social Research Association (SRA) (2003) *Introduction to Ethical Guidelines*. London: SRA.

Thankfully however, I did not have to intervene at any time during the research process. As a researcher it was my place to tell participants about their poor time management. In one instance, I wanted to tell one participant to reflect on and learn from his lateness and poor timekeeping, but this was not my role as a researcher.

As discussed earlier, a mechanism was put in place for participants to withdraw from the study at any time as spelt out in Appendix 2. It was agreed that if participants wish to withdraw they could inform me. If a participant decided to withdraw from the study all data relating to him or her would also be removed from the study. All of the 36 participants who consented and took part in this study, none of them withdrew from the research process. Agreement and consent to participate was therefore strong with 100 percent of participants consenting.

#### **4.3.3 Situational Ethics**

All interviews were recorded and other conversations in a notebook which I took with me into every interview place. To guarantee that trustworthiness was ensured during data collection, I left my notebook and recorder on the table when I went away for breakfast. I wanted participants to believe that I had nothing to hide from them and I told them that they could read my notes at any time. I also wanted the respondents to feel that I was being open and honest with them about what I was recording. Costley and Gibbs say that being honest with and open to participants build trust, which is important in any social research process.<sup>32</sup> Costley and Gibbs further argue that building what they call 'moral trust' and instilling trust in participants helps to promote the researcher's integrity.<sup>33</sup> I also did not want the participants to think that I was there to check up on them or to spy on them. Hence, I hoped to reduce the feeling that I was a 'spy' from any government or international agencies. At the end of the process, the record helped to verify the accuracy, chronology and the interpretation of the data collection process.

Prior to formally starting data collection, I took part in some low-key fieldwork exercise in eastern Sierra Leone in 2013 just immediately before starting my PhD programme. This exercise empowered me to evaluate issues such as trust, bias, community interest in my

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<sup>32</sup> Gibbs, P. and Costley, C. (2006) An Ethics of Community and Care for Practitioner researchers, *International Journal of Research and Method in Education*. Vol. 29, No. 2, pp. 239 - 249.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

research topic, willingness of people to participate, appropriateness of interview format and style (including nature of questions), and my ability to conduct the study in English. All of these factors made me feel that this study had community and societal confirmation, and that there was the potential for respondents to cooperate with me during fieldwork.

My extended stay in Sierra Leone from April to September 2015 added to the authenticity and trustworthiness of this research process. Working together with participants and establishing rapport with them,<sup>34</sup> enabled me to enter into the respondent's world and to gain valuable understanding at first hand. Engaging in conversation with them, learning about their present way of life, about what they went through during the civil-conflict, about their culture, the problems they now face, and their beliefs enabled me to reflect on what respondents take for granted or do not state as well as what they say and do.

Fairness was also achieved by working with respondents together to ensure that those who were chosen reflected the overall voice of former RUF combatants (see Appendix 1). At the same time, the nature of the interview questions and process ensured a safe and fair space so that honest and diverse perspectives were respected.

#### **4.4 Sample Frame**

This section discusses the sampling strategy. Data collection was carried out in Sierra Leone, targeting a total of 36 participants (see table on page 111). One of the reasons why Sierra Leone was chosen for this study is because the country experienced violence at all levels; and the functioning of formal civic association in the country is still largely impeded. At the same time, post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation initiatives between former combatants and the civilian population were undertaken in challenging socio-economic and political environments in which:

- Security and legal institutions remained precariously fragile and challenging
- Social institutions remain weak despite the important role they played in ending the civil-war and
- Large proportion of the former combatants remain poor either because they are unemployed or underemployed.

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<sup>34</sup> Charmaz, K. (2006) *Constructing Grounded Theory: A Practical Guide Through Quantitative Analysis*. Los Angeles: Sage Publications, pp. 19 - 20.



## 4.5 Methods in the Field

In order to collect data successfully three main research methods were chosen; (a) snowballing to enable this researcher to have access to the hard-to-reach respondents, such as the former members of the RUF (b) semi-structured interviews with former combatants, community members/leaders, interlocutors, academics, NGO staff and politicians/policy makers to explore further the issues highlighted in the thesis, and (c) examination of academic and policy documents that relate to the reintegration of former combatants and the DDR process in a post-war context. All interviews took place in secure places over a period of six months. The central aim of this research is to explore the efficacy of alternative perspectives in the re-integration of former combatants as durable peace-building mechanisms in a society emerging from violent conflict, and the main argument is that the reintegration of former combatants could not successfully occur without reconciliation built on trust.

### 4.5.1 Snowballing

For any quality research outcome, researchers need to work with a manageable number of participants and have good quality source of information.<sup>35</sup> My chosen sampling strategy was purposive sampling,<sup>36</sup> because it was appropriate to reach the hard-to-reach respondents, especially the former RUF combatants, most of whom could not have been reached by other means.

Some contacts were established through their websites, and they were happy to participate in the research. For instance, I successfully established contact with David Francis from Bradford University, a scholar and a specialist in African peace and conflict studies with a particular interest in Sierra Leone peace and post-conflict reconciliation and reintegration. In addition, I was able to contact Sorious Samura, a renowned Sierra Leonean journalist whose well received documentary: *Cry Freetown* brought the conflict in Sierra Leone to the attention of the international community in the 1990s. Likewise, I was able to establish contacts from the NGO sector, and these personnel were willing to contribute to the research. However, I encountered difficulty in establishing contact with some potential participants in Sierra Leonean institutions through web addresses, and instead relied on the use of telephone and Skype messaging to recruit some of them. I did not have much difficulty in obtaining

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<sup>35</sup> Atkinson, R., and Flink, J. (2001) *Accessing Hidden and Hard-to-Reach Populations: Snowball Research Strategies*, p.1.

interviews from individual participants and also from organisations that I was introduced to by my contacts.

Hence, a snowballing method was adopted. Snowballing method is where a participant is selected who then referred other participants to me. Patton shows that snowballing approach is useful, and indeed important in identifying participants or cases of interest from participants who know what cases information are rich.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, I wanted to get in contact with hard-to-reach participants such as former members of the RUF armed group. Using other research approaches like quantitative approach, it would have been difficult or almost impossible to reach some of the hard-to-reach respondents like Saddam, a former RUF combatant who contributed immensely to this study. Using the snowballing technique enabled me to access a range of respondents, and to gather critical information from a range of sources in order to be able to make a sound judgment about the reintegration and reconciliation process in Sierra Leone.

In addition, I recruited Dr John Lamina Conteh, a Sierra Leonean academic, and a researcher in similar field as me, who is very knowledgeable and experienced in this area because of his long-term involvement for the cause. He was helpful in referring would-be participants, which had a snowball effect.<sup>38</sup> I also established relations with NGO staff, academics, policy makers, civil society institutions and community leaders/members who were prepared to participate in this research.

A key policy adviser to the Government of Sierra Leone only agreed to be interviewed during my research visit because his brother, one of my contacts had persuaded him to take part in my research. Another former policy adviser, whom I interviewed in Newcastle, UK in May 2014, also told me that he only agreed to be interviewed because of the good relationship between himself and one of my contacts. In addition, former Vice President, Solomon Berewa told me that he agreed only to take part in my research because his close family member introduced me to him. As I will discuss below, participants were drawn from different categories with the hope of choosing from all groups of people in society.

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<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Patton, M., Q. (1990) *Qualitative Evaluation Methods*, p. 182. See also Glaser, B., G. and Strauss, A., L. (1967) *The Discovery of Grounded Theory: Strategies for Qualitative Research*. New York: Aldine de Gruyter.

### 4.5.2 Semi-Structured Interviews

A semi-structured interviewing format was adopted to explore issues further. As illustrated in the table below, I was able to interview a range of respondents, including former combatants. This is because I recognise that qualitative research involving semi-structured interviews is dynamic, and for this reason, I had a contingency plan to expand the number of interviews and discussions if saturation of information was not initially attained. As Kvale points out, ‘semi-structured interviews bring forth new and unexpected aspects of a research process’.<sup>39</sup> Therefore, this number was a starting point, as other research techniques would have been adopted if required. Interpretation of sample was conducted to the point of saturation, in other words, when no new information was elicited by interviewing, data collection was halted.<sup>40</sup> This was achieved at 36 participants.

The table below shows details on gender breakdown of participants who took part on the study

Category	Former Combatants	Community Leaders	Policymakers	NGO/civil Society Organisations	Academics/Journalists	Total
Male	11	04	05	03	05	28
Female	05	03	00	00	00	08
Total	<b>16</b>	<b>07</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>03</b>	<b>05</b>	<b>36</b>

Table 2 Source: Author’s own data

Semi-structured interviews were expected to explore the issues highlighted in the thesis as recommended by Coffey.<sup>41</sup> The list of interviewees can be found in Appendix 1. I was able to seek clarification about issues from the participant's perspective. Different participants were chosen with the intention of choosing from all groups of people who were directly or indirectly connected with the reintegration exercise, including community leaders.

Choosing semi-structured interview enabled respondents to answer questions in as much details as they can. In addition, I wanted to create an informal atmosphere, to encourage

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<sup>38</sup>Ibid, p.1.

<sup>39</sup> Kvale, S. (1996) *Interviews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing*. Thousand Oaks: Sage, p.102.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid, pp. 102 - 103.

<sup>41</sup> Coffey, A. (1999) *The Ethnographic Self*. London: Sage Publication.

respondents to be open and honest while answering questions. In terms of flexibility, I wanted to have the possibility to adjust the question, where possible and to change direction as the interviews progress. I wanted to ask open-ended questions to probe wherever necessary to obtain data deemed useful for the investigation. In other words, I wanted to achieve a holistic understanding of the respondent's point of view.

Prompts were included in the interview in order to facilitate the flow of the discussion and contribution from the participants. Although the interviews took semi-structured format, each interview consistently began with questions such as:

- What was your experience of reintegration after your demobilisation?
- What types of problem do you face from your family, neighbours or community?
- How do you assess your current situation?
- Are you employed? If yes, what type of job do you do now?
- What type of job would you like to do?
- Do you receive any financial, emotional or psychological support? If yes from whom
- How have you contributed to the development of your new community/society?
- Describe a scenario where you may justify the importance of your reintegration back into civilian society
- How do you deal with inequality and discrimination towards you?

As shown above, I utilised a variety of open ended and exploratory questions and a range of appropriate listening responses throughout the interviews.<sup>42</sup> This ranged from silent listening -to facilitate the voice of respondents and allow them to be in charge of the interview, questioning - to elicit clarification, keep on topic, ask for further information where necessary, paraphrasing - to affirm my interest in the participant's message, and to clarify my understanding of what was said, and supporting - to offer solidarity with the participant. In other words, although the structure of the interview was open-ended, it followed a semi-structured format with predetermined motivating questions. These questions were based on the themes that emerged from the literature review. Subsequent sub-topics to be followed up after each motivating question were also previously established but flexibly implemented according to the flow of the interview. In addition, neither motivating questions nor sub-topics were introduced in a specific order or were necessarily introduced in the conversation

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<sup>42</sup> Adler, R., et. al (2009) *Interplay: The Process of Interpersonal Communication*. Don Mills: Oxford University Press.

precisely; instead, transitions between topics were approached in a flexible manner to create what Patton calls 'a natural conversation context'.<sup>43</sup>

The interviews were recorded onto a digital recording device and transcribed into separate word documents. The data produced were contextualised and I began to look at issues and events from the insider's or emic perspective.<sup>44</sup> Validation of findings were done by examining all of the data from a study to test the findings. Results were confirmed by using data from different sources and this helped to give authority to the findings. However, it is important to acknowledge that the final report is not 'the truth'; rather it is my presentation as a researcher that is most important. As a researcher I am aware of my influence on the research and on the data. Agar says that the researcher needs to consider who they are as part of the research process.<sup>45</sup> Coffey agrees with Agar and argues that the fieldwork is personal to the researcher, and that the data collected depends upon the researcher's interpretation and memory, which may challenge the researcher's sense of identity.<sup>46</sup>

#### **4.5.3 Documents Examination**

Apart from interviews, the study also included document analysis of government policy papers, such as policies towards the creation of job opportunities for youth, a large proportion of who are former combatants.<sup>47</sup> Policy document pertaining to post-conflict development in Sierra Leone, the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers, prepared by member countries in consultation with development partners and stakeholders, including IMF and the World Bank were also analysed. As discussed in chapter one, the papers relate to the Sierra Leone's macroeconomic, structural, and social policies in support of growth and poverty reduction, as well as associated external financing needs and major sources of financing post-conflict development initiatives.

In addition, individual and institutional testimonies, reports and conference papers were utilised. Strategy documents published by the Government of Sierra Leone and UN in relation to the reintegration of former combatants served as significant sources for exploring

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<sup>43</sup> Patton, M., Q. (2002) *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*. London: Sage Publications.

<sup>44</sup> Kottak, C. (2006) *Mirror for Humanity*. New York: McGraw-Hill, p. 47.

<sup>45</sup> Agar, M., H. (1980) *The Professional Stranger-An Informal Introduction to Ethnography*. London: Academic Press.

<sup>46</sup> Coffey, A. (1999) *The Ethnographic Self*. London: Sage Publications.

<sup>47</sup> Recent UNDP report suggests that youth unemployment and underemployment rate in Sierra Leone stands at between 70 - 75 percent, one of the highest in the world.

the efficacy of alternative perspectives in the re-integration of former combatants as durable peace-building mechanisms in a society emerging from violent conflict.

Secondary data from published journal articles, newspaper articles and books and official strategy documents, law texts and other written texts were also utilised to validate facts. Utilising these data were significant as part of the fieldwork, because much of the written documents concerning RUF's participation and contribution to the peace process and their reintegration into the 'new' Sierra Leone were scarcely available outside Sierra Leone.

#### **4.6 Returning from the Field**

At the end of the data collection, when the interviews were completed I was sad to leave Sierra Leone. I felt that I became part of the research process as well as the participants, and had made some lasting friendships with some of the participants. At the end of data collection, Chesney noted that it was difficult to leave a group where she had physically and emotionally become a part of for a period of time.<sup>48</sup> In addition to Chesney's observation, Coffey supports the notion that researchers always have an emotional involvement with their first set of participants, calling them the 'first love', and therefore leaving them behind is always difficult for the researcher.<sup>49</sup> According to Coffey this is rarely discussed in the research texts, (he calls it the 'silent space'),<sup>50</sup> where experiences are not spoken about. In line with these observations, I felt that I had left behind a team that I had become a part of and left a group of friends and colleagues.

However, I was optimistic that my research would have a positive effect on the reintegration and reconciliation of former combatants in Sierra Leone and the general DDR process. I had asked many questions about the difficulties former combatants face during their reintegration process, as well as the reasons why they took up arms in the first place. Ellen discusses the transformation research brings, and argues that the researcher can challenge the reasons for behaviour through questioning, resulting in changes in practice.

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<sup>48</sup> Chesney, M. (2000) Interaction and Understanding "me" in the Research. *Nurse Researcher*, Vol 7, No. 3, pp. 58 - 69.

<sup>49</sup> Coffey, A. (1999) *The Ethnographic Self*. London: Sage Publication, p. 7.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid, p. 8.

## 4.7 Data Analysis

The act of capturing data may shape what is said and in turn influence how it is analysed.<sup>51</sup> Therefore, the empirical chapters present the raw data in the text so that the reader can review the interpretation of the data presented.

This qualitative research is presented in a manner that demonstrates the rigour of the work. This is done by allowing the research participants' voices to be heard. There are therefore many quotations presented within the results chapters to illustrate the themes.

Data analysis is the process of systematically searching, arranging and making sense of the data.<sup>52</sup> The data gathered from interviews were analysed to look for common themes, patterns of behaviour, and actions. During data analysis the main research question and sub-questions were re-visited to look for answers. It is important to acknowledge that I may see things differently from those actually involved in the reintegration and reconciliation process I was investigating. It is also important to acknowledge that data analysis is not a distinct phase of the research process; rather data collection and analysis are simultaneous and continuous processes.<sup>53</sup> The collection and analysis of data are closely linked and each shapes the other in an iterative way.

Dey defines data analysis as 'a process of resolving data into its constituent components to reveal its characteristic elements and structure'.<sup>54</sup> Day further says that 'one of the first stages of analysis is moving from a chronological order to another kind of order'.<sup>55</sup> All of the data collected were organised and checked for spelling, clarity, and detail. The data were indexed into word documents for easy reference. Each file was printed out onto paper to allow for easy reading. I decided not to use a computer software programme, preferring to use paper copies of the data. I found it easier to place paper files alongside one another and compare information. Dey says that data should be well managed to allow for good analysis to take place.<sup>56</sup>

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<sup>51</sup> Miles, M., B., and Huberman, A., M. (1994) *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

<sup>52</sup> Creswell, J., W. (2007) *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

<sup>53</sup> Bryman, A, and Burgess, R., G. (1994) *Analysing Qualitative Data*. London: Routledge.

<sup>54</sup> Dey, I. (1993) *Qualitative Data Analysis. A User-Friendly Guide for Social Scientists*. London: Routledge, pp. 30 - 31.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

I read all of the raw data several times. The data were reviewed line by line in detail until a concept emerged. Bryman says that when you sort through and read through the data it becomes more familiar to you and you become more familiar with it.<sup>57</sup> When reading the data, I had to make decisions about what I felt was important and needed to be included in the thesis and what could be discounted. These decisions were based on my own interpretation of events from the field and my interpretation about the narratives of the respondents during the interviews. As I read through the data I began to make sense of it.

In addition, databases for this research were selected from a range of disciplines including political science, political economy, anthropology, and sociology. The extensive literature reviews provided a sound platform for exploring the complexity of post-conflict reintegration in a post-war environment from a social perspective. As social capital concept is complex, conceptualised and understood in the literature, this research firstly, reviewed literature on the concept to gain a more thorough understanding of it. The literature review drew out questions that will be further explored in the empirical chapters.

#### **4.8 Reliability and Validity**

In qualitative research reliability and validity tend to not be used to measure the quality of the research process as these are quantitative concepts. For the purpose of this study the following terms are used; credibility, dependability, conformability and transferability.

##### ***Credibility***

This can be achieved through prolonged engagement with the participants, allowing time to fully understand the group, build trust and rapport, and gain honest responses.<sup>58</sup> Although there was a short timeframe available for fieldwork, however, credibility was established as each of the conclusions from each of the different techniques yielded the same or similar conclusion. In this way, a more detailed and balanced picture of the situation under investigation emerged.

##### ***Dependability***

According to Holloway and Wheeler, dependability measures how stable data are over time. They claim that researchers should use an audit trail to record how the data was collected and

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<sup>57</sup> Bryman, A. (2004) *Social Research Methods*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>58</sup> Brewer, J., D. (2000) *Ethnography*. Buckingham: Open University Press.



how conclusions were reached.<sup>59</sup> My initial aim was to verify that my findings were consistent with the raw data and if other researchers were to look at this data, then they would arrive at similar findings, interpretations, and conclusions. This was important to make sure that nothing was missed in the research study, or that I was negligent or misguided in my final report.

### ***Conformability***

This acknowledges the influence of the researcher and does not hide it. However, the researcher should still aim to provide data that accurately represents the participant's responses. I was able to establish dependability by having an outside researcher to conduct an inquiry audit on my research study. This technique is also called an external audit. It is an inquiry audit that involves having a researcher outside of the data collection and data analysis examine the processes of data collection, data analysis, and the results of the research study. This was done to confirm the accuracy of my findings and to ensure the findings were supported by the data collected. All interpretations and conclusions were examined to determine whether they are supported by the data itself. Inquiry audits are beneficial because they allow an outside researcher to examine, explore, and challenge how data analysis and interpretation occurred.

### ***Transferability***

Generally, transferability refers to the degree to which the results of qualitative research can be generalised or transferred to other contexts or settings. It is the extent to which a study invites readers to make connections between elements of the study and their own experiences. This was achieved by providing a thorough description in order to contextualise the data, thus enabling readers to make inferences about contextual similarities.

## **4.9 Member Checking**

This involves giving the data and its interpretation back to the respondents for them to check the meaning that one has ascribed to the data, and looked at the accuracy and credibility of the account. I used member checking through two of my assistants who were both experienced researchers in the field. As mentioned earlier in this chapter, I recruited Dr John Lamina Conteh, a Sierra Leonean academic, and a researcher in similar field as me. Dr Conteh is very knowledgeable and experienced in the area because of his long-term

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<sup>59</sup> Holloway, I. and Wheeler, S. (2002) *Qualitative Research in Nursing*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

involvement for the cause. In addition, I recruited Mr Abdul Rahaman Sannoh, a UNDP national coordinator, an expert in qualitative research method and an expert for Small Grants for Development Programmes with particular interest in post-conflict development initiatives in Sub-Saharan Africa. Mr Sannoh has much experience in working with former combatants from a range of armed groups. They both looked at the data to see if they recognised the descriptions and interpretations as a form of member checking. This increased the authenticity and reliability of the findings and helped to reduce researcher bias.

### **4.9.1 Limitations**

There are some limitations with my choice of methodology and methods. The main limitation is that this was a small study, undertaken in a country that had over 70 thousand demobilised former combatants.<sup>60</sup> My selection of who to interview had an influence over the result.<sup>61</sup> The choices made ultimately influenced the data gathered. It was not possible for me to interview all of the former combatants or all those who were connected with the reintegration process. As a result, I may have missed out on important informants. I was only able to work with the data that I had been able to gather. Some participants may have felt threatened and did not reveal important information; some may have withheld information or not provide a true picture of the situation.

Another key limitation was the short timeframe available for fieldwork (a 6-month period, from April to September 2015). This prevented repeat visits to the field, and thus limited opportunities to build trust with respondents over time. In some ways this affected the reliability of the data collected. However, due to limited timeframe and funding limitations, this could not realistically be avoided. The politicisation and poor quality of descriptive data available on the ground also affected the result. However, due to lack of alternatives, such data were used with the goal of making the information collected as representative as possible.

Distrust over the researcher's identity and intentions may also have influenced the reliability of data collected. The researcher is an academic who is simultaneously perceived as being both 'foreign' (who has lived in the UK since the early 1990s) and 'local' (with Sierra Leonean origin). Therefore, the researcher's status as an independent investigator was always

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<sup>60</sup> Solomon, C. and Jeremy, G., J. (2008) *Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration in Sierra Leone*, p.2.

<sup>61</sup> Hammersley, M. and Atkinson, P. (1991) *Ethnographic Principles in Practice*. London: Routledge.

questioned by some respondents. My ability to speak some of the key local languages such as Mende, Mandingo, and Creole, was expected to help build rapport with respondents. In addition, my introduction to participants through local facilitators was presumed to help create a basic level of trust. Yet, my association with these local facilitators came with its own problems, to the extent, it compromised my independence as a researcher, and restricted how, when, where and with whom I interacted. Recognising this source of potential bias, there was little that could be done to counteract it.

There was also, in addition a problem in getting relevant and unbiased source of information. This was perhaps the most discouraging challenge, and difficult to address, because the views of my respondents were routinely tainted by their group's identity as the RUF for example was heavily linked with serious human rights violations in the past. For example, no former RUF combatant would ever comment in a way that would indict his or her group's members, or the present community in which they live for fear that the community would retaliate against them. Therefore, each respondent stuck to their group's version of the story about the conflict and the DDR process. However, respondent's views expressed were weighed against those given by practitioners, NGO staff and academics, which in some cases proved revelatory.

#### **4.10 Concluding Remarks**

This chapter proposed a qualitative methodology used in six months of field work. The value of this approach relates to the richness of the data obtained from the field via data collection through semi-structured interviews. Snowballing technique was adopted in identifying key participants, which together with semi-structured interviewing complemented each other. Investigating the reintegration of former combatants using social capital as a lens proved difficult and challenging. Some of the challenges were almost overwhelming, as well as the research methods adopted. In a bid to overcome some of the challenges, various strategies were applied to manage them, and in the process, a pool of relevant data was discovered. In writing up the final thesis, existing literature on the reintegration of former combatants were weighed against the narratives of the former combatants themselves. The results obtained through the combination of these research techniques was the presentation of a balanced, empirical study, and a well contextualised account of the effects of social relationships on the

reintegration of former combatants, which added to the already existing knowledge in the field.

The next chapter presents the first important analysis of the data from fieldwork conducted as part of this study. The chapter looks to develop an understanding of social reintegration and provide a foundation from which to appreciate the impact social reintegration may have on the restoration of social capital and reconciliation. It looks at the experiences of reintegrating former combatants into society as well as their ability to effectively function in their 'new' civilian environment.

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## CHAPTER FIVE

### Reintegrating Former Combatants: Trials and Tribulations

#### Introduction

‘My actual name is James - James Dauda, but during the war, and even up to the time that I gave up my weapon, I changed my name to Saddam Husain... Saddam is my fighting name, which is what is on my ex-combatant ID card. Everyone knows me as Saddam... One thing that the ‘big people’ (regional institutions, as well as the international community) have come to realise in recent years is that combatants were not born to become killers or be bad guys... People only become bad because their governments or their leaders are bad, their systems are rotten and corrupt, and because the society force them to join armed groups and to fight. But after the conflict ended in 2002, we have all learned from our mistakes. As for me, I am very good at the trade that I learnt after the DDR process, I have my certificate, I am a motor mechanic, but I still want to go to a good College whether in this country or abroad and get further certificates if possible, because competition for job is very high now that we are all civilians’.<sup>1</sup>

Saddam is a 35-year old former RUF combatant from Joru, Gaura Chiefdom in Kenema district eastern Sierra Leone, who joined the RUF armed movement when he was just twelve years of age. He now lives in neighbouring Bo town, Bo District. (See map of Sierra Leone below).

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<sup>1</sup> Author’s interview with James Dauda (known throughout in this thesis as Saddam Husain), Bo, 29th May 2015.





Figure 4, a map of Sierra Leone showing, Kailahun, Kenema, Pujehun and Bo districts, where the civil-conflict had its most devastating impact in terms of physical and human destruction.

Saddam was forced to join the RUF when his village was attacked by members of the RUF in 1993. He was one of my respondents, who, in many ways contributed most of the information collected during my research visit to Sierra Leone. In one of our conversations, he expressed how former combatants were, before the conflict, normal people, most of them (like himself) children or young adults, who during the conflict passed through transition phase, and by the end of the conflict, they wished to return to their normal civilian lifestyle again and live like the rest of the civilian population.

The process of transformation from combat lifestyle to civilian lifestyle in Sierra Leone began with the UN backed-DDR process, which happened at the same time when the country was undergoing economic and political transformation. The transformation of Sierra Leonean society - from the wartime society to a peaceful one - required a complete change of people's

behaviour, their relationships, perceptions and personalities, including those of former combatants.

Like many societies emerging from conflict, the social aspects of reintegration in Sierra Leone centres on two main issues. On the one hand, it centres on the ability of former combatants to effectively function in their ‘new’ civilian environment. On the other hand, it centres on whether society is willing and ready to accept and accommodate them. At an individual level, psychological challenges in relation to self-images and overcoming traumatic experiences that occurred to them during the conflict and the challenges they face during their reintegration are very important. Thus, dealing effectively with former combatants in civilian context may entail serious challenges for them as well as for the civilian community into which they reintegrate.

The comprehensive DDR programme, implemented and coordinated by the UN and the NCDDR, took place between 1999 and 2003. Over this period, about 72,500 combatants from all armed factions were disarmed and demobilised, including 4,751 women (6.5 percent) and 6,787 children (9.4 percent), of whom 506 were girls; 42,330 weapons and 1.2 million pieces of ammunition were collected and destroyed.<sup>2</sup>

The table below shows gender category of former combatants from various armed factions disarmed and demobilised between 1999 and 2002.

Faction	No. of men	%	No of women	%	No of boys	%	No of girls	%
AFRC	7,914	89.3	530	6.0	375	4.2	41	0.5
CDF	34,890	93.3	296	5.3	1,996	5.3	7	0.001
RUF	16,735	68.8	3,925	16.1	3,229	13.3	436	1.8
SLA	NA	NA	NA	NA	445	NA	22	NA
Total	NA	NA	NA	NA	6,181	NA	506	NA

Table 3: Gender category of former combatants from different armed factions in Sierra Leone

<sup>2</sup> Solomon, C, and Ginifer, J. (2008) Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration in Sierra Leone. *Contribution to the Project on: DDR and Human Security, Post conflict Security Building in the Interest of the Poor*. Document Available on line at: [www.operationspaix.net/.../4024~v~Disarmament Demobilisation and Reintegration in Sierra Leone.pdf](http://www.operationspaix.net/.../4024~v~Disarmament_Demobilisation_and_Reintegration_in_Sierra_Leone.pdf). Document Accessed on line on: 15/08/2016.

Source: Solomon, C, and Ginifer, J. (2008) *DDR and Human Security: Post-Conflict Security-Building in the Interests of the Poor*, p. 8.

The DDR programme in Sierra Leone started badly, as it suffered severe setbacks at various points, including initial non-compliance with the Lome Peace Agreements on the side of the RUF forces, and resumptions of armed conflict. It was not until the closing stages of the demobilisation programme in 2002 that these breaches were finally controlled. The expectation that DDR would underpin stability and security proved unfounded for much of the DDR phases as civilians in some parts of the country continued to be attacked and more children were recruited into various armed groups.

This chapter analyses the dramatic increase in comprehensive programmes that sought to reintegrate former combatants in Sierra Leone, a country recovering from one of the most violent conflicts that Africa has witnessed in recent memory. It starts by arguing that being a member of an armed group during the conflict in Sierra Leone was an important way of accumulating power and fortifying one's status in society.<sup>3</sup> The chapter further argues that carrying and/or using weapons during the conflict gave combatants a sense of power and control over civilians. It examines the difficulties faced by the NCDDR commission to attract funds, as well as the difficulties to manage the very large number of former combatants, which resulted in the delivery of poorly structured short-term training opportunities for former combatants.

## **5.1 Identity Transformation: Power and Status**

In the context of this thesis, power is defined as the ability to influence or outright control the behaviour of people through the use of the gun, which involves force or the threat of force. It is important to step back at this point and to discuss what it takes or means to be a former RUF combatant in Sierra Leone, following the end of the conflict. Being a member of an armed group during the conflict was an important way of accumulating power and increasing one's status. A need for a better position in Sierra Leone to withstand oppression from the authorities was part of the wider reasons why most of the youth joined the RUF armed movement. Evidence from the field suggests other reasons why people joined the movement including access to food, wealth, power, and the creation of a 'new type of family or

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<sup>3</sup> Weiss, T. (2005) *Perpetrating Powers: Small Arms in Post-Conflict Sierra Leone and Liberia*. ISS Monograph, No. 116. Document Available on line at: <https://reliefweb.int/.../sierra-leone/perpetrating-power-small-arms-post-conflict-sierra>. Document Accessed on line on: 07/10/16.

community' - a supportive network that could look after them, and provide them with social status in society.

During the conflict, it was the combination of socio-economic and political factors that suggested the rank that a particular subject hold or occupied in society. The higher the person's position in society was, the more opportunity that individual was likely to enjoy. In other words, if we want to measure the status of an actor in society, we must consider certain variables, such as: the level of power that individuals exercise; the level of security they have access to; as well as the level of influence they enjoy.<sup>4</sup> Some of these variables, which are further discussed below were used by armed actors as a determinant factor during the conflict to show their status or their position in society. These variables became also important after the conflict ended in 2002.

I have emphasised in the preceding paragraph that one of the most important variables that determine strong status in time of conflict is the level of power individuals exercise, especially by the use of the gun. Therefore, the relationship between power and status was important in maintaining the hierarchy of certain individuals in wartime Sierra Leone".<sup>5</sup>

As Amadu Yajah, one of my respondent's narratives below suggests:

'I joined the freedom fighters (the RUF) in August 1993. At first, I was so scared...then I got used to it,' said Amadu, who began his fighting career with the RUF in Pujehun at the age of ten. 'We were being treated badly by them (the rebels). Some of us were forced to join the revolution, we had no choice. Others joined willingly.... Our responsibility as younger members of the movement were to transport looted goods and arms and ammunition anytime they went to the battlefield. We were also responsible for cooking. I got used to the situation, I wanted to be in control one day like others, I wanted to be a Bosman (an important person in society) ... For others like Fanta Steven, she started fighting with the RUF at the age of eleven after she was detained, raped and tortured by the government forces. 'I thought of leaving [the fighting] many times,' she said. 'I dropped out of school, I lost my future, I lost everything... I looked for job, but there was no job. That was the most difficult period in my

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<sup>4</sup> Lindemann, K. (2007) 'The Impact of Objective Characteristics on Subjective Social Position'. *Tallinn, Estonia: Trames*, Vol. 11, No. 1, pp.54 - 68.

<sup>5</sup> Massey, K., Freeman, S. and Zelditch, M. (1997) 'Status, Power and Accounts'. *Social Psychology Quarterly*. Vol. 60, No. 3. pp. 238.

life.’ So, I decided to stay with them (the RUF) for protection, because there was no way to go back to my village. I was attached to captain Kongolo’s regiment so that he would protect me from further rape, torture and abuses.

The cases of both Amadu and Fanta are in line with David King’s analysis of youth’s involvement in the conflict in Sierra Leone. King views the engagement of Sierra Leonean youth in the conflict as a move towards influence, status, power and security.<sup>6</sup> King argues that most people joined the RUF armed movement, especially the youth as a way to gain influence, protection and power in society, because wartime Sierra Leonean society enabled youth to become strong figures in society through the use of the gun.<sup>7</sup> Therefore, one of the most important ways to have access to power and influence during the war era, according to King was to participate directly in the conflict as the narratives of Amadu and Fanta suggest. They were both abused first and humiliated, especially Fanta. Therefore, for some joining the movement was a strategy to avoid abuse and humiliation. It must also be remembered that the more violent an individual became during the conflict, the more power he or she accumulated.<sup>8</sup> However, following the end of the conflict, their disarmament and demobilisation led to a loss of influence and power that they as fighters had accumulated during the conflict, which inevitably led to increase in their vulnerability.

During the conflict, huge amounts of power were vested in ‘authorities’, which created the possibility for those in power (especially those with weapons) to force people to do something they would not otherwise do in normal circumstance. For many who were associated with the RUF, like in many other armed organisations elsewhere, power symbolised control over the life of civilians or non-combatants. Thus, during the armed conflict in Sierra Leone, the legitimacy of power depended on the status of the fighters and, at the same time, status tended to legitimise power.

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<sup>6</sup> King, D. (1995) *Conflict and Collusion in Sierra Leone*. Oxford: James Currey.

<sup>7</sup> See for instance Utas, M. (1997) ‘Assiduous Exile: Strategies of Work and Integration among Liberian Refugees in Danane, Ivory Coast’. *Department of Cultural Anthropology*. Uppsala: Uppsala University Press.

<sup>8</sup> Known throughout Sierra Leone as ‘Mosquito’ for his ability to attack while civilians as well as other armed groups were off their guard - Sam Bockarie was one of the most feared RUF commanders to emerge from the country’s decade-long civil-conflict, which ended in 2002. Sam once said in an interview with the BBC: ‘I cannot tell how many people I have killed, because when I am firing during an attack, nobody can survive my bullets’. Sam’s ability to kill large number of people with no hesitation shows why he was one of the most feared and powerful men in the RUF hierarchy and in the country at large during the conflict. This enabled him to accumulate more power and influence during the armed struggle.

In many ways, intimidation and fear were used by combatants during the conflict as a means of exercising power over the powerless, i.e., the civilian population, as well as their opponents - mainly the national army and the CDF. As discussed in the previous chapter, such was the case during recruitment process into the armed movement. Thus, intimidation and fear were used as instruments for maintaining control by the combatants.

The statement below gives a summation of how power was utilised by the RUF during the conflict.

‘I was twelve years old when my village was attacked’, said Turkish in an interview with this author in Bo, southern Sierra Leone.

Like many other recruits, Turkish, now 39 years old and living in Bo, was forcefully recruited into the RUF movement at the age of twelve. He later joined the West Side Boys<sup>9</sup> after the RUF/AFRC forces were driven from Freetown in late 1999. He described how he and other boys of his age from his village had gone to the neighbouring village to find food for their families when they were, in his own words, ‘ambushed and kidnapped’ by members of the RUF. He described how, after forcefully recruiting them into the movement they used human parts to make checkpoints so as to install fear and intimidation into civilians and new recruits to prevent them from escaping. They tracked down anyone whom they deemed to be their enemy - doctors who treated wounded enemies, journalist - and tortured and killed them. They killed people who refused to give them money, or those who did not give enough money, or people who looked at them wrongly.

Although Turkish was abducted by the RUF, he however did acknowledge that some of the people from his own village, including children voluntarily joined the armed movement.

With the outbreak of the armed conflict in Sierra Leone in March 1991, it was common for people to join the rebellion, especially in the rural areas. Some families took their own

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<sup>9</sup> The West Side Boys were one of several armed military groups in the Sierra Leonean civil-war. It was a splinter group of the RUF which emerged as a key player particularly between 1999 and 2000. In most international media accounts, the West Side Boys appeared as nothing more than renegade, anarchistic bandits, devoid of any trace of long-term political goals. For detailed analysis on The West Side Boys and the part they played in the Sierra Leone’s conflict, see for instance Utas, M. (2008) The West Side Boys: Military Navigation in Sierra Leone. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol.3, No. 46, pp. 487 - 511.

children to the RUF Headquarters,<sup>10</sup> because they felt that their families needed to be represented in the revolution. Also, there were some chiefdoms in rural Sierra Leone where family feuds, especially chieftaincy ruling houses used this situation to settle old scores. A classical case in point is the chieftaincy dispute that existed between and among the Banyas, the Gobeys and the Bundehs for paramount chieftain positions in Kailahun.<sup>11</sup> Other parents felt that if their children joined what they saw as ‘the struggle for freedom’, they would be able to improve their status as well as protect them.

As one of my respondents explained:

‘...So, because we had a big family, two of my brothers had already joined the struggle in early 1992 when the revolution started. I did not know why they had joined, because I was young... Although I did not join at that time, I expected to join and team up with them at some stage during the struggle... so that we can protect our own people in case other groups wanted to take advantage over them. At that time, many people were joining, even girls as young as eight...’<sup>12</sup>

The recruitment of children and young people into armed groups has traditionally been looked at from two main perspectives: those children and young adults who are forced into armed groups and those who join voluntarily. Some DDR scholars, among them Burgess, view children’s recruitment into non-state armed groups as a result of poverty, lack of education, and due to family violence,<sup>13</sup> as pointed out in the preceding paragraphs. Burgess describes these children and young adults as passive victims of actions conducted by adults or parents in particular, and thus raising the issue of how child recruitment into non-state armed groups should be understood. In Burgess’ view, there is little difference between ‘coerced/forceful’ and ‘voluntary’ recruitment into armed movements, indicating some kind of dichotomy between the two forms of recruitment. In reality, recruitment of child soldiers largely take place in what Vautravers calls the “grey zone” between forced and voluntary recruitment, and the recruits, mainly children make their choices based on the information

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<sup>10</sup> Headquarters means the office where the administration of the movement was based, and where important decisions about the revolution were being taking from.

<sup>11</sup> Chieftaincy is a traditional form of leadership at the local level in Sierra Leone, where there are ruling houses that compete in chieftaincy elections to be paramount chiefs. Those contests are mostly hotly contested, to such an extent that it has created enmity in certain chiefdoms like Luawa and Njaluahun chiefdoms in eastern Sierra Leone. Thus, it was not surprising that members of these ruling houses were to join armed factions as to have power over the others.

<sup>12</sup> Author’s interview with Tigana Joseph, a former RUF member, Pendembu, 21<sup>st</sup> March 2015.

<sup>13</sup> Burgess, R. (2009) ‘Colombia’s Children at Risk of Recruitment into Armed Groups: Exploring a Community-Based, Psychosocial Pedagogy’, *Journal of Education for International Development*, Vol. 4, No. 1, pp. 1- 11.

available to them at the time of recruitment.<sup>14</sup> However, as Honwana points out, children affected by conflict do not all constitute a homogeneous group of helpless victims but some exercise choices that are shaped by their particular experiences and circumstances.<sup>15</sup>

In any case, power is important for the status of an armed actor in time of conflict. But the difference lies in where actors get their power from, and how that power is exercised. In the case of the Sierra Leone's RUF, the power that they had during the conflict lay in 'coercive force',<sup>16</sup> which was inevitably based on the fear of having freedom, assuring the submission of others. This 'coercive power' that was at the disposal of the armed actors during the war left resistance and resentment as a legacy in Sierra Leonean society, which has up till now affected some former combatants in terms of their ability to reintegrate.

## 5.2 Access to Security

One of the key attributes that determine actors' identity, in addition to power and social status is security. As discussed in the preceding section, a need for security was one of the main reasons why many people joined various armed groups during the conflict. As Lujala recently reminds us, during armed conflicts, security is not just a matter of individual, family or communal safety, but also of access to wealth, food and other basic goods for survival, as well as to settle old disputes between and among groups and families.<sup>17</sup> This can be applied directly to the long running land dispute between the Banyas and the Gobehs in Kailahun, as well as the Gbows and Jajuas in Segbwema, eastern Sierra Leone.

Lujala's analysis given above in terms of family and communal security, as well as access to wealth, food and other basic goods for survival, and for military settlement of old disputes between and among families during conflict can be attributed to Tamba Lamina's own narratives below:

'Before I joined [the rebels], I was in my village. Early one morning, Government forces came to our village looking for members of the RUF. In the event, my elder brother, Jamiru was falsely accused by the Government forces of being a member of the RUF. As a result, he was shot repeatedly by the Government

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<sup>14</sup> Vautravers, A., J. (2009) Why Child Soldiers. *Refugee Survey*, Vol. 27, No. 4, pp. 96 - 107.

<sup>15</sup> Honwana, A. (2006) *Child Soldiers in Africa*. University of Pennsylvania Press, pp. 4 - 5.

<sup>16</sup> French, J., R., P., and Raven, B. (1959) 'The Bases of Social Power'. In Cartwright, D. (Ed.), *Studies in Social Power*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.

<sup>17</sup> Lujala, P. (2010) The Spoils of Nature: Armed Civil Conflict and Rebels Access to Natural Resources, *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 47, No. 1, pp. 15 - 28.



forces. The commander then asked whose son my dead brother was, and people pointed at my father. Now my father too is not alive... So, later on, I had to join the revolution [the RUF movement] to protect the rest of my family; I needed to provide security for them. I also joined so that I will be able to provide for my family in time of great difficulty in the country.’<sup>18</sup>

Tamba fought for most of the time in Kailahun and Kono districts. His narrative above evokes the unstable security situation in the country during the conflict. In their study undertaken in 2009, Humphreys and Weinstein found that although 87.8 percent of RUF recruits were abducted, about 42 percent of all those who joined did so in order to survive and to provide security for themselves and their families.

The table below gives a summary of how recruitment into the RUF and CDF armed groups were structured. The table also shows that almost 88 percent of the recruits for the RUF were drawn from abduction of children and other marginalised youth from the rural areas across the country. However, around 42 percent of the recruits joined for survival and for security reasons. Please note that the focus of this study is on the RUF.

<b>Reasons for joining</b>	<b>RUF</b>	<b>CDF</b>
I supported the group's political goals	9.6%	70.4%
I joined to defend my community	1.1%	15.8%
People inside the group lived better than those outside	2.4%	2.3%
I was abducted	87.8%	2.0%
I was put under social pressure to join	0.3%	1.4%
I joined in order to retaliate	0.3%	5.0%
I was scared of what would happen if I didn't choose to join	41.8%	51.2%
I was offered money to join	0.0%	0.4%
<b>Total number interviewed</b>	<b>374</b>	<b>557</b>

Table 4: Summary of RUF and CDF recruitments during the armed struggle in Sierra Leone.

Source: Humphreys, M. and Weinstein, J., M. (2009) *Field Experiments and the Political Economy of Development*. California: Stanford University.

The narratives above raise two particular concerns: firstly, for actors to provide protection or security for themselves and their families, they needed to join an armed group. Secondly,

<sup>18</sup> Author's interview with Tamba Lamina, former RUF member, Kono, 4<sup>th</sup> April 2015.

following the decision to join a particular armed group, they needed to be motivated to stay with that particular armed group.

For the purpose of this study, whether the decision to join the RUF was through abduction, to defend one's community, to protect or provide security for one's own family or community, to support a particular armed group's political goal and ideology, or whether the decision to join was spontaneous or not, what is clear is that most people joined different factions because of lack of choice as most were forced to do so. Life must be considered as a valuable asset, which, during the conflict could only be protected by joining a particular armed group - in this context, to have access to weapon and to accrue the status of a fighter - as a precaution against getting killed or having your family killed.

When it came to acquiring basic goods and services during the conflict in Sierra Leone, like in many other war-ravaged societies around the world, the effect of the conflict modified the normal social order. As a result of the instabilities and the nature of the brutality posed by various armed actors during the conflict, there was a total transformation in the socio-economic and political status of the Sierra Leonean society into 'a survival society'. Thus, civilians were deprived of basic goods and services. Therefore, for most of the population, especially in the rural areas, the only way to have access to food and security was to join an armed group. As one former combatant explains:

'I joined the freedom fighters voluntarily, by myself, because when they [the RUF armed group] came to our village in December 1994, it was Christmas time, they stayed there for long, we ran out of food and other goods, and we needed to survive, many people in the region joining them.... So, like other people, I joined them too to have access to food, money and other basic goods and to protect myself and my family'.<sup>19</sup>

But the power of small arms and ammunition should not be underestimated during civil conflicts. Ultimately, the most important positions during conflict are held by those who have access to arms. They are therefore those who control wealth, food, power, status and security.

It is important to emphasise that many respondents who took part in this study quite candidly revealed that carrying and/or using weapons during the conflict gave them a sense of power,

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<sup>19</sup> Author's interview with Denis Conteh, a former RUF fighter, Freetown, 14th June 2015.

security and control over civilians, as well as other combatants which they very well enjoyed. In this sense, the structure of the RUF armed movement, like many other armed groups around the world, mirrored the traditional male-controlled hierarchies of a society that in the past relegated women, the young and the poor to lower social standing and elevated the rich and the powerful in society. However, as many former combatants discovered, while carrying weapons did not alter their relatively low status within the rebel group, it did provide them with an opportunity to achieve power outside of the group, particularly over the civilian population. Some respondents reported feeling an increased sense of pride, self-confidence, and belonging as a result. This excitement in handling weapons may have been comparable to experiencing a form of emancipation on the side of the rebels during the armed struggle.

However, the transition from 'victim' to 'perpetrator' was not a linear one, nor was it true that all - or even most - young combatants experienced the full transition from victim to hardened perpetrator. Instead, it would appear that the youth within the armed movement continually vacillated between committing acts of violence and being victims of violence themselves. The complexity of this situation often brought about much confusion.

The younger members of the RUF armed movement were subjected to brutal victimization by their captors. Yet to characterize these younger members solely as victims is to present a distorted image of their lived realities. Many of them also became active and violent armed actors, and in so doing perpetrated acts of violence and cruelty themselves, and thus experienced a common rush of power in acquiring and using weapons of violence.

In this section, I have discussed what it means to be a member of an armed faction like the Sierra Leone's RUF. I have, in addition argued that it is the combination of socio-economic and political factors that suggest the rank that a particular subject hold in society in time of conflict. The higher the person's position is in society, the more opportunity that individual is likely to have access to in time of conflict. Younger members of the armed movement were subjected to brutal victimization by their captors, and therefore, to characterize them solely as perpetrators of violence is not feasible.

In the next section, I discuss how former RUF combatants struggle to construct their new civilian identity following their demobilisation. I also discuss the relationship between identity and status, and further argue that the exclusion of some former combatants from

society usually arises as a result of the violent past behaviour associated with them as individuals or as a group.

### **5.3 Status, Identity and the Construction of Self**

During the reintegration of former combatants, status serves as a key factor in understanding the identity and community inclusion and/or exclusion. Status is defined in this thesis as the present condition or state of a person or that experienced by him or her. The concept of social identity and its exact definition on the other hand can vary within certain limits of context and history. Given its importance as a concept in this study, I will discuss it further as both things to be explained and something that has explanatory force. In social category, group identity is a set of persons marked by a label and distinguished by rules deciding membership and (alleged) characteristic features or attributes.<sup>20</sup> In terms of individual identity, it refers to some distinguishing characteristic(s) that a person takes a special pride in or views as socially consequential but more-or-less unchangeable.<sup>21</sup>

One of the key aspects of the relationship between status and identity is that one cannot function correctly without having an impact on the other. The status of an individual is basically a macro overview [held by society] of the individual's personal choices and traits in a personalised and social environment.<sup>22</sup> These choices are structured by the identity of the individual. Herein lies the relationship; the status is macro-structured while the identity is micro-structured.<sup>23</sup>

Identity plays an important role in post-conflict reconciliation as well as in the reintegration of former combatants following their disarmament and demobilisation.<sup>24</sup> However, identity is decidedly influenced by historical and contextual circumstances. In the context of Sierra Leone's RUF, due to the present difficulties in the process of their transformation, the

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<sup>20</sup> Fearon, D., J. (1999) What is Identity as we now Use the Word? Document Available on line at: <https://web.stanford.edu/group/.../What-is-Identity-as-we-now-use-the-word-.pdf>. Document Accessed on line on: 10/12/16.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Jennings, K., M. (2008) 'Seeing DDR from Below: Challenges and Dilemmas Raised by the Experiences of Ex-Combatants in Liberia'. *Journal of New Security Programme Report*. Vol. 9, No. 4.

<sup>23</sup> Fearon, D., J. (1999) What is Identity as we now Use the Word? Document Available on line at: <https://web.stanford.edu/group/.../What-is-Identity-as-we-now-use-the-word-.pdf>. Document Accessed on line on: 10/12/16.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

situation is shaped by the past conflict. Hence, identity and status is a crucial aspect of being a former combatant.

When the RUF combatants were exerting their authority on the civilian population or their captives during the conflict, they were not held in high regard or admiration; rather they wanted to demonstrate that they were in high authority and this gave them high status. Since the RUF claimed that they were fighting to liberate the citizens of Sierra Leone from the brutality of the APC, they claimed to be fighting for the common good. They therefore felt that they deserved to have more privileges than the rest of the civilian population. The former fighters' status is the result of their interactions with society, while their identity is the way the Sierra Leonean society perceives them and how they perceive society. The recognition of a different status for the former combatants accentuates the division between them and the civilian population. Identity, in this case, is linked to society's perception of the group recognised by names such as 'old killers', 'old rebels', 'former combatants', 'spoilers' or 'bad guys'.

During fieldwork in Sierra Leone, I noticed that former combatants who have not been able to find their place in the 'new' Sierra Leonean society, created a kind of self-defence mechanism as a means of survival. Self-exclusion, sometimes generated by former combatants themselves or by society, defending other members in case of an outbreak of trouble, associating with other former combatants and blaming society for the difficulties they face, is among some of the instruments they use to shape their new identity. For them, working together as a unit, for example as Okada Riders,<sup>25</sup> or as a group of young men and women who sit in ghettos and discuss politics or daily issues that society faces, is a result of the individual necessity for people to assimilate and share the same or similar experiences in order to feel a sense of belonging to the 'new' Sierra Leonean society.

But as Paul Higate explains, the exclusion of some former combatants from society usually arises as a result of the violent behaviour associated with them as individuals.<sup>26</sup> Thus, the

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<sup>25</sup>It is estimated that 90 percent of Okada Riders across Sierra Leone are former combatants. See for example Laurence, M. (2013) 'Bottom up DDR': Sierra Leone's Okada Riders, *Centre for Security Governance*. Document Available on line at: [www.ssrresourcecentre.org/2013/03/19/bottom-up-ddr-sierra-leones-okada-riders](http://www.ssrresourcecentre.org/2013/03/19/bottom-up-ddr-sierra-leones-okada-riders). Document Accessed on line on: 10/10/2015.

<sup>26</sup> Higate, P. (2004) *Gender and Peacekeeping Case Studies: The DRC and Sierra Leone*, ISS Monograph 91. Pretoria: *Institute for Security Studies*. Document Available on line at: <http://www.monitor.upeace.org/archive>. Document Accessed on line on: 03/04/16.

difficulties involved in being a former combatant in civilian environment were on every respondent's lip during fieldwork in Sierra Leone. As Munda Sannoh, a former RUF combatant explains:

‘People in Torwama community<sup>27</sup> (the community in which the respondent now lives) dislike me, because of my past involvement with the RUF. I don’t know why, maybe because the fighting did really destroy much of the infrastructure in the area, but the people of Torwama were resistant to the movement. It is still very difficult for some of us to live normal life.’<sup>28</sup>

Munda Sannoh’s narrative above was also supported by another anonymous respondent, who remarked:

‘Life is difficult being a former female combatant in a civilian environment, because you know little about how to work in the house as a woman... Since I was abducted aged ten, I did not know how to manage a household, and certainly I am still struggling to do so even now.... It is a big problem for most of us - no husband, no boyfriend, nothing of such, because society sees us as violent or rebel women. Even now, some people still call us ‘old rebels’ or ‘old killers’. Living in civilian environment for former fighters like me is extremely difficult. When you compare between women who were not involved in the fighting and those of us who were, most of the time, the keeping and leading of the household is difficult for those of us who were involved in the conflict as compared to those who did not.’<sup>29</sup>

The two narratives presented above suggest that there is a direct relationship between violent conflict and its implications for domestic life of former combatants following their demobilisation.

CBD initiatives are regarded as key mechanisms to achieving transformation of bonding social capital into bridging social capital because of their inclusive and participatory nature. I have in addition argued that CBD approaches can bring about meaningful reintegration in societies emerging from violent conflict including Sierra Leone. Former combatants’ sharing of a group identity and a ‘place of belonging in the local structure’<sup>30</sup> could have significant

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<sup>27</sup> Towama was, until recently a small village near the city of Bo. It has now amalgamated into the city of Bo and is where Njala University is situated.

<sup>28</sup> Author’s interview with Munda Sannoh, a former RUF fighter, Towama, 2nd June 2015.

<sup>29</sup> Author's interview with Yatta Mansaray, a former female combatant, Bo, 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

<sup>30</sup> Higate, P. (2004) *Gender and Peacekeeping Case Studies: The DRC and Sierra Leone*, ISS Monograph 91. Pretoria: *Institute for Security Studies*, pp. 6 -7.

impact for society as a whole. Accordingly, group identity has an impact on ‘civil conflict’,<sup>31</sup> and being part of a group can help the individual to gain a positive self-image and transcend stigmas and negative identities and labels.

Nonetheless, there is a sense that being a former combatant in Sierra Leone is not something that people who directly took part in the conflict had relegated to the past; rather it remained an active part of their existence and their identity, perhaps for the rest of their lives, due in part to their experience as armed actors. There is a stigma attached to being part of one of the most devastating conflicts that Africa has witnessed in recent history, a conflict that killed between 30,000 and 75,000 people; displaced around fifty percent of the country’s population and destroyed about half of the country’s infrastructure.<sup>32</sup> Inevitably, this differentiated them from the rest of the civilian population as many people still struggle to find the mechanism to adequately deal with the past, especially at community level.

This section has discussed the construction of self and the relationship that exist between status and identity within the framework of post-conflict reintegration. The section has, in addition argued that former combatants’ sharing of a group identity and a “place of belonging in the local structure could have significant impact for society as a whole.

The next section discusses factors that force former combatants into a state of disillusion and confusion about their role in their own reintegration following the end of a conflict. It discusses the lack of trust, marginalisation, discrimination, and inequality and how they can lead to anger and high emotions experience by formal combatants in their new civilian environment.

#### **5.4 Former Combatants’ Emotional Well-Being: Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder**

The previous section analysed the (re)construction of ‘self’ by former combatants, the relationship between status and identity in their new civilian environment, which are affected by the DDR process that they went through. This section, on the other hand examines the common perceptions, sensations and feelings experienced by formal combatants in their new

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<sup>31</sup> Ibid, pp. 6 - 7.

<sup>32</sup> See Kaldor, M., and Vincent, J. (2006) Evaluation of UNDP Support for Conflict - Affected Countries. *United Nations Development Programme*. Document Available on line at: [web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/thematic/conflict/ConflictEvaluation2006.pdf](http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/thematic/conflict/ConflictEvaluation2006.pdf). Document Accessed on line on 12/12/2015.

status as civilians, which has contributed to the state of uncertainty and confusion on their part. For many former RUF combatants who took part in this study, isolation, betrayal, abandonment, loneliness and discrimination are among some of the key reasons for their failure to reintegrate back into civilian society following their demobilisation. During fieldwork and through some of my interviews and informal conversations with respondents, I was able to understand the feeling of isolation, mental and emotional difficulties, discrimination and the feelings of abandonment that they are presently going through. The purpose of this section is to examine the common traits experienced by many former combatants, which hinder their reintegration and contribute to their position of ‘neglected former combatants’.

In a conversation with Saddam, one of my respondents, I noted the following:

**Interviewer:** How do you feel now that the war is over and you now live in a civilian environment?

**Saddam:** Yes, the war is now over, and we live in civilian environment, but there remain many problems in this country. All of the problems that caused the war are still around - poverty, inequality, corruption, greed and grievance are still embedded in our society despite the violence conflict we went through.

**Interviewer:** What do you mean?

**Saddam:** Because since the conflict ended in 2002, we were promised many things such as job opportunities, houses, even money, and ‘good life’ but until now, nobody cares for us, and we as ex-fighters are suffering and struggling for our living. The only way we survive is by riding Okada.

**Interviewer:** Can you explain this further please?

**Saddam:** During our time in the DDR camp, they told us that the international community will provide money, jobs and houses for us when we give up our arms. I was attached to General Augustine Gbaw’s<sup>33</sup> regiment in Makeni, in the north. During our stay in Makeni, General Gbaw was given a lot of money by the ‘big people’ (the international community) to be distributed among those of us who were under his command, so were other Generals across the movement. But he kept all of the money for his own personal use. After the war ended, some of us who survived went and asked him about the money, but he told us that there was no money for us because he knew the war was over. So, some of the men decided to go to his house and kill him at night. But he was lucky; it was the following week that he

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<sup>33</sup> Augustine Gbaw was a senior commander in the RUF movement from 1991 until his arrest in 2002. He was one of the most ruthless and most feared commanders in the RUF movement. Gbaw was convicted by the Sierra Leone Special Court in February 2009 for war crimes and crimes against humanity. He was sentenced to 25 years in prison.



was arrested and indicted by the Special Court. Now we are left with nothing except extreme poverty. We struggle to even feed our family.

**Interviewer:** What do you think about this situation?

**Saddam:** General Gbaw and other senior commanders in the movement as well as the government and the international community betrayed us because since the war ended, everybody turned their backs on us - no jobs, no money.

**Interviewer:** Do you think you are marginalised or discriminated against because of your involvement with the RUF?

**Saddam:** Yes, it is very difficult for us to get job, we are left by ourselves, and nobody care for us except our close relatives and friends, and those of us who fought for the common cause - former fighters occasionally when we meet in the ghetto.<sup>34</sup>

My extended discussion with Saddam who fought under the command of General Gbaw in Makeni summarises explicitly, not only the feelings of most former combatants across the board, but also the position they are now in after their demobilisation. Some of them had violent reactions from members of their community, some forgot about their past, and others just did not integrate with society. But most of them had feelings of resentment against some individuals especially their own commanders or society as a whole. In terms of feelings and emotions, this gap generated different reactions among former combatants. From the respondents and the discussions so far, it is clear that some of the common feelings are the sense of abandonment and inequality created by the authorities, former commanders, organisations and society in general.

The disarmament and demobilisation (the first two stages of the DDR process) forced some former combatants into a state of disillusion and confusion about their role in the new Sierra Leonean society. Questions then arose about both new and old relationships, which generated inner doubts on the side of the RUF. For some, this confusion is temporary, while for others it is permanent. Labelling them as old killers, old rebels, former combatant or ex-fighter carries with it negative associations, and thus creates a sense of disapproval by society, aggravating their condition, that then modulates into stigmatisation. As Saddam further explains:

‘Some people in my community sometimes call me old killer, old rebel or old assassin, all sorts of names. But what we need to do as former combatants is to

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<sup>34</sup>Author’s interview with Saddam, Bo, 29 May 2015.

change our attitude and behaviour completely, because we now live in a different environment - the civilian environment.’<sup>35</sup>

The reintegration of former combatants is linked, in some ways to individual behaviour, and how well they try to adjust to their new civilian environment. Other factors such as identity, the level of destruction that took place in a particular community, and perhaps most importantly, the level of sensitisation that took place in a given community about the reintegration project following the termination of the conflict are also important. It is also obvious that some community members, in places such as Kailahun and Pujehun, where the rebellion started in March 1991, saw former RUF combatants as revolutionary heroes, idols or ‘liberators’, whose main aim was to free them and their country from the brutality of the APC regime. In other places, where destruction of properties was high, they were described as ‘old killers’ or ‘old rebels’.

In this section, I have examined the common perceptions, sensations and feelings experienced by many former combatants in the civilian environment after they were demobilised, which have contributed to the state of uncertainty, betrayal and confusion on their part. I have also pointed out that some former combatants who took part in this study pointed to isolation, betrayal, abandonment and discrimination as some of the key issues responsible for their failure to reintegrate back into civilian society after the termination of the conflict.

The next section looks at the difficulties faced by the NCDDR commission to attract funds, as well as the difficulties to manage the very large number of former combatants. This resulted in the delivery of poorly structured short-term training opportunities for former combatants.

## **5.5 Evaluating the Success and Failure of Reintegration**

Compared with other dimensions of post-conflict reintegration such as economic and political reintegration, social reintegration focuses mainly on the degree to which former combatants adapt local customs, social relations, and daily practices of the communities into which they are to be reintegrated. Social reintegration is usually measured through social network, language, and intermarriage.<sup>36</sup> One of the most commonly used indicators of social reintegration is social network, which refers to the connection that former combatants build

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<sup>35</sup> Author’s interview with Saddam, Bo, 29 May 2015.

<sup>36</sup> Vigdor, J. (2008) *Measuring Immigrant Assimilation in the United States*. New York: Manhattan Institute, Civic Report No. 53.

with others in the host community. While some scholars use the total number of former combatants' friends as a measure, others use the frequency of interaction with friends and community members.

Language is another important variable some scholars use to assess the degree of former combatants' social reintegration. A higher level in grasping local language results in more chances to communicate with community members and a better understanding of local culture. A typical question I adopted during data collection is as 'Do you understand the local people's language'? In south and eastern Sierra Leone for instance, the fluency of Mende dialect is a widely used indicator as a successful social reintegration, while the fluency of Temne dialect in the North is an indicator of successful social reintegration.

Intermarriage is also an indicator of social reintegration in a post-war context. In some cases, young women who are unmarried are asked the following question: 'Would you consider marrying a former combatant? For those already married, question will be like 'Would you like your children to consider marrying former combatants?' Answers to these questions are a good predictor of former combatants' willingness to be integrated into the host community.

The internationally supported NCDDR commission was faced with problems of limited funds and facilities available for the reintegration project. One of the problems was due to the very large number of former combatants, who had completed the disarmament and demobilisation phase. There was also the lack of adequate funding for the reintegration project through the Multi Donor Trust Fund (MDTF), as well as the lack of capacity of implementing partners. This resulted in the delivery of poorly structured short-term training opportunities, usually between three to six months, and lack of apprenticeships or on-the-job training opportunities across existing workshops or businesses. Moreover, the vocational trainings that were offered by the NCDDR focused mainly on jobs such as carpentry, masonry, hairdressing, tailoring and metal works among other skills, but as further post-conflict analysis suggest, there are limited employment opportunities for such trades anywhere in the country even for the already qualified civilian population.<sup>37</sup>

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<sup>37</sup>Kargbo, A., H. (2014) *Post-Conflict Governance in Sierra Leone*. London: Author House, pp.168 -169.

Apprenticeships training programmes should have been an excellent means of economic reintegration process, as well as the appropriate means of rebuilding social capital as it offers insertion through association with a mentor or trainer into an already existing socio-economic network, consisting of groups and communities of people who are not former combatants. This should have resulted into sustainable employment and reintegration for most demobilised combatants. However, the lack of education among RUF combatants and the poor training coordination, plus the shortage of experienced trainers who could provide rigid and instructor-oriented methodologies turned the training programmes into a ‘quick-fix’ endeavour<sup>38</sup> with little impact on the beneficiaries - the former combatants.

As one former staff member of one of the implementing institutions remarked:

‘...During the training exercise, we were told to tell them (former combatants) that upon completing the training exercise, they will become mechanics or vehicle engineers, carpenters, hairdressers or plumbers, depending on their training programmes, although we very well knew it was almost impossible, because the short trainings provided was almost irrelevant and insufficient for them to be able to successfully compete with their civilian compatriots, most of whom were well-trained and well experienced professionals of these jobs or trades’.<sup>39</sup>

Without any significant access to microcredit schemes and few job opportunities available across the country, the training schemes former RUF combatants, and indeed other former combatants from other factions underwent, and the skills they acquired over the years have lost any potential value. Some of them used their reinsertion benefits to buy basic diamond mining equipment, and are presently in mining areas in Kono, Tongo and other diamondiferous areas<sup>40</sup> around the country. Others bought motorbikes and run them on a commercial basis as Okada. The majority of those who did not make good use of their reinsertion benefits are now in a deplorable and frustrating state of affairs,<sup>41</sup> like Saddam, T-Boy and many others with little or no hope for the future. They believe that they did not achieve anything from the decade long conflict, nor did they benefit from the reintegration programme.

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<sup>38</sup> Author’s interview with Francis Kai-Kai, former NCDDR Executive Secretary, Freetown, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2015.

<sup>39</sup> Author’s interview with a former DDR service provider, Bo, 12 June 2015. The former trainer's name remains anonymous upon her request.

<sup>40</sup> Updates on the Reintegration of Ex-Combatants in Sierra Leone by PRIDE. December 2010.

<sup>41</sup> Author's interview with Solomon Berewa, former Vice President of Sierra Leone, Freetown, 9<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

Tigana's narrative below highlights the failure of these reintegration expectations. He says:

'We had high hope of living good life after given up our arms. Some of us who were young were expecting to continue with our education, or at least get good jobs, but we were just told to go home and nothing else...' <sup>42</sup>

These disgruntled former combatants are convinced that they have been let-down and neglected by society and that there has been a violation of confidence and trust by society. This type of expectation is common in many societies emerging from conflict and among many warring factions in Africa and elsewhere. But for most RUF combatants, the outcome of the eleven years of conflict was disappointing. One of the reasons for this is that dissatisfied former combatants who are not serving in the national army pose the long-term threat to the stability of the country. This is particularly true in regions, such as Kailahun and Pujehun where groups of these men and women were present during the civil war. The Government of Sierra Leone set out to enlist only a small number of them into the national army. The majority of them were supposed to go through a regular DDR programme, which was designed to remove weapons from combatants and take them out of military structures by helping them to reintegrate socially and economically into society. However, in 2002, which serves as the official benchmark for the end of the conflict, saw the state of affairs in the country as an unresolved civil-conflict, the loss of privileges by the former combatants and their perceived sense of insecurity. For most of them, the end of the conflict brought everyone (combatants and non-combatants alike) to the same level, identifying them as ex-killers, and ex-thieves, coupled with the negative memories associated with their status. As such, this failure of reintegration expectations was evident among most of the respondents who took part in this study. It is thus indicative that some of the factors have led to the widening gap in society. It has in addition, led to further socio-economic and political exclusion. This is indicated on the following dialogue:

Fawundu is 34 years old from Koidu town in Kono, eastern Sierra Leone. He fought with the RUF from 1994 until he was disarmed and demobilised in late 2001. He explains:

**Interviewer:** Does inequality and discrimination exist for all Sierra Leoneans or it is only for former combatants like yourself?

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<sup>42</sup> Author's interview with Tigana, a former RUF fighter, Pendembu, 21<sup>st</sup> March 2015.

**Fawundu:** Inequality and discrimination exist across the board, but it is highest for former combatants, especially for those of us who were associated with the RUF. Because many people think that we killed many people during the war, so they look at us differently. We are on our own most of the time; we are discriminated against.

**Interviewer:** So how do you feel about your current situation or the general situation in the country?

**Fawundu:** We are being discriminated against. Even some employers will refer to us as old killers or old rebels. So, they will not want to talk to us, neither do they want to give us job.<sup>43</sup>

Contrary to Fawundu's narrative, a survey undertaken by Arson and Zartman in Sierra Leone in 2005 concluded that most former combatants who were with the RUF for long period had little exposure to formal education;<sup>44</sup> and therefore they did not have any skills that would enable them to compete with the already qualified civilian population in the job market. Although some form of orientations towards skills, job training and other income generating schemes were undertaken by the Interim Care Centres for the former combatants following their demobilisation, it was not robust enough to enable them to compete in the post-conflict job market with the already talented civilian population.<sup>45</sup> As such, most of them have resulted to Okada and Keke riding across the country.<sup>46</sup>

The findings from this chapter underline a gap between former combatants' present perceptions of what it means to be civilians and their current opportunities to become such civilians. Among the many challenges faced by them as they seek to reintegrate back into civilian life are their lack of education and job experience, the social stigma against them, and the reluctance of their family members to accept and share property upon their return. These factors collectively create serious challenges for returning fighters in dealing with and moving past their high levels of emotional stress and mental health issues.

This study thus highlights the need for continued psychosocial support for former combatants and their families. In addition, economic opportunities are essential for successful reintegration, as are programmes that promote the active participation of former combatants

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<sup>43</sup> Author's interview with John Fawundu, Koidu town, 30<sup>th</sup> April 2015.

<sup>44</sup> Arson, C., J. and Zartman, W. (2005) *Rethinking the Economics of War: The Intersection of Need, Creed, and Greed*. Washington: *Woodrow Wilson Centre Press Series*, pp.100 - 110.

<sup>45</sup> Kargbo, A., H. (2014) *Post-Conflict Governance in Sierra Leone*. London: Author House, pp.168 -169.

<sup>46</sup> Lawrence, M. (2013) *Bottom Up DDR: Sierra Leone's Okada Riders*. Ontario: *Centre for Security Governance*.

and community, approaching reintegration as an interactive process between former combatants and their social environment. All of these necessary services must also include attention to help them construct non-violent and positive notions of citizenship.

## **5.6 Concluding Remarks**

As seen from the narratives, discussions and analyses in this chapter, there is the sense of discrimination, inequality and anger included in the emotions of most respondents who took part in this study. The negative view of society towards former combatants as a ruthless and cruel group of people is still visible in the ‘new’ Sierra Leone. Former combatants who, during the conflict committed gross atrocities against members of their own communities or their family members strike the most violent blow to social unity and social cohesion. These sets of former combatants are disliked by many people in society regardless. This is true in cases where the act of violence was directly associated with the perpetrators. However, most of the individual former combatants are not known by the communities to be violent, but are instead stigmatised for violent acts they are assumed to have committed by participating in the conflict. This generates a general stigmatisation for the former combatants.

Common feelings such as discrimination, friction between communities and abandonment experienced by many former combatants who took part in this study suggest that they lost faith in society, the government and the international community. These thoughts and feelings jeopardise their sense of belonging to the RUF armed group, at least in some ways. The motivational properties of collective identities are systematically analysed in Baumeister and Leary’s literature in support of a comprehensive evidence that is fundamental for the ‘need to belong’ as an innate feature of human nature.<sup>47</sup> Accordingly, therefore this detachment from the armed movement and the community, and the loss of a sense of belonging then generated a sense of lost, guilt and frustration among the former combatants. Thus, societal resentment and the exclusion from community is seen by former combatants as a reaction to the dissolution of their supporting networks.

These feelings and reactions to the end of the conflict represent the theoretical evidence of what has been discussed in chapters one and two about destroyed trust, destroyed social unity, destroyed social relations and destroyed social fabric within formal and informal social

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<sup>47</sup> Baumeister, R., F. and Leary, M., R. (1995) The Need to Belong: Desire for Interpersonal Attachments as a Fundamental Human Motivation. *Psychological Bulletin*, Vol. 117, No. 3, pp. 497 - 529.

institutions across the Sierra Leonean society. Isolation for former combatants, in the sense of abandonment and feelings of betrayal are evidence of the disintegration of supporting societal network. The feeling of discrimination confirms the dissolution of the status of former combatants, and negative labelling and categorisation. All these feelings provoke the state of confusion and neglect shared by former combatants.

There is no easy roadmap for reintegration and reconciliation, and certainly there is no simple prescription for healing the wounds and divisions of a society in the aftermath of sustained violence. Building trust and understanding between former combatants and the civilian population is a difficult challenge. It is, however, a crucial one to address in the process of achieving sustainable peace. Examining the painful past, acknowledging it and understanding it, as well as transcending it together, is the best way to guarantee that it does not - and cannot - happen again.

As other post-conflict societies such as South Africa and Rwanda suggest, Sierra Leone discovered its own route to reintegration and reconciliation. Both reintegration and reconciliation cannot be imposed from outside; they must be 'nurtured' at community level. This involves a very long and painful journey, understanding the motivations of offenders, addressing the pain and suffering of the victims, bringing together former combatants and community members, trying to find a path to justice, truth, and ultimately sustainable peace. Sierra Leone has travelled a long way down the road of reintegration and reconciliation, but as revealed in this chapter, there are still issues to be addressed. Reintegration and reconciliation are long-term processes and they must - and will - continue for many years to come. Since the end of the conflict, a lot has been achieved, but there is still more to be done. In Sierra Leone, truth was at the heart of reconciliation: the need to find out the truth about the violent past, the better to ensure that they never happen again. And that is the importance of reintegration and reconciliation. Without it people have no sense of safety, no trust, and certainly no confidence in the future.

The next chapter argues that building trust between former combatants and their receiving community indicate that trust, reconciliation and peace are achievable following the end of conflicts. The chapter, in addition argues that social reintegration of former combatants helps improve social capital in a post-war society like Sierra Leone, which inevitably promotes peace and reconciliation.



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## CHAPTER SIX

### Former Combatants, Reconciliation, Social Capital and their Implications

#### Introduction

Chapter five analysed the sense of discrimination, inequality and anger among the former combatants following the end of the conflict in Sierra Leone. It also analysed the negative views of some sections of the civilian population towards the former combatants; views that have continued to create a divide between some sections of the population and the former combatants. This chapter now looks at sustainable social reintegration of former combatants, and how it impacts on the general peace-building process that affects individual former combatants, their family and the community into which they are reintegrated. The chapter argues that building trust between former combatants and the community into which they are reintegrated indicate that trust, reconciliation and peace are achievable following the end of conflicts. Whilst trust may not be immediately forthcoming between certain groups or individuals, the examples discussed in this chapter show that trust can be built over time. Building on the narratives and analyses in the previous chapter, this chapter argues that social reintegration of former combatants helps improve social capital in Sierra Leone, which inevitably promotes peace and reconciliation in the country.

The chapter concludes that for sustainable social reintegration to take hold, it has to be driven by community involvement and activity, which indicates one of Putnam's dominant theses of social capital, 'the prosperous community'.<sup>1</sup> It also concludes that with increase in the restoration of social capital also comes increase in reconciliation, especially at community level, and that establishing trust between former combatants and the general civilian population following demobilisation promotes the regeneration of bridges and bonds that is compose of social capital.

This chapter is particularly important if we are to both examine and understand the implications of social capital on the social reintegration in a post-conflict environment following the demobilisation of combatants in the context of the RUF in Sierra Leone. It is important first to acknowledge how such reintegration takes place and under what circumstances. As evidenced in chapter five, the reintegration of former combatants into

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<sup>1</sup> Putnam, R., D. (1993) The prosperous community. *American Prospect*, Vol. 4, No. 13, pp. 35 - 42.

civilian environment is multidimensional, and therefore the impacts of such a process on rebuilding social capital and promoting reconciliation and peace will be multifaceted.

## **6.1 Post-Conflict Reconciliation in Sierra Leone**

Whilst investigating reintegration following the end of the conflict in Sierra Leone, one would question whether it is really possible to achieve sustainable or absolute peace in a society that witnessed sustained violence; a conflict that killed between 30,000 and 75,000 people, displaced about half of the country's population and destroyed around half of the country's infrastructure.<sup>2</sup> In other words, we are looking at a post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation programme in a country that experienced violence at all levels, and where the functioning of formal civic institutions was weak. In addition, these processes begin in a climate of great suspicion, distrust, hatred and fear.

There is a simple way to assume, define or analyse reconciliation, i.e., to allow or bring back together formerly conflicted parties following the end of a particular conflict, and allowing them to reconcile their differences through the establishment of trust, truth telling and forgiveness. But as was pointed out in the previous chapter, peoples' involvement in violent conflict changes their behaviour and identity over time.<sup>3</sup> The way in which they relate to other people, and the actors involved in the process will undergo obvious transformation over time. However, traditional DDR literature<sup>4</sup> regarding post-conflict reconciliation, especially in the context of Sierra Leone, focuses particularly on transitional justice, mainly the TRC. Thus, I discuss community justice through which reconciliation is pursued by linking the analyses to the narratives of former combatants in the previous chapter.

Following the end of the conflict in Sierra Leone in 2002, the Tejan Kabbah SLPP government in power saw reconciliation<sup>5</sup> as an important component in peace-building effort, as did regional and international communities. As such, a number of measures were introduced in pursuance of this by the government and its regional and international partners. To be able to accurately evaluate their success, I first need to evaluate the position of the

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<sup>2</sup> Kaldor, M., and Vincent, J. (2006) *Evaluation of UNDP Support for Conflict - Affected Countries*, p. 6.

<sup>3</sup> Bloomfield, D., Barnes, T and Huyse, L. (2003) Reconciliation After Violent Conflict. *International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance*. Document Available on line at: [www.un.org/.../Reconciliation-After-Violent-Conflict-A-Handbook-Full-English-PDF](http://www.un.org/.../Reconciliation-After-Violent-Conflict-A-Handbook-Full-English-PDF). Document Accessed on line on: 05/10/2016.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

government, as well as the position of the international community. The eleven years of continuous conflict destroyed bridging social capital as well as vertical social capital in the country. Thus, reconciliation and the general peace-building effort is difficult to achieve in the country between the former combatants and their civilian victims. Achieving sustainable peace and total reconciliation is a very complex phenomenon. However, as Francis Kai-Kai, the former Executive Secretary of NCDDR points out:

‘The reconciliation effort in Sierra Leone is working towards various facets - it is not only the RUF versus the civilian population. During the height of the conflict, there were big division; sometimes at family level, at community level and even at national level. This led to the ‘us versus them’ rhetoric. Then you have the aspect of victims and perpetrators of violence. Then, there was the aspect of people who did not migrate during the conflict and those who fled the war - the returnees/refugee population. There was lots of hatred and grievances at village/local or community levels, and the conflict became so complicated at one point that nobody knew exactly who was fighting against whom. I know a family of four brothers in which the last son joined the RUF, two joined the national army and the eldest joined the Kamajor militia.... So, imagine how complicated it became for most Sierra Leoneans... Sometimes the conflict was at household level, very complicated to understand. Therefore, it is not only about rebels reconciling, it is far more complicated than that.’<sup>6</sup>

The conflict was experienced at all levels, including at household level, so it is easy to understand why reconciliation and the general peace-building effort has been, and still is, difficult to achieve. In addition, when we consider all the different factions that were involved in the conflict - the national army, Kamajors, The West Side Boys, Donsos, Tamaboros, and the Kapras, plus the IDPs or the returnees, the general refugee population, the amputees and other disabled people, reconciliation in the country becomes even more complex. Hence, there remains the question of whether or not reconciliation is important in the context of Sierra Leone.

Stovel points out in her book ‘There is no bad bush to throw away a bad child’,<sup>7</sup> the general feeling in Sierra Leone today is that whether the people of Sierra Leone like each other or not, they have to live together following the end of the conflict. This is because there is the

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<sup>5</sup> This thesis defines reconciliation as the restoration of peaceful or amicable relations between former members of armed groups and the civilian population who were previously in ‘conflict’ with one another. Reconciliation is used interchangeably with conciliation.

<sup>6</sup> Author’s interview with Francis Kai-Kai, former NCDDR Executive Secretary, Freetown, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2015.

<sup>7</sup> Stovel, L. (2008) ‘There is No Bad Bush to Throw Away a Bad Child’: Tradition-Inspired Reintegration in Post-War Sierra Leone. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 2, pp. 305 - 324.

need for all citizens to accept one another and to leave the past in the past simply because they are all the same people in the same field, living in the same community, almost in the same house, living in the same neighbourhood.<sup>8</sup> There was, in addition, a conflict between perpetrators of violence and survivors, between those who returned and those who managed to stay during the civil-conflict. People had to rebuild their lives and to live together and become one people as in pre-war society. Responding to the need for reconciliation in the country, the government and the international community established the TRC in 2002 with a particular mandate to promote the unity and reconciliation of the Sierra Leonean people following the end of the conflict.<sup>9</sup>

While the TRC had the responsibility to promote reconciliation and unity, and to encourage people to live together, it lacked the mandate to investigate human rights abuses or hold people to account for atrocities they committed either before or during the conflict. However, the creation of the internationally supported Special Court was mandated to carry out these functions, as well as strengthening the existing national court system.

Following the disarmament and demobilisation of fighters, reconciliation in a post-conflict environment appears to be difficult and unpredictable process, which depends on a number of interrelated factors. In the context of Sierra Leone's, level of reconciliation, two main factors should be considered. Firstly, at the time of fieldwork for this thesis, it was fifteen years since the conflict officially ended, which is relatively a short period of time if we take into account the degree of reconciliation one might expect. Secondly, the nature of the conflict, had devastating effects on the Sierra Leonean society as a whole thus making any attempts at reconciliation complex and difficult.

Over the last decade, reconciliation in Sierra Leone has taken place slowly. In the last phase of the conflict, the RUF controlled about 70 percent of the country. During this time, there was serious insecurity and suffering around the country.<sup>10</sup> At the same time, in the immediate aftermath of the conflict, general insecurity caused by RUF activists and sympathisers continued to destabilise the country. Hatred, distrust and fear were prevalent across the

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> See Kerr, R, and Lincoln, J. (2008) *The Special Court for Sierra Leone Outreach, Legacy and Impact*, Final Report. War Crimes Research Group, *Department of War Studies, King's College, London*. Document Available on line at: <https://www.kcl.ac.uk/sspp/departments/warstudies/research/groups/.../slfinalreport.pdf>. Document Accessed on line on: 13/12/15.

country. Therefore, one of the key objectives of the government and the international community was to ensure the security of the country and attempt to get the economy functioning again.

In some communities prior to the return of IDPs and refugees, relations between the civilian population and former combatants differed according to location. In some communities where the impact of the conflict was not very high, cooperation was relatively good, with people sharing and helping each other. However, in other communities, people no longer trusted each other, because of what they went through during the conflict. As one former RUF member explains:

‘When I first came here, many people were afraid of me because they did not trust me, even to speak to me, let alone to have anything to do with me. There was a great deal of fear, which was generated by the war. It was also very difficult for the civilians because some people in the community still had bad feelings for us. But later on, they started trusting us, and slowly we started getting involved in community activities like road building. Today, relations are getting better and better. To come from the war-zone and start a new life in a civilian environment depending on yourself was not easy.’<sup>11</sup>

Some former combatants were scared that the civilians might harm or kill them even before peace was achieved in the country. After security was re-established or strengthened as a result of the presence of ECOMOG, UN peace keepers and the British military, as well as the government of Sierra Leone kept sensitising the civilian population about the importance of unity and reconciliation in a post-war environment.<sup>12</sup> In the east and southern regions, for instance, where the conflict began, and where there was greater destruction, the level of trust was low and communities did not immediately cooperate with reconciliation methods. However, as security was established and more reconciliation messages were sent out by the government and NGOs, citizens started to accept and cooperated more fully with the DDR process.

Informal networks of exchange and various associations such as youth networking, football clubs and dance groups began to develop, especially at local level, which became wide spread

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<sup>10</sup> Keen, D. (2005) *Conflict and Collusion in Sierra Leone*. Oxford: James Currey.

<sup>11</sup> Author’s interview with John Kangoma, a former RUF fighter, Mandu, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2015.

<sup>12</sup> Author’s interview with Francis Kai-Kai, former NCDDR Executive Secretary, Freetown, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2015.

in many communities. This indicates a high incidence of behaviour born out of a need for mutual assistance and reciprocity that helped foster and reinforce solidarity, cooperation and trust between former combatants and community members. Such behaviour developed over time and was actively encouraged and supported by the government, and NGOs who implemented various programmes such as tradition-inspired reintegration projects,<sup>13</sup> and the TRC. As will be discussed in the following paragraphs, for most of the respondents who took part in this study, it was the general observation that life after the war had improved dramatically, that people were living well and that society was functioning well as compared to the war period and the period that immediately followed the end of the conflict.

In general, many civilians, especially community leaders who took part in this study described ongoing relations with former combatants as cooperative and 'workable'. As the narratives of Pa Abu and the Paramount Chief of Tonko Limba, Paramount Chief, Kande Kogba III indicate, it was widely felt that forgiveness and reconciliation had been important steps and that the goal now was simply to move forward and to rebuild a new and a better Sierra Leone. Brima Kallon, a primary school head teacher in Njala Komboya, Southern Sierra Leone, explains his approach to former-combatants as that of a good neighbour, and accepting them as a partner in the community. As Kallon further remarks:

'We have to call them up, we live together, we drink palm wine together, and we do everything together, why not? We have many of them here passing up and down. We continue to do goodness to them. We are all brothers and sisters, what can we do?'<sup>14</sup>

In similar circumstance, Mohamed Kargbo, a senior community worker in Matru Jong similarly stated:

'If everybody accepts what happened to them and forgive the perpetrators (the former combatants), I believe that there will be no more conflict in this country, because we are now living together with those who perpetrated this act on us. We have become brothers and sister again because they said we should do so, and we have accepted them and moved on'.<sup>15</sup>

Similar stories were echoed by others. Like Ramatulai Jalloh, a 32-year-old mother of three pointed out that it was important to encourage former fighters. She said:

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<sup>13</sup> See for instance Stovel, L. (2008) 'There is No Bad Bush to Throw Away a Bad Child': Tradition-Inspired Reintegration in Post -War Sierra Leone. *Journal of Modern African Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 2, pp. 305 - 324.

<sup>14</sup> Author's interview with Brima Kallon, a primary school head teacher, Njala Komboya, 22<sup>nd</sup> July, 2015.



‘We have to encourage our brothers and sisters who went to the bush. Now that they are here and the war is over, we actually need to encourage them again so that things will go forward, because if we do not encourage them maybe that would lead into another problem... So, we just need to leave them so that we will continue to enjoy the peace that we have worked so hard to achieve’.<sup>16</sup>

It is evident that in each of the narratives given above, there is the willingness on the side of the civilian population to accept former combatants and to live together again in the same community as Sierra Leoneans, even to work together with those who perpetrated violence against them. There was little evidence identified in the narratives that identified former combatants as enemies or the unwillingness on the part of the civilian population to accept them back into society.

Although some progress has been made so far in terms of reconciliation, reintegration and the general peace-building effort in the country, as noted above in the commentary of Brima Kallon, a primary school head teacher in Njala Komboya, and Mohamed Kargbo, a senior community worker in Matru Jong for example, there remain a number of problems to be addressed. First, there remains some degree of social exclusion, inequality, and high levels of poverty; unemployment and underemployment remain high among former combatants in particular. One former female combatant who survived but lost her husband during the conflict described how she has been excluded and rejected by her community following her demobilisation. She says: ‘My husband was killed, and now I am rejected by even my own people and the rest of society, it is really difficult for me to understand.’ In the middle of our discussion, she became shaken and agitated and directed her frustration towards me, ‘You are all the same, if I tell you all of my problems, what can you do for me? Will you bring back my husband? Will you give me job? Will you improve my living conditions or provide food for me? By the way which government institution are you from? You are one of those people hurting me? My husband used to do everything for me. Please ask those who sent you here (referring to the government and the international community) why they are only helping some people and leaving the rest of us in poverty, there are lots of poor people here like me.’<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>15</sup> Author’s interview with Mohamed Kargbo, Matru Jong, 1<sup>st</sup> May 2015.

<sup>16</sup> Author’s interview with Ramatulai Jalloh, Kenema, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

<sup>17</sup> Author’s interview with Hawa Kamara, a former female combatant, Bo, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

I tried to control my emotion by first, trying to understand the respondents that I was interviewing by familiarising with them, their moods, emotions and feelings in order to respond to them appropriately. In so doing, I maintained professionalism by managing, adapting and controlling the state of my own emotion. I always reminded myself about the state and strengths of my emotion, knowing very well that I needed to act accordingly. Finally, I tried to manage my interactions with the participants by encouraging and building trust and respect with them. I also tried to utilise empathy to take control of my communications and ensure a positive resolution.

Although the problems in Sierra Leone today are not widespread in terms of the willingness on the side of the civilian population to accept former combatants and to allow them to live together in harmony, as indicated earlier, reconciliation is still ongoing in Sierra Leone. Evidence from the Genocide in Rwanda<sup>18</sup> and the emergence of the Post-Apartheid State in South Africa<sup>19</sup> suggest that sustainable reconciliation takes place over a long period of time. As such, complete reconciliation could not take place in Sierra Leone just fifteen years following the end of one of the most brutal conflicts the continent has witnessed in recent memory. Given the level of destruction, the level of suffering and the total number of people maimed or killed across the country, it would be unreasonable to expect total reconciliation to take place in this short period of time. Nevertheless, significant progress has been made following the end of the conflict. One of the respondents I spoke to held a more optimistic view.

‘One of the key factors for holding the Sierra Leonean society together, and for such remarkable progress so far is the strong social fabric that is present across the country, even though it was destroyed during the civil-war. One of the big advantages has been that group thinking and not individualistic thinking, which has worked well in terms of rebuilding post-conflict Sierra Leonean society. No one is left behind at community level even if you hated them. It was not the case that everyone loved everyone else during the conflict, they probably still do not. Nevertheless, because you are together in one community, and because you think you belong to the same society as Sierra Leoneans, you stay in a house next to each other, you live in the same community, you speak the same languages, you still see each other as brothers and sisters, and you still talk to each other is a remarkable achievement in a short period of time’.<sup>20</sup>

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<sup>18</sup> Clark, P. (2011) *The Gacaca Courts, Post-Genocide Justices and Reconciliation in Rwanda*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

<sup>19</sup> Wilson, A., R. (2001) *The Politics of Reconciliation in South Africa: Legitimising the Post-Apartheid State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

<sup>20</sup> Author’s interview with Abass Bundu, former Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, Bedford, UK, 5th November 2014.

There is consensus that conflict dynamics do not end abruptly. There is never a clear transition from conflict to post-conflict. Rather, low level or sporadic fighting may continue; violence may persist in other forms, such as violent crime, organised crime and violence based on gender issues; and peace agreements and the general post-war reintegration programmes be derailed. Moreover, compromises made to appease belligerents in order to secure peace agreements may, in some cases institutionalise conflict dynamics. Many conflict analysts have critiqued the Lome Peace Agreement, for example, for not addressing most of the structural issues that caused the conflict in the first place. Given the complexities of ‘post-conflict’ settings, it is important that actors seeking to engage in recovery efforts conduct comprehensive assessments. The aim of such assessments is to assist actors to understand the environment in which they will be operating, to determine local priorities and needs, and to plan reintegration strategies and activities.

## **6.2 Social Capital, Former Combatants and Reintegration**

In this section, I begin by analysing the restoration of social capital following the disarmament and demobilisation of former combatants in Sierra Leone. I combine the analysis with the macro, meso and micro level elements of former combatants’ social reintegration as discussed in chapter two. This will help the reader to understand how the social reintegration of former combatants’ impact on the restoration or renewal of vertical social capital in Sierra Leone. First, I begin by analysing the transformation in social capital in the post-conflict era. I will then go on to analyse how former combatants’ social reintegration affects vertical social capital, and how bonding and bridging social capitals have been rebuilt following the end of the conflict.

This section begins by reminding the reader about bridging, bonding and linking social capital, as discussed in chapter two. Immediately following the end of the conflict in Sierra Leone, restoring the social capital that was destroyed by the conflict proved immensely difficult. Not surprisingly, in a society that was full of insecurity, distrust and fear, there was still division, and hence the usual rhetoric of ‘us versus them’. Due to the conflict, Sierra Leonean society has been fundamentally distorted and immensely fragmented. Following the displacement of and the death of many Sierra Leoneans,<sup>21</sup> the challenge that the then SLPP

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<sup>21</sup> Kaldor, M., and Vincent, J. (2006) Evaluation of UNDP Support for Conflict - Affected Countries. *United Nations Development Programme*. Document Available on line at:

government which was in governance faced was huge. Bridging social capital had been destroyed by the previous APC government, which had ruled the country for almost three decades.<sup>22</sup> Many scholars have identified this as one of the causal factors of the conflict, mainly through the discriminatory vertical social capital practices the path that the SLPP government chose following the conclusion of the conflict in 2002 would be very important to analyse here.

In the years immediately following the end of the conflict, the RUF still had some support, especially in the rural areas. As such, the attention of the government, ECOMOG forces and UN peace keepers was to ensure security throughout the country and to eliminate war ideology among the citizens. At this particular time, the level of trust across society was low; people feared each other, because they did not know who was who and who was supporting which faction. Inter-communal and inter-group trust and collaboration were still very low.

As David Francis of the Department of Peace Studies and UNESCO Chair in African Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Bradford points out:

‘At this particular time, you could not tell if this one had killed, not killed or supported the rebels, or was a rebel himself, at least secretly. You couldn't tell if the war was finally over, or if there was going to be a resumption of violence. When the war came to an end, at first people were very emotional, some people had lost their relatives, their houses and all their belongings, as such it was really very difficult for most of the population emotionally. Therefore, as far as the government, regional and the international community were concern, security was paramount which was as well important in restoring social capital’.<sup>23</sup>

At the same time, bonding social capital at community level was weak. In the rural areas, there were a large proportion of people who had lost at least one relative.<sup>24</sup> This led to high volume of disabled people, widows and orphans,<sup>25</sup> all of whom experienced different levels of suffering and trauma. In addition, all of them had different levels of trust. Moreover, a large number of those who fled the conflict returned to find their belongings destroyed, looted, burnt down, and/or their relatives killed. Whilst this may have initially added to the

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[web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/thematic/conflict/ConflictEvaluation2006.pdf](http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/thematic/conflict/ConflictEvaluation2006.pdf) Similar. Document Accessed on: 28/04/2016.

<sup>22</sup> Abdullah, I. (2004) *Between Democracy and Terror: The Sierra Leone Civil War*. Dakar: CODESRIA.

<sup>23</sup> Author's interview with David Francis, Department of Peace Studies and UNESCO Chair in African Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Bradford. [Telephone interview], 13<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

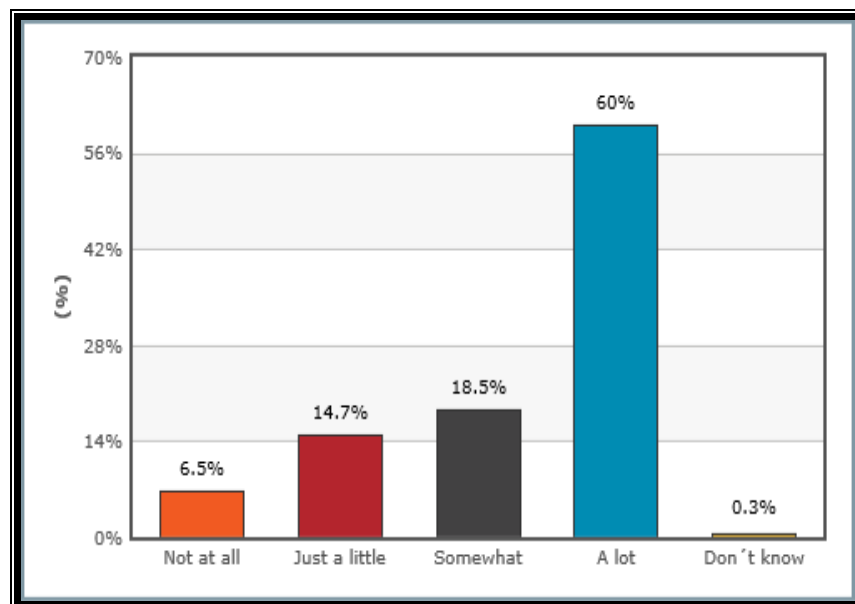
<sup>24</sup> Gberie, L. (2005) *A Dirty War in West Africa: The RUF and the Destruction of Sierra Leone*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

complexity of bonding social capital among the civilian population as discussed earlier in this thesis, over time these networks became more established. The ties that bound people together, began to develop. In this same period bonding social capital between and among the rebels was also weak. To begin with, many former combatants who took part in the conflict fled the country before even the Lome Peace Accord was enforced.<sup>26</sup> This, coupled with the fact that the rebels did not have any political say in the country, despite the transformation of their armed movement into a political party, meant that bonding social capital was weakened.<sup>27</sup>

The following figures show national public attitude surveys of democracy and governance in Sierra Leone between 2011 and 2013 in relation to the level of trust the general public have for their own relatives or family members, their neighbours and other people they only know.

Figure 5: Trust own relatives



<sup>26</sup> See for instance literature on Lome Accord for further clarification. Document Available on line at: <https://peaceaccords.nd.edu/accord/lom-peace-agreement>. Document Accessed on line on: 29/12/14.

<sup>27</sup> Mitton, K. (2008) Engaging Disengagement: The Political Reintegration of Sierra Leone's Revolutionary United Front. *Conflict, Security and Development*, Vol. 8, No. 2, pp. 192 - 222.

Figure 6: Trust neighbours

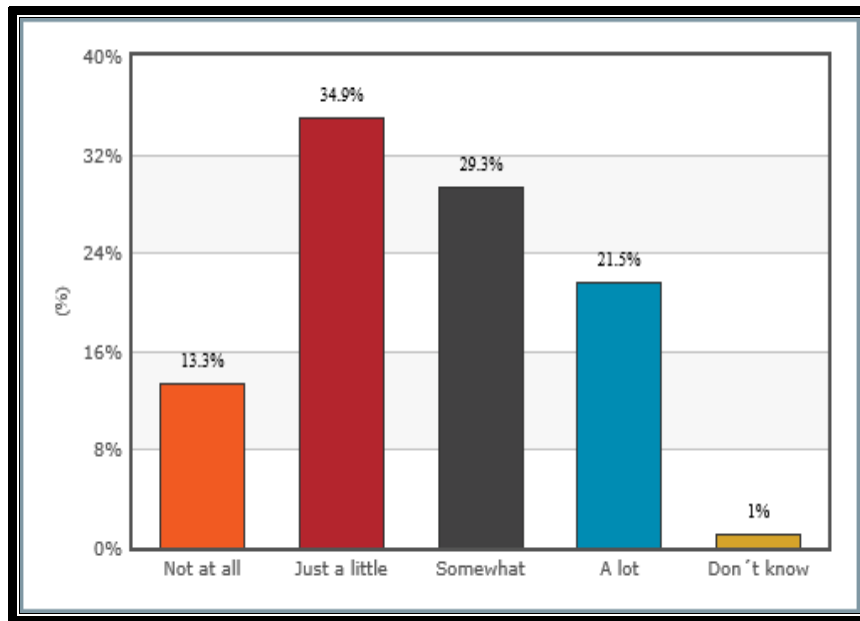
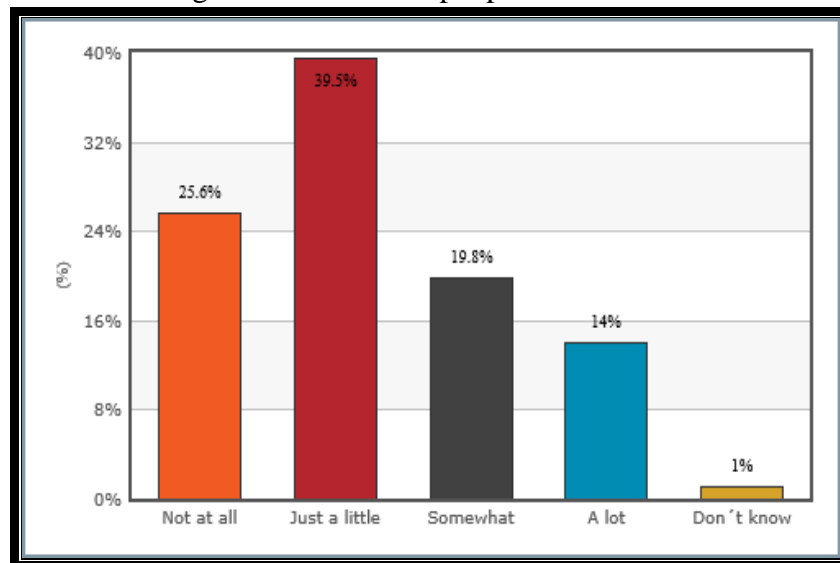


Figure 7: Trust other people



Source: Afrobarometer R52011/2013, the online data analysis tool. Available on line at: <http://afrobarometer.org/online-data-analysis/analyse-online>. Accessed on line on 01/01/16.

Losing levels of thin trust in the Sierra Leonean society, and indeed in other societies emerging from violence conflict is a great loss to community spirit, social cohesion and the general peace-building effort. It is important because thin trust is one of the key foundations for rebuilding social capital that was destroyed by the conflict. As Putnam points out:

‘In short, people who trust others are all-round good citizens, and those more engaged in community life are both more trusting and more trustworthy...[while] the civically disengaged believe themselves to be surrounded by miscreants and feel less constrained to be honest themselves’.<sup>28</sup>

The community loyalties and a shared sense of belonging were important in the resilience of a positive community spirit and development across the country. The norms of reciprocity and the strong dense and supportive ‘bonding’ that emerged in the post-war Sierra Leonean society typified the present Sierra Leonean state. Components of community life across the country were able to nurture well-being by providing access to mutually supportive relationships and also by enabling both former combatants and the civilian population to maintain ‘Ontological Security’<sup>29</sup> through meeting needs for a sense of local identity, belonging and security. The substance and sense of community in Sierra Leone, although less strong than it was in the pre-war era, had been sustained and slowly rebuilt into the present.

The Afro Barometer data shown in figure five above suggest that 60 percent of the population in the country trust their own relatives, while 21.5 percent (figure 6) reported that they trust their neighbours. This suggests that bridging social capital has been somehow re-established. Further evidence in UNDP report<sup>30</sup> also suggest that human security in the country has improved and that most communities and individuals across the country engaged in the reciprocal exchange of food, information, labour and work tools. Together, these indicate a good level of trust in and across communities in the new Sierra Leone. Although these exchanges of items were not very frequent in the immediate aftermath of the conflict, - at least in some communities - exchanges increased over a period of time. With increased communication and interaction, trust developed and exchange took place, based upon the relationships that became established. Trust was established particularly because of a combination of social cohesion, associations, and community events that included former combatants, informal networks, and most importantly collective action and responsibility. Social events like community feasts, traditional child naming rites, wedding and playing football together all provide a platform on which members of the community become familiar

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid, pp. 136 - 137.

<sup>29</sup> Giddens, A. (1990) *The Consequences of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

<sup>30</sup> Kaldor, M., and Vincent, J. (2006) Evaluation of UNDP Support for Conflict - Affected Countries. *United Nations Development Programme*, p.9. Document Available on line at: [web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/thematic/conflict/ConflictEvaluation2006.pdf](http://web.undp.org/evaluation/documents/thematic/conflict/ConflictEvaluation2006.pdf). Document Accessed on line on 12/12/2015.

with other people and develop relationship with people they did not know before. Associations based on socio-economic activities help to develop support networks, increase reciprocal exchange and strengthen social cohesion and solidarity among community members. Ultimately these associations stimulate self-help, mutual-help and interdependence, thus assisting in the re-establishment of bridging social capital across communities in the country.

Although steady progress has been made since the end of the conflict, there still remains much work to be done. But as this quote from a local Imam (an Islamic scholar or preacher, who is also a community leader) from Daru in eastern Sierra Leone shows, there is hope for achieving sustainable peace and re-establishing social capital in the country:

‘Immediately after the end of the conflict, there was a lack of trust among the people. There was also a great deal of fear, which was generated by the war. When citizens saw that the war had finally come to an end, they started trusting one another slowly, and getting involved in activities together like playing football and other community activities. Even refugees who were returning started working together with those who stayed behind, as well as with former combatants and things started improving slowly. And today, when you see people working together - civilians, former fighters, refugees, IDPs, JCs etc., without trying to point fingers at people or associate people with a particular group, I think that the country is getting closer and closer to unity and total reconciliation. Although there still remains huge work to be done, but we are getting somewhere at least’.<sup>31</sup>

Social capital in Sierra Leone which was severely damaged during the conflict has been at least partially restored. Bridging social capital, the variant of social capital damaged the most throughout the conflict, is slowly evolving among the people of Sierra Leone. Although the situation in the country is not perfect at present, the progress that has been made since the end of the conflict is huge and cannot be discounted.

The next section examines how the process of social reintegration of former RUF combatants caused such a huge transformation in social capital in Sierra Leone through bridging, bonding and linking social capital.

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<sup>31</sup>Author’s interview with Abass Bundu, former Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, Bedford, UK, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2014.



### 6.3 Social Reintegration and the Renewal of Social Capital

Successful reintegration of former combatants back into civilian society following the end of a particular conflict has a very important effect on bridging social capital. In the case of Sierra Leone, the civilian society into which former combatants returned from where they have been absent for long time, is diverse and complex, consisting of other armed groups such as Civil Defence Forces (CDF), RSLAF, Donsos, Tamaboros and Kapras. It also consists of other units such as IDPs, refugees, widows, orphans, and other war victims and perpetrators. However, the social reintegration of former combatants is believed to have facilitated and empowered the re-establishment of social networks and linkages between various groups, linkages that are essential for bridging social capital. When former combatants claim that they have been reintegrated back into civilian society, it means that society has accepted them, and thus ensures linkages between various units to form a single formidable civilian society comparatively free of violence and respecting the rule of law.

To achieve sustainable reintegration and the renewal of bridging and bonding social capital, the TRC was important, as it is organised at national and local levels, and thus has its branches across the country. It heard the voices of a number of victims, perpetrators and others who witnessed terrible events during the conflict. In particular, women were systematically targeted by all factions, and victims who came forward to testify displayed considerable bravery in order to relate their stories to fellow Sierra Leoneans and the rest of the civilised world. Among such stories was one former so-called ‘bush wife’, Yatta Mansaray. She says:

“I was in my village of Tonkia when the rebels attacked us. Following the attack, one of the men who led the attack asked my father to become their representative (or town chief) in Tonkia town. However, the commander, Mohamed ‘badblood’ resisted, and said that my father was a bad man because he (my father) had in the past refused him to married me, and instead gave me to a teacher in the nearby town. So, he (‘badblood’) killed my father together with my husband and my three-year-old son. He ordered other members of the group to beat and rape any members of my immediate family. I witnessed the beheading of my father, I was given my father’s blood to drink, my mother was badly beaten and molested, she was shaken badly...I was raped several times before the general public in Tonkia. He then took me as his wife and later abandoned me in the jungle to be repeatedly rape by other members of the group. So, that was how I became his wife, and eventually a member of the RUF... I had no choice but to join them”.<sup>32</sup>

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<sup>32</sup> Author’s interview with Yatta Mansaray, a former member of the RUF movement, Bo, 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

Former combatant attendance at the TRC, whether as victims or as perpetrators or both, as in the case of Yatta Mansaray, aids the establishment of bridging social capital, by enabling the community to adjust to the presence of those who perpetrated violence against them, whether willingly or forcefully. This testimony also illustrates the complexity of identity for both victims and perpetrators. The TRC also served as a platform on which former combatants can show their willingness to be accepted by indicating that they are trustworthy, ready to move away from their past and to ready forge a new positive direction. This issue is concisely captured in the following account from Samuel George, a former RUF strongman in Pujehun region:

‘During the conflict, I did many bad things to many people in Pujehun town and the surrounding areas. My command and actions caused death to many people including women and children. Women were raped, and property looted, therefore, I am asking for forgiveness from the people of Pujehun and Sierra Leone as a whole, because ‘there is no bad bush to throw away a bad child’. Therefore, I want the people of Pujehun to forgive me for all the bad things that I did and accept me again’.<sup>33</sup>

In similar circumstance, Jonh Kangoma a renowned former RUF fighter in Mandu chiefdom in Kailahun district says:

‘When I first came here, many people were afraid of me, even to speak to me, let alone to have anything to do with me; it was very difficult for them also because some people in the community still had bad feelings for us. However, through TRC, people started to get close to us, especially young people. We started going to *poyo bar* [*poyo* is the common name for palm wine in Sierra Leone] to drink palm wine together. We played football together. Before that there was no way to talk to us or play with us, drink *poyo* together and do many other community activities together. TRC enables us to demonstrate our ability to live in the community, and over time we came to be accepted by the community’.<sup>34</sup>

Undoubtedly, some former combatants I interviewed said the community trusted them. Some of them have taken up leadership positions in institutions like the Vegetable Crop Rehabilitation and Income Generating Programme in Fonikoh District in Kenema for instance. As argued in the previous chapter, social reintegration is a two-way process. On the one hand, the individual former combatants have to be ready, willing and committed to be reintegrated back into society. On the other hand, the community people have to be willing

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<sup>33</sup> Author’s interview with Samuel George, a former RUF fighter, Pujehun, 27<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

<sup>34</sup> Author’s interview with John Kangoma, a former RUF fighter, Mandu, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2015.

and ready to accept them. As Pa Joe Samu, a community leader in Koribondo who took part in this present study says:

‘When they come into the community they live like other civilians, they do community work such as road brushing and road maintenance, they go to town/community meetings, they play and drink *poyo* together with us. We do everything together, no difference... They now see themselves like the rest of the community members... At this point, you see that trust is being rebuilt slowly because the TRC, which works on the idea of building trust, togetherness, unity and reconciliation, teaches us these values’.<sup>35</sup>

The full participation of former combatants into community events, contributes to feelings of improved communication and solidarity and thus promotes civic-mindedness. Although former combatants are not expected to lead or monopolise leadership positions in many of these community events, their attendance and full participation in these programmes contributes greatly towards their successful reintegration and the process of bridging social capital renewal.

One typical example is explained by Pa Joe Samu, a community leader in Koribondo.

‘Anytime there is any functions like child naming rite, burial ceremony or traditional wedding ceremony, everybody in the community get involve - your neighbour, IDPs, former combatants and even JCs,<sup>36</sup> and everybody feel they are part of it more than even your own family members. Everybody comes with the little they can afford and also help in their own little way’.<sup>37</sup>

Over a period of time, such community activities have the effect of galvanising community spirit and facilitating the development of community networks. Like in many other African societies, weddings and naming ceremonies in Sierra Leone involve many people in the community and bring together those from different communities. Former combatants reintegrating into their communities of birth or integrating into ‘new’ communities are encouraged by the TRC to engage in such communal activities in an effort to form community cohesion and togetherness. Invariably they do, and this has shown to be a particularly powerful way of connecting with the community. What is also remarkable about the role of former combatants in the development of society is the organisational skills they

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<sup>35</sup> Author’s interview with Pa Joe Samu, a community leader, Koribondo, 14<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

<sup>36</sup> JCs refers to people or someone who just arrived from abroad. It literally refers to people who have just arrived into the country/ community from outside of the country. In other words, it refers to Sierra Leoneans who left the country during the war and have been residing abroad.

bring with them after they are disarmed and demobilised. As a result of their extensive training programmes whilst they were still fighting, it is possible they are more organised and have a higher capacity to undertake more difficult tasks than civilians.

‘Because the Sierra Leonean society was completely broken, people were forced to stick together, to do things in common and to work together as a unit. In this sense, most communities were looking for the advantages that former combatants will bring with them following their demobilisation, especially after the TRC had sent messages of trust, forgiveness and reconciliation. As former armed men, they are well organised because they have been used to structure. Although they might not have the necessary skills to compete with the already qualified section of the civilian population in the job market, they may well be useful in terms of working as a unit’.<sup>38</sup>

When former combatants are fully engaged in community activities, they do not only build stronger ties and trust with community members, they also demonstrate that they do not place a burden on to the community. This makes it easier for them to be accepted by the community more quickly. There will be a greater chance for their swift reintegration into society if they can positively contribute to the development of the community.

The aims and objectives of former combatants with regards to reintegration, rebuilding trust and social capital renewal are the same as those of the civilian population. This enables former combatants to live with the civilian population as [social capital becomes based more around] those common goals and values rather than divisive practices. As trust, reciprocity and social cohesion continue to take hold, they do so in many ways. Security Sector Reform, rebuilding the broken national economy, rebuilding the shattered infrastructure, organising the resettlement of IDPs and the refugee population among others, there will also be the need to improve the basic living conditions for the host community.

### **6.3.1 Bridging and Bonding Social Capital at Community level**

As shown in Chapter Five, whilst the reintegration of individual former combatants are largely individualistic affairs, their elevation to leadership positions show a high level of acceptance and cooperation of those individual former combatants. It also serves as an

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<sup>37</sup> Author’s interview with Pa Joe Samu, a community leader, Koribondo, 14<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

<sup>38</sup> Author’s interview with David Francis, Department of Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Bradford. [Telephone interview], 13<sup>th</sup> November 2014.

indication to other former combatants that there is a chance they will be accepted and reintegrated too.

Following the end of the brutal conflict in Liberia for instance, Youth Education for Life Skills (YES), a Community Based Organisation, was launched by USAID to enable IDPs, refugees, former combatants together with the local people to facilitate the reintegration process following the end of fourteen years of violent conflict. The project was designed specifically to address issues of socio-economic exclusion and to enhance lasting peace in Liberia.<sup>39</sup> The project was launched in thirty-seven different communities across the country targeting more than 2,300 former combatants.<sup>40</sup> It provided life skills training to youth, most of whom were former combatants, to be economically and socially responsible following the end of the conflict. The training programmes were conducted by international trainers and learning facilitators with management committees that constituted former combatants, who served as role models. On the whole, the project achieved its aims and objectives of facilitating the reintegration process by encouraging more former combatants to take up leadership positions in other programmes around the country.

At the end of the conflict in Tajikistan, UNDP tried to involve former combatants in local decision-making and policy implementation aimed at stabilising the socio-economic situation of former combatants - which benefited them and the community as a whole. The Rehabilitation, Reconstruction and Development Programme (RRDP) guided former combatants in the establishment of associations, and coordinated local authorities, communities and former combatants alike. This ensured effective dialogue and provided a role for all in the decision-making and policy implementation process.<sup>41</sup>

Following the end of the armed conflict in Kosovo, UNDP was involved with DDR in the country since 2008, and was the lead implementing partner of the Kosovo Protection Corps Resettlement Programme (KPC). The KPC programme was divided in two components with separate budgets, both financed by North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO). The first was the 'Transitional Financial Assistance (TFA) in the form of severance payments,' which was directly implemented by the UNDP. The second was a 'Comprehensive Assistance to create

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<sup>39</sup> USAID (2005) 'Community-Focussed Reintegration'. Document Available on line at: [http://pdf.dec.org/pdf\\_docs/PNADF305.pdf](http://pdf.dec.org/pdf_docs/PNADF305.pdf). Document Accessed on line on: 13/04/ 2015.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

sustainable livelihoods' through counseling, training, further education, placement and small business assistance, which had a particular focus on sustainability. The employment and business assistance were implemented by the Employment Promotion Agency in Kosovo (EPAK). Many of the recipients benefitted from business assistance, mainly in agriculture for traditional/geographic reasons, while others opted for the job placement support, mostly in the public sector. However, a small number of former combatants benefitted from the professional training and further education. As Bonard and Conoir write, there were 1,464 eligible former combatants involved in the programme, including forty-three women and girls.<sup>42</sup> UNDP worked alongside the resettlement programme investing Kosovo's justice and security sectors. The programme strategically targeted community members, as well as former members of Kosovo Liberation Army (KLA) through some eligibility criteria. Beneficiaries were satisfied with their new or strengthened skills that they received and the overall support.<sup>43</sup> Although one of the highest 'budget per beneficiary' ratio for any DDR project to date, with an average 'unit investment' per beneficiary of \$11,000, the results of the programme proved to be satisfactory and targets were met. The evaluation of the programme states that almost one hundred percent of the eligible beneficiaries completed the scheme.<sup>44</sup>

Another project that enhanced social reintegration was one implemented in Bosnia and Herzegovina by The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) for a period of eighteen months, from January 2001 to July 2002.<sup>45</sup> The project was known locally as 'Imagine Coexistence', and encompassed twenty-six projects focused in two regions that experiences the highest level of post-conflict minority returns and persistent segregation of communities: Drvar (Federation) and Prijedor/Kozarac (RS).<sup>46</sup> The initiatives included cultural, psychosocial, educational and income-generating projects, which aimed at 'overcoming deeply entrenched mistrust, promoting cooperation and rebuilding

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid, p. 49.

<sup>42</sup> Bonard, P. and Conoir, Y. (2013) Evaluation of UNDP Reintegration Programs, Vl. 1, Final Evaluation Report. Document Available on line at: <https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/documents/download/8080>. Document Accessed on line on: 20/01/17.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid, p. 19.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid, pp. 19 - 20.

<sup>45</sup> Babbitt, E., F. et al (2002) *Imagine Coexistence. Assessing refugee reintegration efforts in divided communities*. The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. Tufts University: USA.

<sup>46</sup> Bradly, M. (2015) *Forced Migration, Reconciliation and Justice*. Ontario: McGill-Queen's Press.

community relationships',<sup>47</sup> namely rebuilding and bridging social capital between former armed or disputed groups. The projects emphasized non-ethnic issues that participants had in common, providing a safe space for a renewed dialogue and challenging the divisive, collectivizing perceptions. The sharing of constraints and successes of the projects created a bond among individuals of different ethnicities, often bringing them together for the first time.<sup>48</sup> Moreover, as the institutional solutions increased a sense of social insecurity,<sup>49</sup> those initiatives became vital in constructing local 'webs of social support'.<sup>50</sup> One of the key initiatives involved was opening a café run by multi-ethnic staff. The café proved to be the first social, 'family-friendly' venue of this kind in Drva and attracted large number of people from the two ethnic groups: young and old, men and women of both ethnicities, showing their mutual needs and support.<sup>51</sup> In addition, sports activities, music, and other education functions aimed at inter-ethnic groups of different ages proved successful in establishing lasting interconnectedness between them,<sup>52</sup> strengthening the inclusive social capital. Twenty-one out of the twenty-six projects continued to function after 'Imagine Coexistence', positively affecting societal attitudes and inculcating patterns of inter-ethnic cooperation in daily activities and in a variety of social domains.<sup>53</sup>

A similar social reintegration initiative was run in Rwanda following the end of the 1993 Genocide. The World Bank's Community Reintegration and Development Project (CRDP) in Rwanda was particularly designed towards fostering inclusive social capital in the local communities. Targeting all communities and pursuing 'community-based reintegration', the project was run from 1998 to 2003.

As the World Bank's report points out, ethnic reconciliation was not among the stated goals of the project as it was focused on rebuilding social capital and diminishing cleavages among

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<sup>47</sup> Heider, H. (2011) Initiatives and Obstacles to Reintegration in Divided Communities: UNHCR's Imagine Coexistence Project in Bosnia and Herzegovina. *Divided Cities/Contested States*, Working Paper No. p.21

<sup>48</sup> Burns, C. et al (2003) Imagine Coexistence Pilot Projects in Rwanda and Bosnia. In A. Chayes, M. Minow (Eds.). *Imagine coexistence. Restoring humanity after violent ethnic conflict*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, p.94.

<sup>49</sup> Kostić, R. (2007) *Ambivalent Peace: External Peacebuilding Threatened Identity and Reconciliation in Bosnia and Herzegovina*. Uppsala: Uppsala Universitet, p.332.

<sup>50</sup> Korac, M. (2009) Gender, Conflict, and Social Capital: Bonding and Bridging in War in the Former Yugoslavia. In M. Cox (Ed.). *Social Capital and Peace-Building. Creating and Resolving Conflict with Trust and Social Networks*. London: Routledge, 108.

<sup>51</sup> Babbitt, E., F. et al (2002) *Imagine Coexistence. Assessing Refugee Reintegration Efforts in Divided Communities*. The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy. Tufts University: USA. p. 26

<sup>52</sup> Ibid, p. 40

<sup>53</sup> Dowley K., M. and Silver B., D. (2002) Social Capital, Ethnicity and Support for Democracy in the Post-Communist States. *Europe-Asia Studies* Vol. 54, No. 4, pp. 505 - 527.

groups.<sup>54</sup> Moreover, the project was conducted in agreement with the Rwandan government and faced ‘high levels of political resistance’.<sup>55</sup> However, the territorial and social proximity between former enemies in daily life in Rwanda enabled the projects to develop cooperative inter-ethnic relations.<sup>56</sup> Aimed at fostering an appropriate environment for socio-economic reintegration, as well as (re)building communal trust in post-genocide context, the project was structured according to the needs identified by participants themselves. It included infrastructure projects (rebuilding schools, roads, hospitals and other community health centers), income-generating projects, and capacity building.<sup>57</sup> Such productive, apolitical engagement encouraged conflicted groups to accept one another as members of the same community and restored communication between them, gradually promoting coexistence.<sup>58</sup> The project also enabled the creation of a budding ‘network of reciprocal social relations’.<sup>59</sup> Such projects, if tailored to micro-dynamics of communities, are mostly important in ensuring sustainable reintegration and reconciliation in countries emerging from violent civil-war like Sierra Leone, which experienced high levels of violence, of greatly ‘intimate’ nature and leading to the disruption of communal and social bonds and trust.<sup>60</sup> Following its completion, the World Bank’s Community Reintegration and Development Project in Rwanda was considered ‘a best practice example of promoting the socio-economic integration of the poor amid ethnic tensions in a post-conflict situation’.<sup>61</sup> The project also helped to overcome a sense of victimisation and increase the sense of security by means of socio-economic empowerment. In some cases, the Hutu and Tutsi voiced the wish to continue

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<sup>54</sup> World Bank (2002) *Bosnia and Herzegovina: Local Level Institutions and Social Capital Study*. Washington: World Bank. Document Available on line at: <http://documents.worldbank.org/curated/en/2002/12/2460906/bosnia-herzegovina-local-level-institutions-social-capital-study>. Document Accessed on line on 22/2/15.

<sup>55</sup> World Bank (2003) *Rwanda - Community Reintegration and Development Project. Implementation Completion and Results Report*. p. 10.

<sup>56</sup> Buckley-Zistel, S. (2008) We are Pretending Peace. Local Memory and the Absence of Social Transformation and Reconciliation in Rwanda. In Clark, P, and Kaufman, Z., D. (Eds.). *After Genocide: Transitional Justice, Post-Conflict Reconstruction and Reconciliation in Rwanda and Beyond*. London: Hurst and Company, p.138.

<sup>57</sup> World Bank (2003) *Rwanda - Community Reintegration and Development Project. Implementation Completion and Results Report*. pp. 4 - 5.

<sup>58</sup> Chayes, A. and Minow M. (2003) Introduction. In Chayes, A, and Minow, M. (Eds.). *Imagine Coexistence. Restoring Humanity after Violent Ethnic Conflict*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, p. xx.

<sup>59</sup> Putnam, R., D. (2000) *Bowling Alone: the Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon and Schuster, p. 19.

<sup>60</sup> Ngesi, S. and Villa-Vicencio Ch. (2003) Rwanda: Balancing the Weight of History. In E. Doxtader, Ch. Villa-Vicencio (Eds.). *Through Fire with Water: the Roots of Division and the Potential for Reconciliation in Africa*. Cape Town: David Philip Publishers, p.3.

<sup>61</sup> World Bank (2001) *Building Cooperation in Post-Conflict Areas: Rwanda Community Reintegration. Social Development Notes. Note No. 59*. Washington: World Bank., p.1.



working together on initiated projects, such as school projects and housing developments,<sup>62</sup> which indicates the existence of socio-economic networks that permeate ethnic divisions in communities that participated in the project.

In the context of Sierra Leone, a Vegetable Crop Rehabilitation and Income Generating Programme in Fonikoh, Kenema town, eastern Sierra Leone was launched in 2004 by CARITAS. The project targeted mainly former female combatants who were struggling to reintegrate into society following their disarmament and demobilisation. CARITAS provided the women with tools, seeds, fertilisers and other materials, as well as other technical assistance for vegetable production. Vegetable production had been the main occupation for many women in the Fonikoh district of Kenema even before the war breakout, but the destruction and looting of agricultural land during the war, made it difficult for them to reactivate the activity. However, following the end of the conflict, CARITAS re-launched the programme. The programme was headed and directed by former female combatants. It also benefited former female combatants and their dependants, child mothers, and war widows among other beneficiaries. The targeted beneficiaries quickly recovered from the effects of the conflict as they benefited from sustainable income-generating activities. Community participation enhanced the sustainability of the programme because beneficiaries, including former female combatants were involved in the planning and direction of the programme.

As one member of the Vegetable Crop Rehabilitation and Income Generating Programme in Fonikoh, Kadie Kamara remarks:

‘By working together, former combatants sometime show their leadership quality and skills. They also show to the Fonikoh community and the rest of society that collective action is possible. when you see people from CDF, refugees, widows, former fighters and members of the general population come together to undertake a particular project, and where former fighters plan and direct projects, it must be acknowledged that they have leadership quality. It is a nice example for the population to see that armed groups that used to fight against other armed groups are now living and working together as a unit. It is a very nice thing to witness’.<sup>63</sup>

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<sup>62</sup> Afzali A. and Colleton L. (2003) Constructing Coexistence. A Survey of Coexistence Projects in Areas of Ethnic Conflict. In A. Chayes, A. and Minow, M. (Eds.). *Imagine Coexistence. Restoring Humanity After Violent Ethnic Conflict*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, p.11.

<sup>63</sup> Author’s interview with Kadie Kamara, member of the Fonikoh Vegetable Crop Rehabilitation and Income Generating Programme, Kenema, 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2015.

In similar circumstance, The Vocational Training for the Rehabilitation and Resettlement Project in Bumpe Township, southern Sierra Leone was implemented by the Sierra Leone Opportunities Industrialisation Centre (SLOIC) for Bumpe and its surrounding villages. Sponsored by NCRRR during the reintegration phase of the DDR programme, it aimed to train former combatants in the region in carpentry and masonry to help rebuild the war-ravaged communities in the Bumpe area, and to facilitate the reintegration process. At the beginning of the programme, SLOIC conducted sensitization programmes via local radio stations and organised meetings to inform the community about the importance of the programme. Thereafter, interested members of the community also got involved in the project. In total, 109 former combatants, ninety-two members of the community, and sixty-five IDPs were trained in both masonry and carpentry in and around the Bumpe community. SLOIC provided all of the resources.

Through the implementation of UN 'Stop-Gap Programme',<sup>64</sup> the UN Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) averted a potentially volatile and dangerous situation in the country when it employed thousands of former combatants in short-term projects to rebuild their communities. The programme employed some 6,000 former combatants as well as 1,500 community members in labour intensive, quick impact community infrastructure and agricultural development projects.<sup>65</sup> The projects were implemented in a sociable environment of communal meals and organised sport. The fact that the former combatants, together with community members, rebuilt infrastructure that were destroyed during the conflict had a positive impact on peace-building effort. These projects also became the starting point for the creation of several Community-Based Organisations across the country.<sup>66</sup>

The willingness and the general behaviour of former combatants to work together with community members remain crucial in ensuring their own individual acceptance within the

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<sup>64</sup> A Second-Generation Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration (DDR) Practices in Peace Operations (2010) A Contribution to the New Horizon Discussion on Challenges and Opportunities for UN Peacekeeping. Document available on line at: [http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/2GDDR\\_ENG\\_WITH\\_COVER.pdf](http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/documents/2GDDR_ENG_WITH_COVER.pdf). Document Accessed on line on 10/02/17.

<sup>65</sup> United Nations Development Programme (2005) Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration of Ex-Combatants, p. 37. Document Available on line at: [https://reliefweb.int/.../2795101D27F8E4EBC125742800328C0F-undp\\_dec2005.pdf](https://reliefweb.int/.../2795101D27F8E4EBC125742800328C0F-undp_dec2005.pdf). Document Accessed on line on 17/12/16.

<sup>66</sup>Ibid, p.37.

community. It also acts as a 'roadmap' for how newly returning former combatants can be reintegrated back into society. In the overall picture, this can serve as an effective model that provides evidence to the community and proves to them the benefits that former combatants can bring with them after their demobilisation.

The creation of former combatants' associations, and indeed their involvement in Community Based Organisations is often promoted as a means of ensuring adequate representation of former combatants in a DDR process. These associations are also considered to be an early warning and response system for spotting dissatisfaction among former combatants and for confidence building between discontented groups and the rest of the civilian community. However, as Bonard and Conoir point out, such associations, especially when set up nationally and in a top-down manner, can sometimes be problematic.<sup>67</sup> For instance, Veterans Associations can delay or prevent the effective reintegration of former combatants by perpetuating their identity as former armed actors and their adherence to previous command structures. Following the end of the conflict in Guatemala for instance, the Fundacion Guillermo Toriello (FGT) was formed as an association of demobilised combatants.<sup>68</sup> It implemented different projects for former combatants, and also advocated for the reintegration of demobilised former armed actors into society. With limited capacity and no previous experience, its performance in project implementation was problematic. The FGT pursued political aims to the detriment of its programme commitments. This had implications on cooperation between former combatants and the civilian population.

Ignoring the military rank of former combatants can sometime be destructive and can have negative effects on reintegration process. High-ranking officers and leaders who have achieved status and political influence during the war have the most to lose. Their organisational and managerial skills, resources, and higher expectations warrant them special attention. It is common for high-ranking former combatants and commanders to become disgruntled if they are given similar benefits as their subordinates. Alden<sup>69</sup> found out, that the reintegration of demobilised former government officers in Mozambique proved to be problematic. Following their demobilisation, many of them became offended when they were

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<sup>67</sup> Bonard, P. and Conoir, Y. (2013) Evaluation of UNDP Reintegration Programmes, Vol. 1, Final Evaluation Report. Document Available on line at: <https://erc.undp.org/evaluation/documents/download/8080>. Document Accessed on line on: 20/11/16.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

given start-up kits of seeds, hoes, machetes, buckets and Food for Agriculture and were expected to become small-scale farmers like their former subordinates. As Aiden further points out, this is one of the reasons why many former combatants today run many of Mozambique's criminal organisations as they were not properly reintegrated back into society.<sup>70</sup> The high-ranking officers of government forces have proven especially difficult to appease. These high-ranking former government officers often have more education and skills training than their guerrilla counterparts. Therefore, they tend to have higher demands that are difficult to meet.<sup>71</sup>

Although limited in time frame and scope and affecting limited number of people in the population, the projects in Tajikistan, Kosovo, Liberia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Rwanda and Sierra Leone achieved something that national reconciliation processes did not attempt to do in neither of the cases - they brought the conflicting groups together and encouraged them to work towards mutual goals, building inclusive social capital and reinforcing the hope for common good and community development.

### **6.3.2 Social Capital as the Prime Focal Point in the Community**

With the focus on communities rather than divisive national politics, family issues become important. Although in the immediate aftermath of the conflict, and in some cases, up till now, trust and cooperation were not evident at community level, and bonding social capital was based around tribalism and regionalism. This has changed over time. Family re-establishment and friendship played a key role in this. After the conflict ended, one of the common factors that emerged was that there was almost nobody who had a 'normal' family structure anymore, especially in the rural areas where the impacts of the conflict were felt the most. Some families were so devastated and traumatised that the entire social fabric was destroyed. Hardly any community, village or town in the country had what can generally be termed as 'true family structure'.<sup>72</sup>

This had a significant impact on the peace-building effort, and indeed the general reintegration process in the country. In such a complex post-conflict society, peace and

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<sup>69</sup> Alden, C. (2002) 'Making Old Soldiers Fade Away: Lessons from the Reintegration of Demobilized Soldiers in Mozambique', *Security Dialogue*: Vol. 33, No. 1, pp. 341-356.

<sup>70</sup> Ibid, pp. 350.

<sup>71</sup> Berdal, M. (1996) *Disarmament and Demobilisation After Civil Wars*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, p.48.

<sup>72</sup> Author's interview with former NCDDR Reintegration Official, Bo, 4<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

stability were expected to start with the (re)establishment of family unity, the composition of which was not 'normal'. There was a need to rebuild trust, and families were therefore 'created' from widows, IDPs, orphans, and other survivors of the conflict. In a very difficult time, people were obliged to bond together, and they needed to trust each other to work together so as to be able to restart their social life. Thus, the post-war development drive of the community required the whole population to work together as a unit to start the rebuilding of a new Sierra Leonean society. As the civilian population gradually returned to their communities, they slowly started to engage in such familial renewal process, and the community grew together out of this situation. Over time this has continued to contribute to the general development of bonding social capital based around community as the prime focal point.

It is important to acknowledge that although tribalism currently plays an important role in social relations in Sierra Leone it does not however play any significant role in the way in which people bond in the country today, nor did it during the civil-war.

As one former RUF combatant explains:

'We did not know about tribalism at the time when we were fighting, it never existed among us. Whether you were Mende, Temne, Limba, Mandingo, Susu, Fullah or Kissi, we were all the same, we lived together, we fought together, and we struggled together. Even though the 'Papay' (referring to Foday Sanko, the leader of the RUF) was from the Temne tribe, but most of his main commanders were from other tribes like Mende and Kissi. For that matter, my own commander was from the Fullah tribe. Even when we were being disarmed and demobilised, there was no signs of tribalism among us'.<sup>73</sup>

As highlighted in the previous section, the interrelated nature of the elements that combine to make social reintegration possible also ensure that these elements are equally reinforcing. As such, this has had significant impact on the restoration of bridging social capital in the new Sierra Leonean society following the end of the conflict. The level of trust that individual former combatants establish by different means shown in the social reintegration process explains bridging social capital through the roles that former combatants play in the development of their new community, into which they appear to have slowly been reintegrated.

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<sup>73</sup> Author's interview with John Kangoma, Mandu, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2015.

## 6.4 The Implications of Social Reintegration

Violent conflict is generally seen as the result of a failed society, which results into social disintegration. As a result, post-conflict reintegration and the general peace-building programmes are often aimed at social reintegration so that the destroyed social fabric is rebuilt or reconstructed. But as Hazen points out, civil-conflict is not purely the disintegration of society; it is instead more about the disintegration of the broad social community, and the social integration of certain members of the community into a new social fabric: the war family. In other words, civil-conflict is both a destructive and constructive process; disintegrating broader social bonds, while constructing smaller more exclusive ones.<sup>74</sup> As discussed in the previous chapter, social reintegration is not only a positive process with a peaceful outcome, but can also provide a foundation for the formation of competing group identity.

Thus, the challenge after violent conflict is not only to reintegrate former combatants into society, but also to address the social bonds of the war family and combatant society. And as Whittaker points out, reintegration and reconciliation promote hope that material benefits will grow as a product of peaceful transitions and independence.<sup>75</sup> However as evidence from the fields suggests, Sierra Leone is not at this stage a fully reconciled society. Nevertheless, as reconciliation is both a process and a goal as such, I am convinced that the country is on track for reconciliation and sustainable peace so far. According to my respondents, peace in Sierra Leone is, first and foremost, associated with the absence of war, i.e. the cessation of hostility, insecurity, and destruction. The principal connotation with peace then is non-violence. Against the backdrop of this conceptualisation of peace, the first picture emerging from a look at day-to-day communal relations, informed by both respondents' observation as well as the views provided by former combatants, shows exactly this situation of non-violence, while the specific relationship between the wider community and former fighters can be described as a state of mutual toleration or 'peaceful coexistence'.

In addition, looking at the relatively short period of time since the conflict ended in 2002, the general consensus amongst regional and international institutions, including the UN and AU

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<sup>74</sup> Hazen, J., M. (2005) Social Integration of Ex-Combatants after Civil War. Division, Social Policy and Development (DESA), United Nations. Expert Group Meeting in Dialogue in the Social Integration Process, pp. 1 -11. Document Available on line at: [www.un.org/esa/socdev/sib/peacedialogue/fnl\\_rpirt.doc](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/sib/peacedialogue/fnl_rpirt.doc). Document Accessed on line on: 19/04/16.

<sup>75</sup> Whittaker, D., J. (1999) *Conflict and Reconciliation in the Contemporary World*. London: Routledge, p. 8.

concludes that Sierra Leone has made 'significant progress'.<sup>76</sup> At the termination of the conflict, the country was considered by many as a fragile, broken, destroyed, or failed society.<sup>77</sup> The then SLPP government faced a very daunting task. First, it needed to secure the country from the aggression of the RUF remnants, resettle the IDPs and the refugee population, rebuild the economy that was destroyed by the decade long conflict, rebuild the country's infrastructure, 50 percent of which were destroyed by the conflict, re-establish and uphold the rule of law as well as undertaking reintegration and reconciliation processes.

The end of various peacekeeping missions in the country, including ECOMOG and UNAMSIL's operations follows what many have viewed as 'successful'<sup>78</sup> presidential, parliamentary and local council elections in 2002, 2007, 2012 and again 2018. During this same period, the country was able to restore and consolidate state authority, implement national recovery programmes, including extension of public services, as well as undertake reforms in the governance and security sectors.<sup>79</sup>

The security sector reform is seen as another example of success story in the peacebuilding process in Sierra Leone. In March 2013, the International Military Training and Advisory Team (IMATT) ended its mission in the country. The mission was aimed at reforming the RSLAF after the civil-conflict. It had been established in 2002 in the country following the cessation of violence. IMATT's mandate was to provide basic training and specialised courses, as well as improving professional military culture that sought to sever the close ties between military officers and politicians. The newly transformed national army is also expected to embrace social responsibility. IMATT is now being phased out, and replaced by the International Security Advisory Team (ISAT) which has a new role to play, with a new civilian Foreign and Commonwealth Office Head taking over in May.

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<sup>76</sup> Twort, L. (2013) Sierra Leone: A Post-Conflict Success Story? *Commentary* 22. Document Available on line at: <https://rusi.org/commentary/sierra-leone-post-conflict-success-story>. Document Accessed on line on 08/04/16.

<sup>77</sup> Lancaster, C. (2007) "We Fall Down and Get Up", State Failure, Democracy and Development in Sierra Leone. Center for Global Development. Available on line at: [https://www.cgdev.org/files/14314\\_file\\_Lancaster\\_Sierra\\_Leone.pdf](https://www.cgdev.org/files/14314_file_Lancaster_Sierra_Leone.pdf). Accessed on line on 27/10/16.

<sup>78</sup> The 2007 presidential and parliamentary elections were landmark elections in Sierra Leone because it was the first time in the history of Sierra Leone the outcome of any elections would pave the way for the transfer of political power from the ruling SLPP to the opposition APC.

<sup>79</sup> Gisselquist, R., M. and Onoma, A., K. (2014) Transition Regimes and Security Sector Reforms in Sierra Leone and Liberia. *The ANNALS of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, Vol. 656, No.1, pp. 136 -153.

## 6.5 Positive and Negative Peace

The recurrence of conflict after the signing of Peace Agreement has been a cause for concern in the sub-region, which makes the perceived success of Sierra Leone post-conflict a model of achievement. Until the outbreak of Ebola in May 2014, Sierra Leone was on track to become a transformed nation with middle-income status. In 2012 for instance, the World Bank named Sierra Leone as one of the world's top reformers using the Bank's Doing Business index.<sup>80</sup> Real Gross Domestic Growth (GDP) is projected to recover from -20.6 percent in 2015 due to the Ebola outbreak<sup>81</sup> in the country to 5.4 percent in 2017 with increased iron ore mining. Despite the perceived trend of 'success' and reform, social indicators such as social well-being, high youth unemployment, widespread rural and urban impoverishment and institutionalised corruption are still some of the worst in the world, which has undermined national cohesion. The country continues to face the daunting challenge of transparency in managing its natural resources and its fiscal policy.

The country has not yet achieved the imperative recommendations of the TRC recommendation that would allow 'positive' peace through long term structural change. The 2010 United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) report listed West Africa as the key transit hub for cocaine being smuggled from Latin America to Europe, with Sierra Leone being used for transshipment.<sup>82</sup> This would undermine state institutions, foster corruption and create the possibility of an influx of small arms and light weapons in the region. All of these factors contribute to the possibility of conflict recurrence.

The work undertaken by UN agencies in relation to upholding the peace around the country has been successful, to the extent that it risks damaging the legitimacy of the Sierra Leone government, with the former being more trusted to maintain peace and stability. Once the international guarantees are removed, it is not clear whether civil society organisations would be trusted or strong enough to bridge the gap between the populace and the government in order to prevent a recurrence violence.

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<sup>80</sup> Georgieva, K. (2018) Doing Business 2018: Reforming to Create Jobs. Document Available on line at: <http://www.doingbusiness.org/~media/WBG/DoingBusiness/Documents/Annual-Reports/English/DB2018-Full-Report.pdf>. Document Accessed on line on: 13/07/17.

<sup>81</sup> According to a World Bank cell phone survey conducted in late 2014, an estimated 9,000 wage earners and 170,000 non-farm self-employed workers were out of work as a result of the Ebola crisis in Sierra Leone. The survey also found a decline of 40 percent in the average revenues of households engaged in non-farm enterprises.



The distinction between positive and negative peace is important when looking at Sierra Leone, because the general opinion of it as a model of peacebuilding could be misleading in the long term, after international attention and aid moves out of the country. These concerns must not be overlooked; otherwise there will be a risk of reversing the current progress due to ‘inflated perceptions of successes.

### ***Further Analysis***

Given that Sierra Leone has experienced one of the most brutal conflicts in the sub-region in recent memory, the country has moved comparatively fast to peace and stability. Similar to other studies in the field such as Humphreys and Weinstein;<sup>83</sup> Shaw;<sup>84</sup> and Stovel,<sup>85</sup> this thesis finds that many former combatants reintegrated back into civilian community very swiftly. At first glance a picture of peaceful coexistence at the community level emerges - undoubtedly a considerable accomplishment. Considering which of the micro-level that are responsible for this achievement, I argue that reconciliation and reintegration together with coexistence are grounded in a collective effort based on pragmatic motives. Reintegration was the ‘price the people of Sierra Leone paid for peace’, one of the best ways to sought state of non-violence. As Shaw<sup>86</sup> points out, ‘the people of Sierra Leone were tired with violence and ready to conclude the civil-conflict and start reconciliation’.<sup>87</sup> Most respondents for this study pointed to several factors interacting with reintegration and reconciliation, which were perceived as facilitating the handling of these difficult processes on the individual level. The fact that the conflict did not take a tribal or ethnic dimension, reintegration and reconciliation are mostly individualistic processes. Therefore, in many cases, victims directed their anger against specific perpetrators not the armed group as a whole. In addition, strong social ties mean that former combatants are often accepted back in society as ‘brothers, sisters and children.’ Furthermore, resilience coupled with a high propensity to forgive were seen as

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<sup>82</sup> Chawla, S. (2010) United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime: *World Drug Report*. Vienna. Document Available on line at: [https://www.unodc.org/documents/wdr/...2010/World\\_Drug\\_Report\\_2010\\_lo-res.pdf](https://www.unodc.org/documents/wdr/...2010/World_Drug_Report_2010_lo-res.pdf). Document Accessed on line on 17/10/16.

<sup>83</sup> Humphreys, M. and Weinstein, J. (2007) Demobilization and Reintegration. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 51, No. 4, pp. 531 - 567.

<sup>84</sup> Shaw, R. (2007) Memory Frictions: Localizing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Sierra Leone. In: *The International Journal of Transition Justice*, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp.183 - 207.

<sup>85</sup> Stovel, L. (2006) Long Road Home: Building Reconciliation and Trust in Post-War Sierra Leone. PhD Thesis, Simon Fraser University. Document Available on line at: [summit.sfu.ca/system/files/iritems1/2281/etd2099.pdf](http://summit.sfu.ca/system/files/iritems1/2281/etd2099.pdf). Document Accessed on line on 21/04/16.

<sup>86</sup> Shaw, R. (2005) Demobilising Memory: Truth, Reconciliation, and the Unmaking of War in Sierra Leone.

Unpublished Report for the John D. Catherine and T. MacArthur Foundation. (mimeo).

<sup>87</sup> Ibid, p. 3.

internalised in people's behaviour supporting the peace process. Lastly, credit was given to a multitude of institutional efforts. In this respect, initiatives on the local level are of great importance in the new Sierra Leone. The example of youth organisations such as sports, dance and drama clubs organised for both civilians and former combatants showed how actors within the community were not only working towards mending relations between former combatants and the civilian society, a consequence of the civil-conflict, but also target one of the root-causes of the conflict, the relationship and power-balance between youth and elders. What emerges then is a truly national effort on multiple levels to forge forward.

Exploring the characteristics of the state of reintegration and reconciliation, considering that reintegration could not successfully occur without reconciliation built on trust, a mixed outcome emerges. Looking closely at communal relationship suggests that peaceful coexistence in the new Sierra Leone is based on three key factors. Firstly, as Peters<sup>88</sup> and Shaw<sup>89</sup> reveal, the freedom of movement and choice of residence is limited for former combatants in so far as they cannot reside in places where they have committed atrocities, in some cases in their own communities and against members of their own families. Secondly, experiences of extreme violence undergone during the civil-war lead to greater rejection towards the reintegration of former combatants. Rejection is mitigated for those who were abducted or behaved positively during the conflict. While in line with Shaw's<sup>90</sup> data, my findings differ from that of Humphreys and Weinstein<sup>91</sup> who discover that abductees have greater difficulties reintegrating after their demobilisation. Third and perhaps most importantly, peaceful relations in a post-conflict environment depend on stability. Within a tense context, like the 2007 and 2012 Presidential and parliamentary elections, former combatants, especially from the AFRC and RUF are singled out under high public scrutiny, displaying continued distrust and also fear of renewed violence.<sup>92</sup> On a daily basis the misconduct of former combatants is severely sanctioned.

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<sup>88</sup> Peters, K. (2006) *Footpaths to Reintegration. Armed Conflict, Youth and the Rural Crisis in Sierra Leone*. PhD Thesis. Wageningen Universiteit.

<sup>89</sup> Shaw, R. (2005) *Demobilising Memory: Truth, Reconciliation, and the Unmaking of War in Sierra Leone*. Unpublished report for the John D. Catherine and T. MacArthur Foundation. (mimeo).

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Humphreys, M. and Weinstein, J. (2005) *Disentangling the Determinants of Successful Demobilization and Reintegration*. Document Available on line at: <http://www.columbia.edu/~mh2245/papers1/#dev>. Document Accessed on line on 15/02/16.

<sup>92</sup> During the 2007 election campaigns, the two main political parties in Sierra Leone, APC and SLPP both employed high profile former combatants from various armed groups. While the APC of Ernest Bai Koroma hired Idrissa Kamara, a former AFRC commander known as 'Leatherboot', and other mid-ranking former RUF fighters to join their security unit, the SLPP of Solomon Berewa engaged Hassan Bangura, known as

Both Kelsall<sup>93</sup> and Shaw<sup>94</sup> emphasise the importance of apologies offered by perpetrators at TRC-hearings for the promotion of peace and reconciliation. Some participants who took part in this study exposed feelings of vengeance, asking for accountability of former perpetrators, while others perceived a gap between the request to ‘forgive and forget’ and the absence of displays of repentance. The levels of grievances pertaining from the conflict - violence and loss experienced as well as unresolved demands for apologies and punishment - guide the final assessment of emotions of ‘*War Don Don*’.<sup>95</sup> Communal interactions between former combatants and the civilian population reflect these grievances. My interviews with former combatants and community members revealed socio-economic and political constraints to post-conflict reintegration faced by former combatants on daily basis, leading to heightened vulnerability and marginalisation of some former combatants. In some cases, former combatants are still not seen as ‘normal’ citizens and, henceforth, not treated like true citizens. Strategies to deal with this rejection include moving to more anonymous places and manufacturing lies about their own identity, such as ‘I was not involved in the fighting’. Humphreys and Weinstein,<sup>96</sup> Stovel,<sup>97</sup> and Shaw,<sup>98</sup> all report discrimination in their research, and suggest that only small progress towards true reconciliation and peaceful coexistence has been achieved in the new Sierra Leone.

However, the interpretation of what emerged from this present study is that discrimination serves as a form of subtle punishment. It expresses mundane, local justice within a society that for the most part is overwhelmed by the request to ‘forgive and forget’ and needs pathways of venting feelings about the past. In this line of interpretation, the reaction of former combatants who for the most part quietly accept discriminating acts is seen as subtle

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‘Bomblast’, also a former AFRC commander who later became second-in-command of the West Side Boys. These alliances were designed to gain political clout, but youth groups - and unemployed young men in particular - were responsible for most of the atrocities during the 2007 campaigns. Similar pattern was repeated during the 2012 Presidential and parliamentary election campaigns.

<sup>93</sup> Kelsall, T. (2005) Truth, Lies, Ritual: Preliminary Reflections on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Sierra Leone. In: *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 27, No. 2, pp. 361 - 391.

<sup>94</sup> Shaw, R. (2005) Rethinking Truth and Reconciliation Commissions. Lessons from Sierra Leone. United States Institute of Peace Special Report No. 130. Document Available on line at: <http://www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports/sr130.pdf>. Accessed on line on 16/07/16.

<sup>95</sup> ‘*War Don Don*’ is the local interpretation of the civil-war is finally over.

<sup>96</sup> Humphreys, M. and Weinstein, J. (2007) Demobilization and Reintegration. In: *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol.51, No. 4, pp. 531 - 567. See also Humphreys, M. and Weinstein, J. (2005) Disentangling the Determinants of Successful Demobilisation and Reintegration. Document available on line at: <http://www.columbia.edu/~mh2245/papers1/#dev>. Accessed on line on: 15/02/16.

<sup>97</sup> Stovel, L. (2006) Long Road Home: Building Reconciliation and Trust in Post-War Sierra Leone. PhD Thesis, Simon Frazer University.

acts of repentance. Therefore, achieving successful reintegration can be seen as a process of continuing contestation and negotiation between former combatants and the wider civilian population.

The analysis given here reveals a connection between post-conflict reintegration and violence. As Humphreys and Weinstein point out, social reintegration and peaceful coexistence mainly depend on the ruthlessness of the armed faction in which a particular combatant fought. I find that the same holds for experience of violence. Civilians who experienced higher levels of violence and destruction, found it difficult to forgive and forget their perpetrators, and therefore voiced louder calls for punishment, and showed greater rejection towards reintegration. As a result, my findings are in opposition to those of Bellow and Miguel,<sup>99</sup> whose study suggest that greater experience of violence leads to higher community engagement and political activism following disarmament and demobilisation.

But what is the way forward for the new Sierra Leonean society? Many participants who took part in this study formulated their peace needs primarily around the provision of employment opportunity especially for the youth. Providing employment opportunity for demobilised combatants is an important way to reduce renewed marginalisation and their involvement in crime, as well as a means to provide a future perspective and generate an acknowledgement of their usefulness in society. The provision of employment opportunities for former combatants has shown to be important in the cases of Okada Riders Association<sup>100</sup> in the country. In addition, those who suffered great losses during the war need building blocks for a new life. This become especially important in light of the connection presented between the ability to rebuild one's life, and the process of '*War Don Don*'. In this context, my finding lends support to that of Shaw's<sup>101</sup> findings and underlines the significance of analysing post-conflict situations in a holistic manner to understand local linkages, like the one between economic development, overcoming of traumatic experiences, and reintegration at the

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<sup>98</sup> Shaw, R. (2005) Demobilising Memory: Truth, Reconciliation, and the Unmaking of War in Sierra Leone. Unpublished report for the John D. Catherine and T. MacArthur Foundation. (mimeo).

<sup>99</sup> Bellows, J. and Miguel, E. (2006) War and Collective Action in Sierra Leone. Document Available on line at: [elsa.berkeley.edu/~emiguel/miguel\\_sl.pdf](http://elsa.berkeley.edu/~emiguel/miguel_sl.pdf). Document. Accessed on line on: 25/02/16.

<sup>100</sup> Lawrence, M. (2013) Bottom UP DDR: Sierra Leone's Okada Riders. *Centre for Security Governance*. Document Available on line at: [secgovcentre.org/2013/03/bottom-up-ddr-sierra-leones-okada-riders](http://secgovcentre.org/2013/03/bottom-up-ddr-sierra-leones-okada-riders). Document Accessed on line on: 12/07/15.

<sup>101</sup> Shaw, R. (2005) Demobilising Memory: Truth, Reconciliation, and the Unmaking of War in Sierra

individual level. In line with other studies such as Peters,<sup>102</sup> Shaw<sup>103</sup> and Humphreys and Weinstein,<sup>104</sup> my findings suggest the importance of social and economic interventions in a post-conflict society. In the context of Sierra Leone, the provision of employment for former combatants in particular and also for youth more generally remains important in achieving sustainable peace and successful reintegration. Sufficient access to employment opportunity serves as an important means to correct grievances that caused the conflict. It is important to emphasise that academics, researchers, NGO workers, community members, politicians and former combatants pointed to the negative effects the failures of DDR programmes have on the new Sierra Leonean society. Many believed that the problem of current unemployment or underemployment, its related crime and frustration is linked to insufficient and uninformed training during Disarmament and Demobilisation.

While economic development can go a long way to stabilize social reintegration and reconciliation, the findings in this thesis also suggest that there is the need for long term interventions that focus on coming to terms with the past. As opposed to Kelsall's<sup>105</sup> and Shaw's<sup>106</sup> research, this thesis found that there is the need for a continuous dialogue and interventions bringing together former combatants and civilians to forge links and to cohabit.

While in many cases, this takes place in daily interactions and has supported the peace in the new Sierra Leone, the level of discrimination and rejection of former combatants as well as the grievances voiced by civilian population points to the fact that there is scope for more formalised interventions. Reintegration and reconciliation are thus not only multifaceted processes but, importantly, develop slowly demanding long term and focused support.

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Leone. Unpublished report for the John D. Catherine and T. MacArthur Foundation. (*mimeo*). See also Shaw, R. (2007) Memory Frictions: Localizing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Sierra Leone. In: *The International Journal of Transition Justice*, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp.183 - 207.

<sup>102</sup> Peters, K. (2006) Footpaths to Reintegration. Armed Conflict, Youth and the Rural Crisis in Sierra Leone. PhD Thesis. Wageningen Universiteit.

<sup>103</sup> Shaw, R. (2007) Memory Frictions: Localizing the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Sierra Leone. In: *The International Journal of Transition Justice*, Vol. 1, No. 2, pp.183 - 207.

<sup>104</sup> Humphreys, M. and Weinstein, J. (2007) Demobilization and Reintegration. In: *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol.51, No. 4, pp. 531 - 567.

<sup>105</sup> Kelsall, T. (2005) Truth, Lies, Ritual: Preliminary Reflections on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Sierra Leone. In: *Human Rights Quarterly*, Vol. 27, No. 2, pp. 361 - 391.

<sup>106</sup> Shaw, R. (2005) Rethinking Truth and Reconciliation Commissions. Lessons from Sierra Leone. United States Institute of Peace Special Report No. 130. Document Available on line at: <http://www.usip.org/pubs/specialreports/sr130.pdf>. Accessed on line on 16/07/16.

The peace in Sierra Leone is sustained to a good part by the rejection of a violent past and the acceptance of cohabiting. None of my respondents supported a return to conflict in any way. Nevertheless, it is important that peace is further fed by a positive outlook into the future. This can only be generated by targeting those grievances, which fed the conflict in the first place, as well as those, which resulted from it.

## **6.6 Concluding Remarks**

In this chapter, I have examined the social reintegration of former combatants following their demobilisation. After the conflict ended in Sierra Leone, many former combatants have re-entered civilian life, and are now living in their original or 'new' communities with their new neighbours. Most of them are in some way stable, and are together with the rest of the civilian population re-building the 'new' Sierra Leone. Cohabiting with the civilian population appeared to be initially difficult, but as time passed, the situation appeared to be smoother and more successful.

Secondly, the chapter has highlighted the role of the macro and meso elements of former combatant's reintegration in the ability of such reintegration in promoting reconciliation and reciprocity. The expansion of vertical social capital through former combatants' reintegration shows an important facet in reintegration and subsequent developments of other forms of social capital. In addition, the chapter has emphasised the role social reintegration play as a means for the restoration of social capital following demobilisation. Vertical social capital is enhanced through social reintegration, because as social reintegration takes place, government support increases. Reintegration occurs when government, NGOs and the international community remain committed to DDR process. In this sense, vertical social reintegration is created through governmental desire for social reintegration. Thirdly, the chapter has argued that for successful social reintegration to take place, it has to be driven by community involvement and activity, which indicates one of Robert Putnam's dominant theses of social capital, *The Prosperous Community*.<sup>107</sup> During violent conflict, 'us versus them' rhetoric often emerges; in the case of Sierra Leone, this was mainly between the rebels and the civilian population. Successful reintegration restores, (at least to certain degree) the trust destroyed throughout the conflict. This facilitates the strengthening of bridging social capital.

The reintegration of former combatants has positive impacts for the renewal of social capital both at community level, as well as national level because such reintegration process increases the restoration of social capital. With increase in the restoration of social capital also comes increase in reconciliation, especially at community level. Establishing cooperation and cohabitation between former combatants and the general civilian population following demobilisation promote the regeneration of bridges and bonds that is embedded in social capital.

For any social reconciliation to be meaningful there has to be first the establishment of cooperation and the willingness of former enemies to coexist and to be ready to build and ‘preach’ trust. Without these, it will be difficult for sustainable peace to take hold. Moreover, where former combatants get involved in community activities positively, they may well serve as role model for the community into which they are reintegrated. They can, in addition be effective in disseminating the message of peace and reconciliation through their good behaviour. As former combatants reintegrate into community and actively engage and contribute to the management and development of that community, they also facilitate the generation of trust between the community and government, and this can have positive implications for political reconciliation as well.

Building on the foundations constructed throughout this thesis, this chapter has endeavoured to provide an analysis of the ways in which the social reintegration of former combatants promotes enhanced social capital in Sierra Leone and the implications of such a promotion for the general peace-building effort in the country.

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<sup>107</sup> Putnam, R., D. (1993) The prosperous community. *American Prospect*, Vol. 4, No. 13, pp. 35 - 42.

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## CHAPTER SEVEN

### Peaceful Coexistence: At What Cost?

#### Introduction

This chapter analyses the sustained violence that affected all sectors of the Sierra Leonean society during and after the conflict. Given that the reintegration of former perpetrators would be particularly difficult following the end of the conflict, two particular questions are worth asking. Firstly, what are the nature and characteristics of the state of reintegration that has so far been achieved? Secondly, which factors at the micro-level are responsible for this reintegration success at the local level?

Most respondents who took part in this study reported that peace is associated with the absence of war and violence in Sierra Leone, i.e. the cessation of hostility, insecurity, violence, and destruction. The prime connotation with peace then is the absent of war and violence. Against the backdrop of this conceptualisation of peace, the first picture that emerged from a look at everyday communal relations in Sierra Leone, informed by the author's observation and the views of participants, shows exactly this situation of absent of war and violence, while the relationship between former combatants and the wider Sierra Leonean community can be seen as a peaceful coexistence or mutual toleration. As the town Chief of Daru, eastern Sierra Leone David Kallon explains:

‘Those three young men drinking palm wine in that Veranda (he pointed to the direction towards the three young men), they were all with the RUF rebels. Presently, two of them work in the secondary school as cleaners, and the other one works as a security guard at the community bank; they are all here now.... They are in good condition, talking nicely, cracking jokes and living with us in harmony. Since the end of the conflict, there has been no problem in this town. Many of them are here but they have not done anything bad to us. Perhaps, this relationship will continue.... We trust them, in my view. Community relation is good here because of intermarriages, because of the good behaviours of former combatants and because of their economic engagement in the town’.<sup>1</sup>

This positive view is also confirmed by many former combatants who took part in this study, who stated that they felt they were members of the civilian community like everybody else.

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<sup>1</sup> Author's interview with Pa. David Kallon, town chief of Daru, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2015.

As one former female combatant explains:

‘Me and my husband decided to stay here because it is peaceful for us here. We experienced peace and harmony here, and so we stayed. We socialise with a mixed group of friends - former combatants and civilians. Some of our friends got married to civilians after the war and were somehow accepted in the community. Some former combatants are also employed in their places of residence and, hence, are peacefully reintegrated. Now the test is that it is difficult to differentiate between us...Our behaviour does not stand out anymore’.<sup>2</sup>

Given that Sierra Leone experienced sustained violence that affected all sectors of society, which gives the assumption that the reintegration of perpetrators would be particularly difficult, two particular questions are worth asking. First, what are the characteristics of the state of reintegration that has so far been achieved, i.e. what is the nature of this success? Second, which factors at the micro-level are responsible for this reintegration success at the surface? Plunging deeper below this surface reveals, not surprisingly, more complex detail realities, which show that reintegration and reconciliation in the Sierra Leone are not yet complete. Rather than invalidating the success that has been achieved on the surface of everyday life, however, this more comprehensive view points to the fragility of peace, and assesses how Sierra Leoneans deal with the memories of the war, shape paths of reconciliation, forgiveness, justice, revenge, and punishment.

Which micro-level factors, then, are responsible for the reintegration success at the surface? First, my data suggests that reintegration was made possible by desperation of Sierra Leoneans wanting to end the war and violence in the country. Therefore, Sierra Leoneans accepted ‘peace at any cost’ and allowed coexistence with former perpetrators. Considering Peter’s observation:

‘It is through the general desire for peace and reconciliation that former combatants are forgiven and allowed to settle in civilian communities following the end of the war.’<sup>3</sup>

Certainly, the conflict in Sierra Leone is a powerful memory to all its people. None of my 36 participants, including policy makers, community leaders, academics and former combatant alike expressed any wish for a resumption of violence. And on the bases of the narratives

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<sup>2</sup> Author’s interview with Hawa Kamara, a former female combatant, Bo, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

<sup>3</sup> Peters, K. (2006) *Footpaths to Reintegration. Armed Conflict, Youth and the Rural Crisis in Sierra Leone*. PhD Thesis. Wageningen Universiteit, p.145.

given by participants, there is the willingness on the side of the civilian population to accept former combatants and to live together again in the same community as Sierra Leoneans, and to work together with those who perpetrated violence against them. There was little evidence identified in the interviews that pointed to former combatants as enemies.

As the town chief of Daru, David Kallon remarked:

‘As long as the guns have been withdrawn from them [the rebels], we are happy. When the barrel was active, there was nothing to do but to save your life. They told us, we have to forgive and forget, and we just accepted it..... there were no alternatives for us’.<sup>4</sup>

The Lome Peace Agreement was upheld by the SLPP government. President Kabbah and his government pleaded to all Sierra Leoneans to ‘forgive’ and to forge ahead with rebuilding the new Sierra Leonean society. By doing so, the government’s initiative was to prevent a post-conflict cycle of revenge and further destruction due to ill feelings from the civilian population towards the former armed actors.

As evident by the former Vice president Solomon Berewa:

‘We as government had to beg communities to accept these people [the rebels] back. We brought together all stakeholders and community people and preached to them: We want you to allow your children, friends, nephews and wives, who were fighting, to be accepted back in society. Do not point fingers at any of them. Do not abuse them. Do not revenge. If that happens, the peace we have fought for will not be sustainable.’<sup>5</sup>

On the bases of these narratives, it appears that post-conflict reintegration in Sierra Leone rests on pragmatic decisions rather than on emotional ones. One of the reasons Sierra Leoneans accepted former combatants within their communities is because reintegration enabled transition to peace. However, the decision to accept these former combatants was not an easy choice for most Sierra Leoneans to make. Most community leaders who took part in this study did admit that for the sake of peace and stability, they accepted to forgo revenge and suppress feelings of rejection and vengeance. However, some participants, in particular, older women admitted that they would like to see former perpetrators punished or held

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<sup>4</sup> Author’s interview with David Kallon, the town chief of Daru, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2015.

<sup>5</sup> Author’s interview with Sierra Leone’s former Vice President, Solomon Berewa. Freetown, 9<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

accountable for crimes they committed during the conflict. Some people also expressed distaste for living together with former combatants in the same community. Nevertheless, all participants acknowledged that revenge and rejection of former combatants would cause new tensions and potential violence that would affect reintegration and reconciliation, and hence cohabiting remains key in achieving durable peace in Sierra Leone.

Although Sierra Leoneans have accepted former combatants back into their communities for the sake of peace, successful reintegration and sustainable peace rest on a number of factors, which came together in the post-conflict period enabling the country to move forward. Each individual experienced these components differently. However, from my data, four main factors emerged, which intersected with the reintegration and reconciliation process in such a way, that they were described as facilitating the handling of this difficult process on an individual level. They include but not limited to: Institutional interventions and local initiatives and social ties.

### ***Institutional Interventions and Local Initiatives***

Many participants who took part in this study pointed to institutionalised efforts as one of the key factors interacting with the reintegration and reconciliation process. Initiatives on the national level mentioned most often were DDR-programmes, the TRC, the Special Court, and other range of projects brought in by the donor community and NGOs, as well as local religious institutions. My own interviews did not include specific questions regarding these institutions; rather they included terms like ‘reconciliation’, ‘justice or punishment’, ‘forgiveness’ or ‘revenge’. It must be pointed out that few participants made a direct link to the Special Court or TRC, when talking about these topics. This allows for two main observations: Firstly, some of my participants expressed discontent with a lack of apologies from former combatants and formalised events, bringing together victims and perpetrators to forge reconciliation, the task of the TRC. Secondly, others did not see the Special Court as a sufficient answer to their desire for punishment of perpetrators. In this sense, my limited data questions the effectiveness of these institutions while affirming that the purpose they were set up for initially - retributive and restorative justice, respectively- is what people had expected and therefore still demand.

Presently, initiatives fostering reintegration and reconciliation are mostly located at the community level, as the donor community and most NGOs have moved on to other intervention areas than reintegration. One important area that worth pointing out is the youth organisations, responsible for organising youth (including former combatants) at the local level. During my research visit to Lumbely, western Freetown for instance, I observed the important role, these organisations play in mediating disputes between youth and older community people, negotiating petty crimes with the police, and bringing together civilian youth and those of former combatant youth. This shows that cooperation and coexisting peacefully might be an alternative to trust in the aftermath of violent conflict.

### ***Social Ties***

The fact that the conflict in Sierra Leone did not take any tribal or ethnic dimension suggest that achieving durable peace does not involve reconciling two or more tribes or sections of society, as was the case in Rwanda or Kosovo, which turned against each other. Instead, it was the patrimonial system that created cleavages along class, age and gender lines within every community in the country, especially in the rural areas. Therefore, in Sierra Leone, reintegration and reconciliation are more individualistic process. Two key facts emerge here: First, the fact that the conflict did not take any tribal or ethnic lines made it easier for former combatants to come back from the bush and give up their arms. They were basically their children, and they had to take them back<sup>6</sup> on the basis of ‘there is no bad bush to throw away a bad child’, meaning that if it is your child, you cope with any kind of misbehaviour. Arguably, the conflict in Sierra Leone put family bonds to an extreme test. Many recruits were forced to commit atrocities against their own family members<sup>7</sup> in particular to invoke feelings of shame and fear of return. The saying is nevertheless reflected by my interviews.

As Samuel George, a former RUF commander in Pujehun explains:

‘Because I am from this soil, my people have to encourage me; because I am a family member. Family plays the greater role. Whatever bad you do; the community will accept you. You are part of the community’.<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Author’s interview with Sierra Leone’s former Vice President, Solomon Berewa. Freetown, June 2015.

<sup>7</sup> Mitton, K. (2015) *Rebels in a Rotten State: Understanding Atrocity in the Sierra Leone Civil War*. London: Hurst and Co Ltd.

<sup>8</sup> Author’s interview with Samuel George, Pujehun, 27<sup>th</sup> June 2015.



Second, in several instances those victimised by rebel forces during the conflict, direct their anger and revengeful thoughts against those individual rebels who harmed them, not against the armed group they belong to, allowing for the reintegration of those who did not do them direct harm.

## **7.1 Unfinished Reconciliation and Reintegration**

I now turn to the second research question which was posed earlier in the introduction, namely, *‘What kind of relationship do former combatants form with the community in order to coexist?’* A deeper probing of respondents’ account and a critical evaluation of community relations reveal that peaceful, non-violent coexistence and tolerance of reintegration depends on a number of factors. One of the key factors that emerged from my data and participant’s narratives include former combatants residing in places other than those where they had committed atrocities. Residing in a stable society that is violence free is another factor.

It must be recognised also that successful peace-building process depends on daily circumstances. In a case where instability or tension occur, former combatants are easily implicated because of their past involvement in the civil-conflict. This is true on the mundane level of everyday interactions as well as events of larger scale.

In line with the above assertion, many of my participants pointed out that during the 2007 and 2012 parliamentary and presidential elections for example, political parties deliberately employed former combatants as private security guards, which scared the population as they remembered war nicknames like ‘operation kill everything’, ‘operation pay yourself’, ‘Bomblast’, ‘Leatherboot’ and ‘Mosquito,’<sup>9</sup> that were connected with serious violation of human rights abuses in the past. In addition, there was uncertainty about the course of the electoral process, especially party rallies in the run up to the actual vote. Although political violence was limited to a few occasions during the 2007 and 2012 elections, the atmosphere of uncertainty and potential violence created rumours about former combatants returning to violence. This fear was translated by some into accusations against former combatants. Therefore, peoples’ memories were remobilised to identify former combatants as ‘bad guys’,

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<sup>9</sup> Sam Bockarie, also known as ‘Mosquito’, was one of the most feared RUF fighters during the Sierra Leone’s civil-war that lasted for more than a decade. Bockarie was (in)famous for his brutal war tactics, which included mutilation, rape, amputation and killing of large number of people.

and thus set them aside from the rest of society. Former combatants were aware of the fearful and hostile perception of the community.

Two important themes emerged from the above narrative. First, if a former combatant becomes prominent in a particular aggression or violence, they will remind them of their past involvement in the armed conflict. Fingers are pointed at them if violence occurs in a given community. As the remark below suggest:

‘People in our community cannot distinguish them (the former rebels) from the rest of the population if they behave well by remaining calm and peaceful’.<sup>10</sup>

Second, in a context of tension and insecurity, people remember those former combatants who were involved in serious crimes. A community leader in Kenema agreed with this narrative and added: ‘We know all of them, but as long as they remain quiet and peaceful and do not get into any violent act, they will stay with us peacefully and happily.’<sup>11</sup>

Different communities experienced the conflict differently and, therefore, have a different memory of attitude towards former combatants. This unfolds in various ways. Similar to Humphreys and Weinstein’s<sup>12</sup> conclusion that those former combatants who fought in violent units have greater problems reintegrating back into civilian society, from my selection of participants, those who suffered most from the aggression of the rebel forces are most vocal against the reintegration of former combatants. As one retired female teacher in Koribondo pointed out:

‘If I have the opportunity to drive them [former combatants] out from our community, I will certainly do so without any hesitation, because they are responsible for the death of many people in this country, including members of my own family. But our government and the international community said we should cohabit with them for the same of peace.’<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Author’s interview with Musa Jusu, a community leader, Towama, 12<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

<sup>11</sup> Author’s interview with Usman Sesay, a community leader, Kenema, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

<sup>12</sup> Humphreys, M. and Weinstein, J. (2007) Demobilization and Reintegration. In: *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol.51, No. 4, pp. 531 - 567.

<sup>13</sup> Author’s interview with Jattu Idris, a retired female teacher, Koribondo, 20<sup>th</sup> April 2015.

However, participants who claimed to have experienced little or no violence, in contrast, expressed less radical rejection of former combatants, and therefore favoured their reintegration.

Nevertheless, a different perception of former combatants emerged from my interviews, which not only depended on their experience of violence. One of the strongest theme that emerged from my interviews, is the importance of the method of recruitment in to armed groups. Combatants who were abducted or forcibly recruited into armed organisations appeared to receive the benefit of the doubt from much of the population. As a community leader in Kenema pointed out:

‘It is easier to accept back into society those who were forcibly recruited into armed groups because they did so against their will. They did not do so willingly; they were forced to comply and to save their own life. Therefore, community people need to sympathise with them’.<sup>14</sup>

And as Shaw<sup>15</sup> points out, not only pity makes the reintegration of those forcefully recruited into armed organisations easier but that communities in many cases conceptualised individual combatants as mere vehicles for the agency of their commanders, thus, shifting responsibility from them. Greater lenience towards those who were forced to fight, has led to a strategy among former combatants to claim that they were forcefully abducted, couching their history of fighting in terms of coercion.

Given that most communities experienced sustained atrocities, peaceful coexistence seems to be conditional in the sense that the population expects those former combatants who have committed serious atrocities, to settle in places other than those where the crimes were committed. This supports the point I made earlier on the individualisation of anger and rejection. Communities seem to reject mostly to live together with their perpetrator, i.e. the very persons who caused them harm rather than individuals who were part of destruction and violence in other incidents. The fact that peace partly rests on the limited freedom of movement and choice of residence for former combatants cannot be stressed strongly enough.

The following statements were narrated by almost all community members I interviewed:

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<sup>14</sup> Author’s interview with Usman Sesay, a community leader, Kenema, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2015.

<sup>15</sup> Peters, K. (2006) *Footpaths to Reintegration. Armed Conflict, Youth and the Rural Crisis in Sierra Leone*, PhD Thesis. Wageningen Universiteit, pp. 7 - 8.

‘Those who committed serious atrocities in our community are not here anymore... You are not allowed to settle here if you committed grave atrocity here during the conflict. There is no one here who killed a single person in this community, or set alight any single house. The ones who are here, cannot go back [home] because of what they did there.’<sup>16</sup>

Given that many teenagers were forcefully recruited by the RUF and other armed groups, at the same time they were forced to commit atrocities against their own families or communities. Therefore, the rejection of those who committed crimes runs counter to the notion that friends, children, brothers or sisters are accepted back as part of the family. Here, a more complex picture emerges with no clear-cut solutions but individually different paths of tolerance acceptance, forgiveness or rejection.

While some former combatants were killed through mob justice in the immediate post-conflict era, it has not widely been reported in the DDR literature.<sup>17</sup> As a result, many former combatants were afraid to go back to places where they might have committed serious crimes during the conflict. As Peters<sup>18</sup> further says, this is one of the reasons why many former combatants who fought in the eastern part of the country, for instance can be found settled in the north, while those who committed serious atrocities in the north are settled in the eastern part of the country. This has led to an implicit deal within the country, i.e., communities accept those who have not committed atrocities in that particular community.

## **7.2 Former Combatants and their Interaction with the Community**

What kind of relationship do former combatants form with the community in order to coexist? My interviews, interaction and discussion with former combatants and community members revealed the difficulties former combatants are faced with on daily basis. These difficulties sum up to socio-economic and discrimination on various levels, leading to heightened vulnerability and marginalisation.

My own observations in places such as Koribondo, Kenema, and Daru for instance deviated somehow from the narratives of the former combatants. In many occasion, I only experienced true socialisation (interaction) between civilian youth and former combatant youth in those

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<sup>16</sup> These types of narratives were given by almost all community members/leaders who took part in this study.

<sup>17</sup> Peters, K. (2006) *Footpaths to Reintegration. Armed Conflict, Youth and the Rural Crisis in Sierra Leone*, PhD Thesis. Wageningen Universiteit, p. 26.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid*, p.141.

locations mentioned above. My supposition therefore is that the interaction between former combatant youth and civilian youth was bridging relations. As the chairman of the youth organisation in Samami section in Bo explained:

‘Our community is now a new one. Over 70 percent did not live here before the civil-conflict. Many come from different places. That is the reason why the interaction is peaceful. Since people came from different places, nobody knows about the history of the other. It is actually a new start for everyone here’.<sup>19</sup>

In big towns and cities like Freetown, Bo and Kenema and Makeni for example, former combatants kept to themselves. They lived together and hangout in groups, rarely mixing with other people. Listening to a narrative of a University student in Freetown, it becomes clear that interaction between former combatants and civilians in the younger generation comes down to individually different cases. There is no clear-cut acceptance or rejection of former combatants per se. Within the older generation, interaction appears to be more difficult. This is because many adults and the older generation have a more vivid memory of the atrocities perpetrated by the rebel forces. In addition, former combatants are often seen by the older generation as youth, a group that has not fully matured and, therefore, cannot be interacted with. This appears to be a subtler form of discrimination and labelling. Usually, gossip takes place among civilian women who target former female combatants. The former female combatants whom I interviewed, spoke of humiliation, discrimination and rejection within their communities: ‘The people in my community always discriminate against me. They provoke me by calling me names such as ‘old rebel’ or ‘old killer’. Sometimes they say to me, ‘You have many children like a bush rat. You have been with the rebels for long time, but the only profit you have is many children like a bush rat’....<sup>20</sup> Such level of sustained discrimination leads to vulnerability of former combatants compared to other groups of people in society. While some vulnerability is palpable, in economic and political marginalisation, social stigmatisation is more difficult to assess or measure. In this case, former combatants are vulnerable to abuse, discrimination and rejection.

However, it is important to recognise that former combatants have many ways of dealing with abuse, discrimination and rejection in society. Some of the strategies they adopt include lying about their personal story and history. Some of them are known to have turned to more

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<sup>19</sup> Author’s interview with Aruna Mambu, chairman youth organisation, Samami district, Bo, 17<sup>th</sup> May, 2015.

<sup>20</sup> Author’s interview with Hawa Kamara, a former female RUF combatant, Bo, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2015.

shady lives, becoming criminals, while others moved to places where abuse, rejection and discrimination are low. Such places include big towns and cities and mining towns like Tongo and Kono.<sup>21</sup>

Paul Richards<sup>22</sup> discusses a more positive way through which former combatants counter economic discrimination in particular, i.e., through the creation of a new niche in the job market such as Okada riding<sup>23</sup> across Sierra Leone. An interesting result of this initiative has been greater social acceptance of those who engage in this useful activity. Another important strategy to divert attention from their past and, henceforth avoid discrimination is lying about their past. Nearly all the former combatants I interviewed, concealed at least part of their identity, either throughout the entire interview process or at the beginning. The strategies included altering their role in the conflict, downplaying responsibility for crimes they might have committed in the past. Many former combatants who used this strategy also lied to me about their relationship with their family, stating that they could and did return home after the war, but in reality, they did not.

In particular, women tried to conceal their past. I found it difficult to recruit former female combatants for my interviews and once they volunteered, I had to meet them in a quiet place. Those who did volunteered mostly lied about playing active role in the conflict, because accepting their involvement in the conflict will stigmatise them even more than only being an abducted 'bush-wife'. In the case of those former female combatants who volunteered, I had learned that 'bush-wives' who did not fight usually stayed in bush-camps away from the war-front, while female combatants would move around with their fighting husbands actually went to the frontline to fight. All those I interviewed denied that they had fought actively. However, two of them accepted that they followed their husbands to the frontline occasionally to fight. The overwhelming majority of former combatants I interviewed contended that lying about their past or hiding their past identity will help them to avoid harassment and discrimination.

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<sup>21</sup>Peters, K. (2006) Footpaths to Reintegration. Armed Conflict, Youth and the Rural Crisis in Sierra Leone. PhD Thesis. Wageningen Universiteit, pp. 60 - 62.

<sup>22</sup> Richards, P. (2004) *No Peace, No War. An Anthropology of Contemporary Armed Conflicts*. Oxford: James Currey.

<sup>23</sup> Riding Okada (or motorbike taxi) in Sierra Leone has become an important emerging economic sector since the end of the conflict in 2002, especially in big towns and cities. The Okada industry has offered many former combatants avenue through which to achieve economic security and social support. The industry has proved to be important especially for the economic reintegration of many former combatants in the 'new' Sierra Leone.

By keeping to themselves, as mentioned earlier, former combatants usually interact with their former comrades. I observed many cases where former combatants shared homes and gathered in groups. The lack of trust of community people towards former combatants tightens networks between former comrades. I observed from the fieldwork that in the context of Sierra Leone, with regards to successful reintegration, discrimination is a form of subtle punishment; mundane local justice within a society that for the most part is overwhelmed by the request to forgive, cohabit, reconcile and build a 'new' Sierra Leonean society. In this line of interpretation, the reaction of former combatants to discrimination is that of subtle act of repentance and apology.

### **7.3 Concluding Remarks**

Achieving sustainable reintegration in Sierra Leone is still on-going 15 years following the end of the conflict. Due to high level of violence in the country, resentments are still present and large numbers of people are still traumatised.<sup>24</sup> Hence, peaceful cohabitation and rebuilding social relationships remains a challenge in the 'new' Sierra Leonean society. In order to achieve sustainable peace, the government of Sierra Leone, supported by the international community implemented programmes and policies in two particular areas: reconciliation and reintegration of former combatants.

One of the key findings shows that the government of Sierra Leone and the international community are committed to both reconciliation and reintegration. Important institutions such as NCDDR work together to maximize successes. On a programmatic level, connections were found in various areas. First, through economic reintegration activities such as the engagement of former combatants in Vegetable Crop Rehabilitation and Income Generating Programme in Fonikoh, and the Vocational Training for the Rehabilitation and Resettlement Project in Bumpe Township, reintegration and reconciliation are fostered through cohabitation, respect and cooperation. Second, psychological issues, due to stigmatization and impaired social abilities, militate against the reintegration and reconciliation process. Therefore, social reintegration is as important as economic reintegration. Third, the TRC, in contrast to traditional justice systems, aims at forgiveness, cooperation and social cohesion.

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<sup>24</sup> Winter, D., Brown, R; Goins, S. and Mason, C. (2015) *Trauma, Survival and Resilience in War Zones: The Psychological Impact of War in Sierra Leone and Beyond*. London: Routledge.

Reintegration cannot be separated from reconciliation; they must accompany each other, with society seeing to the needs of former combatants, while relief, resettlement and rehabilitation programmes take care of other war-affected populations like IDPs. In that way, it may be possible to achieve a ‘balance of the individual former combatant and the community.’ Ultimately, the success of reintegration and reconciliation are marked by the point at which former combatants are no longer labelled as lazy, ex- killers or violent youth. They become identified instead as youth, farmers, or small-business owners, like the rest of the population. All of these will point towards collective responsibility to address the root causes of the conflict and to transform social structures in the country accordingly.

The next section is the conclusion of the thesis. It provides an overall conclusion to the thesis. It seeks to draw together a comprehensive answer to the main research question. It summarises and cements the outcome of the fieldwork.



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## **CONCLUSION**

This research began with an extract from an interview with a former combatant during an interview with this researcher in Sierra Leone. The narrative demonstrates some of the key difficulties faced by former combatants when they returned to civilian environment. Various concerns such as the need for identity transformation, distrust or low level of trust towards former combatants by civilians, the changed and changing environment to which former combatants returned, and the need to build one's own life being self-reliant combined to ensure that social reintegration is a difficult process.

This conclusion begins with a summary of the thesis so as to provide a concise review of the most relevant literature covered. It then goes on to draw together the conclusions of the study and provide an answer to the research question posed earlier in the introduction. From here the thesis moves on to the provision of thesis outputs that: offer recommendations that develop our methodological ability to conduct research of this nature; advance our theoretical understanding of social reintegration, reconciliation and social capital; and provide recommendations to facilitate our capability of designing and implementing effective DDR programmes. The final section will then examine potential future research in this area.

### **Thesis Summary**

The aim and objectives of this thesis was to offer an alternative perspective from which to view the process of reintegration of former combatants which does not rely on conventional measures of reintegration such as economic indicators. Instead, it assesses the impact of conflict on social capital and explores ways in which the effective social reintegration of former combatants may facilitate the restoration of social capital destroyed during the course of the civil-conflict in Sierra Leone.

Thus, the aims and objectives of this thesis were:

1. To explore the linkages between reintegration, reconciliation, trust and social capital through the analysis of data obtained from the Sierra Leone case study and compare them to linkages identified within the wider DDR literature.

2. To investigate ways in which civil-conflict transforms social capital and how the successful social reintegration and reconciliation of former combatants may restore social capital in a post-conflict society.
3. To show that where reintegration occurs without reconciliation built on trust, peaceful coexistence is an alternative. It thus emerged that bridging and bonding social capital has evolved in the absence of trust, and that trust appeared as some kind of transitional mechanisms that initiated with peaceful coexistence at the community level. Thus, even without trust peaceful coexistence was possible, which operated through a number of mechanisms at the local level.

The aim and objectives are reflected in the following research questions, which was the basis of this research:

*How does the reintegration of former combatants link in with the reconciliation process in Sierra Leone?*

*What kind of relationship do former combatants form with the community in order to coexist peacefully?*

The thesis starts with a personal note on how and why the research was undertaken, why it is important, and how it can add to our understanding of post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation. It then stated the aims, objectives and scope of the study, as well as the problematic research subject. This was particularly important as rationale for the study, as well as demonstrating the originality of the work and the insights it offers on the topic under investigation.

## **Conclusion**

When considering the contribution social reintegration of former combatants makes to social capital renewal and reconciliation, it is first necessary to consider the overall picture in post-conflict Sierra Leone in terms of social capital and reconciliation as this represents the environment into which former combatants reintegrate.

Before the outbreak of the decade long civil-conflict, the process of undermining social capital had already begun in the country. Following the establishment of Freetown, the

capital of Sierra Leone by the British in 1787 to serve as a settlement for freed slaves, who later became known as the Creoles, it was a century later before the hinterland could become a British protectorate.<sup>1</sup> Since then, there was an emergence of tension between the Creoles of Freetown, who saw themselves as direct British subjects, and the indigenous peoples of the hinterland, whom the Creoles saw as ordinary locals. Prior to the arrival of the Creoles, there were already indigenous people living along the Freetown peninsula, but these indigenous people were ignored and excluded by the settler community. This differentiation and segregation of ethnic or tribal groups during this period formed a platform for 'us versus them' mind-set and for the future ethno-politicisation of the state of Sierra Leone, as different tribes lived in close proximity.

As independence approached in 1961, there was a fundamental increase in socio-political divide based on ethnicity or tribal lines and regionalism. While the Mendes from the southeast supported the SLPP, the Temnes and Limbas from the north were drawn to the APC. This tribal and regional divide and the resultant political setup continued to affect the social capital and thus led to persecutory vertical social capital between those in power and the various social groups within the population. The effect of this was to create overly strong bonding social capital within the population whilst bridging social capital became eroded over time. In the period leading to the outbreak of the conflict, social cohesion and cooperation were based on regional boundaries and the development of 'us versus them' attitude.

With the outbreak of the conflict, the transformation of social capital continued. Furthermore, trust became depleted to the extent coordination and cooperation between those in power and the civilian population became almost impossible thus rendering bridging social capital effectively non-existent. Within the population, especially at local level the bonds that defined the population and held it together grew in strength in the face of the perceived threat from those in power and was reinforced through continuous inequality and increased poverty. Among the powerful elites and the minority in power, bonding social capital dwindled and was now located in small social groups such as Ekutay<sup>2</sup> and family members. As

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<sup>1</sup> Porter, A., T. (1963) *Creoledom: A Study of the Development of Freetown Society*. London: Oxford University Press.

<sup>2</sup> As Jimmy Kandeh writes of the era leading to the outbreak of the conflict in Sierra Leone, the ethno-politicisation of the army, palpably evident under president Momoh's APC regime (all top officers continue to be northerners, and especially from the Limba tribe), occurred largely within the context of continued attempts

communication was made increasingly more difficult, and the uncertainty as to who could be trusted increased, the cohesiveness of this group was diminished.

The end of the conflict in 2002 saw the return of IDPs, refugees and J.Cs, who had fled to neighbouring countries. This led to greater confusion in the country with bridging social capital remaining absent and bonding social capital within each group becoming more and more complex. In addition, the change in government, first from APC, who had ruled the country for nearly four decades, to NPRC, AFRC and SLPP further altered vertical social capital with most members of the former governments being fearful and distrustful of the new SLPP regime which had been out of governance for more than three decades. At this point the situation in Sierra Leone was unprecedented with the combination of a multitude of groups such as IDP, perpetrators, widows, returnees, J.Cs, refugees, orphans and the disabled, into a post-war society that was full with trauma, fear, distrust and hatred. At this point, the new SLPP government was faced with transforming a society that was almost unrecognisable from its former self into one in which reintegration, reconciliation and cohabitation were difficult to achieve.

Since the end of the civil-conflict in 2002, social capital has steadily been re-established. Reintegration and reconciliation have also largely been achieved taking into account the level of destruction that took place in the country. Although there is still more to be done, lots have been achieved in terms of reintegration, reconciliation, cohabitation, cooperation, and social capital renewal. Due to the increased discriminatory policies that existed in Sierra Leone by those in power prior to the outbreak of the conflict, the restoration of non-discriminatory vertical social capital was urgently needed by the people of Sierra Leone. However, non-discriminatory vertical social capital was difficult to achieve in the new Sierra Leone. Through the policies of the central government and the responsiveness of the people of Sierra Leone, vertical social capital gradually transformed so that the discriminatory vertical social capital practiced by the previous regime did not define relations in the new Sierra Leone. Although there are still problems and the elites can still be criticised for inequality and

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at power consolidation.... (The Limba) 'Ekutay', President Momoh himself was a staunch member. So was the chief of police (Bambay Kamara), the minister of trade and industry (Ben Kanu) and the ruling APC party affairs minister (Edward Kamara), all of whom were from the Limba tribe. For more on Ekutay and the ethno-politicisation before the onset of the conflict in Sierra Leone, see for instance Kandeh, D., J. (1992) 'Politicisation of Ethnic Identities in Sierra Leone', *African Studies Review*, Vol. 35, No. 1, pp. 81 - 99.

corruption, the general view is that relationship between the people and those in power has significantly improved.

The renewal of bonding and bridging social capital has also taken place in the post-conflict Sierra Leone. In the beginning bonding social capital was evident between small, close knit groups perpetually based on kinship with bridging social capital being the links between these micro groups. As the process of cohabiting increased via proximity, familiarity and reciprocity that were part of the effort to survive, so too did the bridges between these groups got stronger. With the reconstruction of the country and the (re)integration of different identity groups bonding social capital gradually came to be based on ties other than tribe and region bridging social capital thus occurs between various groups. Such a transformation in the three elements of social capital facilitated the establishment of social cohesion and enhanced the probability of reconciliation and successful reintegration.

Reconciliation is a long, difficult and a gradual process which goes through different stages. However, as the restoration of social capital takes place in a post-conflict environment, it positively impacts reconciliation. The key fundamental principles that underpin social capital, such as coordination, trust, cooperation, and communication among others, can only be realised when people cohabit. Therefore, social capital and co-existence are mutually reinforcing. It must be pointed out that co-existence is the precondition for the successful reintegration, reconciliation and the general development of the new Sierra Leonean society today, to the extent that war victims can live in close proximity and engage in community development with former perpetrators. Whilst some former combatants were intimidated, at least in the immediate aftermath of the termination of the conflict in some communities, there exists a relatively sustained level of peace throughout the country.

Given the period between the end of the conflict and now, it would be difficult for anyone to assume that Sierra Leone is totally a reconciled society. A lot has been achieved in terms of reintegration, reconciliation and the general peacebuilding effort as the people of Sierra Leone have accepted to co-exist and move on. The process of reintegration and reconciliation which are ongoing are building on these gains made thus far in terms of co-existence and will take time. However, the renewal of social capital serves to demonstrate to the people of Sierra Leone the possibility and benefits of durable peace. As members of communities engage together in activities that facilitate the physical development of the community, so too

do they cultivate the restoration of the social fabric that was destroyed during the conflict. In comparison with other societies emerging from conflict, reconciliation and reintegration in Sierra Leone is relatively in its early state; nevertheless, 16 years since the conflict ended, Sierra Leone as a society has made significant progress. Cohabiting and social reintegration of former combatants has made significant contributions to this advancement.

In order to fully understand the ways in which the reintegration and reconciliation of former combatants contributed to the renewal of social capital in Sierra Leone, it is important to first understand how such process took place. Hence, we must understand the situation of former combatants upon their return to the community. As noted throughout this thesis, the new Sierra Leonean society that emerged following the end of the conflict was weak and fragile, and former combatants were faced with many problems in terms of their reintegration. The starting position of former combatants is perhaps the most serious of these problems.

As pointed out in this thesis, and especially emphasised earlier in this conclusion, the social reintegration of former combatants into civilian society is a complex process, and in order for it to be successful, actors need to actively engage with the process. Notwithstanding the difficulty former combatants are faced with during their reintegration, when such social reintegration is achieved the renewal of social capital and reconciliation is facilitated, through both the process and its attainment. This is due to the fact that, as a process, it affects the community as a whole and can only be accomplished with the involvement of the entire community and the state. In order for the social reintegration to be successful the requisite commitment from the state must help to restore vertical social capital, which in turn facilitates the renewal of bridging and bonding social capital.

Following their return to civilian community, the social reintegration of former combatants essentially depends on cooperation and cohabiting processes that begin with their micro group. As trust and cooperation are established within the immediate family, they gradually increase to include the neighbour and other networks in the community. The exchange of food items and other household resources also become necessary as a result of poverty-induced interdependence. This takes places over a period of time that on average lasts between six and eight months, during which the cooperation that develops between former combatants and their families and neighbour expands further as the community in general becomes used to their presence within the community and in the various associations and

community activities they engage in. As noted in 6.3.1, the mutually beneficial nature of community development endeavours and exchange such as The Vegetable Crop Rehabilitation and Income Generating Programme in Fonikoh, Kenema, The UN 'Stop-Gap Programme' and The Vocational Training for the Rehabilitation and Resettlement Project in Bumpe Township serve to increase collective responsibility, civic mindedness, interdependence, solidarity and cooperation between former combatants and the civilian population. Therefore, the various interactions that occur within the process of former social reintegration help in cooperation, coordination and the rebuilding of trust through the familiarity that develops as a result of the proximity between former combatants and civilians when former combatants engage in community activities.

The social reintegration of former combatants has an important impact on the renewal of social capital. Former combatants facilitate the re-establishment of cooperation and coordination in the community when they socially reintegrate. In this way, they act as drivers for social capital restoration, especially bridging and vertical social capital. If, however, former combatants are not successfully reintegrated, social capital renewal cannot be said to be inclusive of all groups in society and, as a result, bridging social capital between former combatants and community members will be weak. As a result, coordination and social cohesion within the community will reduce and could lead to instability and insecurity.

If the reintegration of former combatants in Sierra Leone is successful, the ensuing promotion of social capital renewal has implications for reconciliation in the country. As noted earlier, during the civil-conflict and the period leading to the conflict, there was a development of 'us versus them' rhetoric between those in position and the citizens. Following the end of the conflict, similar situation developed between the civilian population and the former combatants. The newly emerging Sierra Leonean society thus became more complex and more polarised with citizens belonging to different social groups with different traumas, needs and aspirations. There was, therefore the need to build bridges between these polarised groups in order for them to be able to live together - bridging social capital. If bridging social capital is renewed and strengthened, antagonisms between previously conflicting groups are reduced thus building the foundations for reconciliation to take root and develop. This began with the development of the ability for members of communities to cohabit and, through the acknowledgement of the interdependent nature of life in Sierra Leone, especially at local level, the process of reconciliation has continued to develop.



The constructive social reintegration of former combatants has had positive implications on reconciliation, and such success has been achieved because of the political commitment of the government of Sierra Leone. This constructive social reintegration is achieved by the positive contribution former combatants make to the management and development of the community to which they return, which facilitates the generation of cohabitation even in the absence of trust at local level. Through social capital renewal, we can also see the influence social reintegration has on social reconciliation, especially at local level. The trust that is established between former combatants and the community during the process of their reintegration, enables the regeneration of bridging and bonding social capital and facilitates the steady developing of social reconciliation. Thus, trust resonates through the community. The role model status that is often attained by former combatants through their positive involvement in community activities enables them to take a positive role in the reconciliation process, however such a role can only be taken if their social reintegration is successful. If the social reintegration of former combatants is not fruitful, reconciliation is more likely to be unsuccessful as this implies cohabitation has not developed to the desired level. This will also affect the security and stability of the community thus affecting social cohesion. Therefore, the social reintegration of former combatants has significant ramifications for reconciliation and cohabitation.

In sum, the successful reconciliation and social reintegration of former combatants enhances cooperation, and coordination through cohabitation even in the absence of trust. As trust, social cohesion, cooperation and coordination are re-established; vertical social capital is also restored between the local community and the central government while the regeneration of bridging social capital occurs between former combatants and the civilian population. Bonding social capital during this time becomes based around local communities rather than ethnicity and regions. Former combatants contribute to this enhancement of social capital through their commitment to and engagement with community development. By actively engaging with the community, helping in its development and taking on roles of responsibility, former combatants demonstrate trustworthiness between them and the civilians. The implications of this promotion of social capital for reconciliation derive from the cooperation that is developed that enables the coexistence of such conflicting groups and the development of a society in which constructive relations can be built and developed. The social reintegration of former combatants has an important role to play in the process through

the useful contributions they can make to the community and also by virtue of the fact that if former combatants are not positively social reintegrated they can derail the peace process.

### **Research Reflection**

The section below now highlights a number of contributions that justify this present study. If the result of this study can be applied to other post-conflict situations elsewhere, then we can say that it adds value to our understanding of social reintegration and DDR in general other than only answering the research questions. The section starts with methodological recommendations and goes on to the contributions in terms of both methodology and theory.

### **Methodological Recommendation**

Some of the difficulties encountered during fieldwork whilst conducting this study may serve to develop our methodological ability to undertake such an ethnographic study elsewhere. As pointed out in Chapter 4, those conducting research in societies emerging from conflict are faced with multiple problems. Therefore, there is greater need for thorough preparation before one goes to the field. Although one cannot be 100% knowledgeable of the environment in any given place at any given time and a great deal of flexibility is required in order for researchers to be able to effectively adapt to the environment, it is important that great deal of preparation is done before hand. By preparing one's field trip as thoroughly as possible, with the awareness that what is being planned, in particular, timetabling and lists of desired interviews, which will almost certainly not occur in the way planned, researchers are able to be flexible in their approach.

In conducting research in societies emerging from violent conflict, limitations such as archival and documentary search always prove challenging. The search for important policy documents and other related literature are hampered by the problem of defaced or mutilated records, the unavailability of some files and bureaucratic red tape.<sup>3</sup> During my research visit to Sierra Leone, a member of staff of the Archives who was supposed to help me find documents, demand money before he could help. However, due to ethical consideration, I decided not to give any financial reward in exchange of information from any of my participants. In this particular case, I succeeded in explaining to him that I was just a student working on my PhD thesis. In other instances, I was able to use my own networks on the

ground without participants knowing that I was actually behind the engagement between them and my gatekeepers, which made me to get the information from them without them knowing.

Where possible, it is important to conduct the fieldwork over two or more phases. This provides time to be reflexive regarding the investigation and to improve where necessary. This will also provide space and time to analyse results, and identify particular irregularities or themes that are emerging that can be tapped into. Moreover, after returning to the field after the first phase you will be more confident having already spent time there and this will enhance working practices. Upon your arrival in the field, try to build friendship with members of the local community, as well as expatriates. Also, try to be open about meeting people, as this will help in gaining access to areas and people that may have previously been difficult. During interviews, be prepared for respondents cancelling or turning up late due to factors such as travel time and bad weather condition. Undertaking such a research process involves a great deal of flexibility.

### **Methodological Reflection**

The following methodological contributions were made during this study. Firstly, the research design used for this study provides a fruitful insight into the short-term effects of re-establishing social capital - through a participatory intervention - on the manner in which former combatants' features of sociability are integrated into their 'new' society and on the terms of inclusion that allow them to access and benefit from social resources vis-a-vis the class-based relations in which those processes take place. Although the findings and conclusions of this thesis are related to a particular geographical, cultural, and historical environment in which this work has been undertaking, I am convinced that the methodology and research techniques proposed enriches the existing debates surrounding the reintegration and reconciliation of former combatants in a post-conflict setting. In this respect, this present study could be considered as a starting point for using ethnographic and more in-depth qualitative methods that explore more the efficacy of an alternative perspective in the re-establishment of former combatants as durable peace-building mechanisms in societies emerging from violent conflict.

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<sup>3</sup> In most poor countries, especially those emerging from violent conflict, excessive regulation or rigid conformity to formal rules (bureaucratic) sometimes hinders or prevents action or decision-making. This will

Secondly, some of the challenges faced in the field almost overwhelmed this researcher, as well as the research methods that were adopted. In the bid to overcome some of the challenges, various research strategies were applied to manage them, and in the process, a pool of relevant data was discovered. In writing up the final thesis, existing literature in the field were weighed against the narratives of the former combatants. The results obtained through the combination of these research methods and techniques was the presentation of a balanced, empirical study, and a well contextualised account of the effects of social relationships on the reintegration of former combatants, which added to the already existing knowledge in the field.

## **Theoretical Reflection**

Three main theoretical contributions were made as a result of this study; social capital theoretical advancement, social reintegration theoretical advancement, and DDR theoretical advancement, all of which enhance our understanding of post-conflict peace-building. These three theoretical advancements are examined below.

### ***a). Social Capital***

This study enhances our understanding of social capital in two main ways: (a) through the application of the social capital concept in the context of post-conflict societies, especially through its application to social reintegration and cohesion and (b) through augmenting our comprehension of the link between violent conflict and social capital.

Building on the work of Colletta and Cullen,<sup>4</sup> and other authors in the field, this thesis provides a detailed analysis as to how social capital can contribute to the outbreak of violent conflict and how such conflict impacts on social capital before examining ways in which social capital can be restored in societies emerging from conflict. This is potentially a significant advancement in our understanding of conflict as it increases our knowledge of what leads to conflict, which then enables the development of more effective conflict prevention strategies. It also augments our understanding of the conflict process which helps in the ways we handle post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation. In addition, the concept of social capital could be used to explain other conflict-related social phenomena such as spill-over and insurgency. Social capital is a concept that can augment our understanding of

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inevitably have negative influence on researcher's ability to collect data.

the conflict context and should thus be utilised more when attempting to grasp the complexity of post-conflict societies.

As argued throughout this thesis, an increased understanding of civil-conflict is one of the key benefits of this study. As pointed out in Chapter three, social capital as a concept was first developed in the United States and European society to express the essence of communal vitality, and to explain social organisation in countries such as Italy. However, due to the relative infancy of the concept its application to the context of the developing societies, especially those emerging from conflict has been limited, although this has expanded over recent years with the creation of the Social Capital Initiative as part of the Social Development Department of the World Bank in the mid 1999s.

This present thesis adds to the application of social capital in the post-conflict society in the following ways: Firstly, the application of social capital as a concept in this thesis increases our understanding to specific areas such as IDPs, J.Cs and refugee reintegration, which are concerned with issues of community cohabitation, cooperation, cohesion and solidarity. Secondly, the use of social capital as a mechanism through which to better understand conflict and post-conflict reintegration and reconstruction adds to the understanding of post-conflict environment, due to the fact that violent conflict of an intrastate predominately occurs in countries that experience poor governance, high inequality and increased poverty. Thirdly, though the application of social capital concept in this study is particularly focused on the social reintegration of former combatants, the fact that former combatants are reintegrating into a post-conflict environment draws on the involvement of the society, both at local and national level in such reintegration. This present study enhances our understanding of social capital within the context of the mechanisms that help former combatants' reintegration back into society. It also enhances our understanding of community development through the contribution of former combatant in community projects as well as local and national development.

#### ***b). Reintegration and Reconciliation***

Like the theoretical advancements in the previous section, reconciliation and reintegration literature is dominated by Euro-centric based literature that understands reconciliation and

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<sup>4</sup> Colletta, N., J. Cullen, M., L. (2000) *Violent conflict and the transformation of social capital: lessons from Cambodia, Rwanda, Guatemala, and Somalia*. Washington: The World Bank.

reintegration from a certain perspective and applies reconciliatory measures that are, in theory, appropriate to the understanding of reintegration and reconciliation. However, the application of social capital concept into this study enhances our understanding of reintegration and reconciliation from a different perspective. Whilst much of the reintegration and reconciliation literature propose solutions such as tribunals and TRCs, results from this research indicate that this is not necessarily the most suitable for the communitarian-based societies emerging from violent conflict across the developing world, especially in the African context. Both reintegration and reconciliation in these contexts are about social cohabitation, cohesion and reconciliation than internationally sponsored Special Court and TRCs that Western-centric literature bases its discussion on, and this is important for the way in which reintegration and reconciliation are approached.

As pointed out in chapter two, there is the need for a hybrid approach in societies emerging from violent conflict like Sierra Leone, and this syncretic approach to justice in a post-conflict environment should be incorporated in the model of transformative justice, placing transitional justice in the context of conflict transformation, reconciliation and peace-building effort. In addition, traditional courts might be more appropriate and more popular as a justice model for dealing with crimes committed during the conflict. This is because it involves initiatives that engage the community at the grassroots and allow them ownership over their own progression as oppose to the internationally supported Special Court or the TRC. Reconciliation between neighbours within communities is overwhelmingly personal matter and, although projects can be developed to promote and assist in this process, it cannot be implemented from outside and has to occur at grassroots. By recognising the importance of local justice system and incorporating it into reintegration and reconciliation literature, the chances of an understanding of the reconciliation process that both reflects experience and has the potential to make a difference is further developed. The way that Catholics reconcile in Kosovo or the pro and anti-Franco factions in Spain, or in Northern Ireland where the Catholics and Protestants reconcile differ in many ways with the African context; what works in the European context does not necessary work in the African context. Therefore, if we aim to achieve permanent reconciliation and reintegration, it is important to understand that local ownership and knowledge are drafted into designing and implementing reintegration and reconciliation initiatives. This present study thus conveys some bearing onto this subject through its examination of community-based reintegration and reconciliation endeavours.

It is generally argued in much of DDR literature that if former combatants are not efficiently reintegrated into society, they may pose danger to peace process. Constructive peace, as generally understood includes successful cohabitation, reintegration and reconciliation and therefore if former combatants are not successfully reintegrated into society, reconciliation will be difficult to achieve. This gives a negative acknowledgement to the potential importance of former combatants in the reconciliation process; however, it does not in any way recognise how they may positively contribute to it. One of the key findings of this research show that, where former combatants engage in community development, as pointed out in section 6.3, the social and physical rebuilding of the community can have a significant positive influence in the reintegration and reconciliation process. This enhances our understanding of how reintegration is achieved at the grassroots by acknowledging that those who are part of the problem need to be part of the solution if durable peace is to be achieved. Rather than focussing on Euro-centric or state-centric approaches to reintegration and reconciliation; this present study is beneficial by way of its contribution to academic understanding of the actors involved in grassroots reintegration and reconciliation.

In summary, this present study advances our understanding of reintegration and reconciliation by:

- i. Highlighting the inadequacies of current reintegration and reconciliation thinking
- ii. Introducing an important actor in the reconciliation process and explaining how the social reintegration of former combatants, through social capital renewal, can contribute to the reconciliation process and general peace-building
- iii. Linking the concepts of social capital and reintegration so as to augment our understanding of how reintegration and reconciliation are achieved, and how they can be generally measured
- iv. Increasing our current understanding of local reconciliation programmes and techniques through a consideration of community practices and their application to the reintegration and reconciliation processes in general
- v. Situating the process of reintegration in the complexity of the post-conflict environment.

***c). DDR***

The findings of this thesis have emphasised a number of issues that can develop further our understanding of DDR in post-conflict societies. In terms of DDR, this thesis concentrates on

reintegration and reconciliation. As pointed out in section 0.4 and again in section 5.5, social reintegration has often been neglected in comparison with other aspects of reintegration such as economic and political reintegration due to various reasons. It is thus evident from this thesis that there is the need to examine social reintegration in detail. This thesis primarily adopts social capital concept to examine social reintegration in a post-conflict context.

Although the application of social capital concept has been contested, especially in terms of post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation, due in part to the fact that there is no universally agreed way to measure social capital, it provides an ideal starting point from which we can work towards designing a more accurate measure of social reintegration and reconciliation. As noted in this thesis, social reintegration is a key constituent of DDR process because its achievement has significant influence on other key components of post-conflict peace-building such as community development. Most importantly, its attainment signifies that the reintegration stage is complete. There is therefore the need to understand the process of social reintegration, factors that propel it and factors that militate against it, which this thesis has attempted to do.

In particular, this thesis contributes a detailed understanding of the ways in which former combatants reintegrate socially back into community after their demobilisation, both in terms of the difficulties they face and the successes they achieve. Therefore, we can better understand how social reintegration can be augmented. This is important because it shows the significance of DDR as a process we must engage with in order to keep former combatants from re-engaging in violence. The economic reintegration of former combatants is important because it improves the employability of former combatants through intensive training in skills that are in demand in local economies and markets, and through longer-term support to new entrepreneurs. At the same time, it creates an enabling economic environment, especially in local communities with high return for former combatants by taking a more holistic view of DDR process. We can thus, see that the effective reintegration of former combatants has an important effect on reconciliation and peacebuilding in general.



## **Future Research**

It has been evident throughout this thesis, especially in chapter one, as well as in the empirical section that the Sierra Leone's reintegration project was directed, managed and implemented by external actors, with little input from former combatants themselves and the host community. Even when the conflict ended, the post-conflict affair was largely managed by external actors - the so-called 'professional bodies' such as the donor community, DFID, UNDP, the World Bank, the ADB, psychiatrists, psychologists and human rights professionals. DFID, UNDP and the World Bank overwhelmingly focused on the Security Sector Reform and political dimensions of peace-building, while the IMF and ADB focused on the reconstruction of war-ravaged economy, which, as noted in chapter one routinely required the implementation of complex economic reform programmes and policies, which did not benefit either the former combatants or the local population. Psychiatrists and psychologists were interested in the ways people who were affected by the conflict dealt with the experience of violence they witnessed, whilst human rights experts focused on justice and the promotion of reconciliation.

The central argument of this study was that where reintegration occurs without reconciliation built on trust, peaceful coexistence is an alternative. In other words, peaceful coexistence might be an alternative to trust. In the context of Sierra Leone, bridging and bonding social capital has evolved in the absence of trust, and that trust appeared as some kind of transitional mechanisms that initiated with peaceful coexistence at the community level. Thus, even without trust peaceful coexistence was possible in Sierra Leone, and this operated through a number of mechanisms at the local level. Having done so, I am convinced that further research should be undertaken to explore the relationships between the different professional bodies such as those mentioned above, together with other bodies that are interested in the welfare of former combatants and their host communities.

Given that this thesis expands our knowledge on social reintegration, reconciliation and social capital, there is the need for further research for the reintegration of IDPs, JCs, refugees and other groups. The fact that most former combatants join armed groups at very early age and later demobilised as adults, there is the need to undertake further research on the reintegration and reconciliation of this particular group. Fundamentally, there is the need to investigate this group separately and to establish the challenges they are faced with upon their return into society.

Although many questions and challenges for future research remain, the post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation programmes in Sierra Leone have had positive experience. Sierra Leone's approach to post-conflict reintegration and reconciliation are widely praised, and arguably regarded as one of the most successful peace-building programmes in Sub-Saharan Africa. Today, the people of Sierra Leone coexist peacefully in harmony without visible tensions. Therefore, Sierra Leone can be seen as a positive role model for other societies emerging from violent conflict.

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## **APPENDICES**

**Appendix 1: List of Interviewees**

**Appendix 2: Sample Participant Consent Form**

**Appendix 3: Sample Participant Information Sheet**

**Appendix4: Sample Letter for Snowballing Recruitment**

## **Appendix 1 - List of Interviewees**

### **Former Combatants (Males)**

Amadu Yajah, Kailahun town, 28<sup>th</sup> July 2015  
Denis Conteh, Freetown, 14<sup>th</sup> June 2015  
James Dauda (Saddam Husain), Bo, 29<sup>th</sup> May 2015  
John Fawundu, Koidu Town, 13<sup>th</sup> April 2015  
John Kangoma, Mandu, 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2015  
Mohamed Kargbo, Mattru Jong, 1<sup>st</sup> May 2015  
Munda Sannoh, Towama, 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2015  
Samuel George, Pujehun, 27<sup>th</sup> June 2015  
Tamba Lamina, Kono, 4<sup>th</sup> April 2016  
Tigana Joseph, Pendembu, 21<sup>st</sup> March 2015  
Turkish, Bo, 29<sup>th</sup> May 2015

### **Former Combatants (Females)**

Hawa Kamara, a former female combatant, Bo, 19<sup>th</sup> May 2015  
Kadie Kamara, former female combatant and member of the Vegetable Crop Rehabilitation and Income Generating Programme, Kenema, 12<sup>th</sup> April 2015  
Massah Joseph, former female combatant, Freetown, 14<sup>th</sup> June 2015  
Mbalu Tifa, former female combatant, Bo, 12<sup>th</sup> May 2015  
Yatta Mansaray, former female combatant, Bo, 7<sup>th</sup> May 2015

### **Community Members/ Leaders (Males)**

Aruna Mambu, chairman youth organisation, Samami district, Bo, 17<sup>th</sup> May 2015  
Brima Kallon, primary school head teacher, Njala Komboya, 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2015  
Pa. David Kallon, Town Chief, Daru town, 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2015  
Pa. Joe Samu, a community leader, Koribondo, 14<sup>th</sup> May 2015  
Usman Sesay, community leader, Kenema, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2015

### **Community Members/ Leaders (Females)**

Jattu Idris, retired female teacher, Korobondo, 20<sup>th</sup> April 2015  
Kadie Kamara, member of the Fonikoh Vegetable Crop Rehabilitation and Income Generating Programme, Kenema, 12<sup>th</sup> April, 2015  
Ramatulai Jalloh, Kenema town, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2015

### **Policy Makers/Interlocutors/Politicians**

Abass Bundu, former Executive Secretary of ECOWAS, now Speaker of the House of Parliament of Sierra Leone, Bedford, UK, 5<sup>th</sup> November 2014

Brigadier (Retired) Julius Maada Wonie Bio, 2012 Presidential candidate for SLPP, now President of the Republic of Sierra Leone, London, 15<sup>th</sup> November 2014

Eldred Collins, former RUF leader and 2012 Presidential candidate, Freetown, 9<sup>th</sup> June 2015  
Francis Kai-Kai, former Executive Secretary of NCDDR, Freetown, 3<sup>rd</sup> September 2015

Solomon Ekuma Dominic Berewa, Sierra Leone's former Vice President and 2007 Presidential candidate for the SLPP, Freetown, 9<sup>th</sup> June 2015

### **Academics/Journalists**

David John Francis, Department of Peace Studies and UNESCO Chair in African Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Bradford. Currently Chief Minister of the Government of Sierra Leone. Telephone interview, 13<sup>th</sup> November 2014

Ismail Rashid, Department of International Studies, Vassar College, New York. Telephone interview, 1<sup>st</sup> December 2015

Joe., A., D. Alie, Head of the Department of History and African Studies, Fourah Bay College, University of Sierra Leone, April 2015

Lansana Gberie, Africa Conflict Prevention Programme of Institute for Security Studies, Addis Ababa. Telephone interview, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2016

Sorious Samura, Author and Producer, Cry Freetown, London, 1<sup>th</sup> November 2014

### **NGO and Civil Society Organisations**

Abu Brima, Executive Director, NMJD, Freetown, 10<sup>th</sup> June 2015

Ibrahim Tommy, Executive Director, Center for Accountability and Rule of Law. Freetown, 11<sup>th</sup> June 2015

Mohamed Gibril Sesay, Chairman of the Board, Center for Accountability and Rule of Law. Freetown, 14<sup>th</sup> June 2015

## Appendix 2: Participant Consent Form 2015

- I, the undersigned voluntarily agree to take part in the study titled 'Lost Voices, Fragile Warriors: Social Capital, Reconciliation and the Reintegration of Former Combatants in Sierra Leone'. (Version No 2). ☐
- I have read and understood the Information Sheet provided. I have been given a full explanation by the investigators of the nature, purpose, location and likely duration of the study, and of what I will be expected to do. I have, in addition been advised about any discomfort that may arise as a result of the study on my psychological well-being. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions on all aspects of the study and have understood the advice and information given as a result. ☐
- I shall inform him immediately if I suffer any deterioration of any kind in my health or in my psychological well-being. ☐
- I do agree that audio or video recordings made of my participation in this research be used ONLY for the purpose of this research. ☐
- I do NOT want segments of the recordings made of my participation in this research to be used for education and training of future researchers/practitioners. ☐
- I agree that my comments be used as a citation in this study where and when necessary. ☐
- I consent to my personal data, as outlined in the accompanying information sheet, be used for this study only. I understand that all personal data relating to volunteers is held and processed in the strictest confidence, and in accordance with the Data Protection Act (1998). ☐
- I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without needing to justify my decision and without prejudice. ☐
- I confirm that I have read and understood the above and freely consent to participating in this study. ☐
- I have been given adequate time to consider my participation and agree to comply with the instructions and restrictions of the study. ☐

Name of researcher: (BLOCK CAPITALS) .....ABDUL RASHID KOROMA  
Signed.....  
Date: .....

Name of Volunteer: (BLOCK CAPITALS) .....  
Signed.....  
Date.....



## **Appendix 3: Participant Information Sheet 2015**

**Project Title:** “Lost Voices, Fragile Warriors: Social Capital, Reconciliation and the Reintegration of Former Combatants in Sierra Leone” (Version No 2).

### **Introduction**

I am a Doctoral Researcher and a PhD candidate in the Department of Politics at the University of Surrey, and I would like to invite you to take part in a research project. Before you decide to take part, you need to understand why the research is being done and what it will involve for you. Please take the time to read the following information carefully and talk to other people about the study if you wish.

### **What is the purpose of the study?**

This study focuses on social reintegration, broadly understood as a state of reconciliation between former combatants and civilian communities. Adopting ethnographic research design through semi-structured interview method with participants, and snowballing technique for the identification and selection of participants, and using social capital concept, the thesis argues that where post-conflict reintegration occurs without reconciliation built on trust, peaceful coexistence is an alternative. In other words, coexisting peacefully might be an alternative to trust.

The thesis sought to address the following research questions:

*How does the reintegration of former combatants link in with the reconciliation process in Sierra Leone?*

*What kind of relationship do former combatants form with the community in order to coexist peacefully?*

### **Why have I been invited to take part in the study?**

You have been invited to take part in this study because you are one of the key actors who may have valuable information to contribute to the success of this study as you directly or indirectly took part in the conflict or because you were deeply involved in the negotiation and other political processes that finally brought peace in the country.

### **Do I have to take part?**

No. You are free to withdraw at any time you wish to do so without giving any reasons for your withdrawal from the programme.

### **What will my involvement require?**

It is not compulsory that you take part in the study; it is your decision to do so and your participation is voluntary and you can withdraw at any time you wish to. The information that you will provide will be kept confidential. It will not include your name or any other

identifying information. However, if I need to use your direct citation in the research; I will get back to you for further clarification. The interview will last between 50 and 75 minutes depending on how much information you have or wish to provide.

### **What are the possible disadvantages or risks of taking part?**

Potential risks or harm that may occur as a consequence of participation in this research focus largely on the possibility of psychological or emotional distress that you as a participant could trigger. Less likely threats could conceivably be experienced in relation to security fears such as fear of lack of confidentiality, as a consequence of participation in interviews. In response to the first, I will be prepared to refer participants to counselling services at Surrey University, Sierra Leone Embassy, UK, or Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) in Sierra Leone. The major precaution regarding security concerns will be dealt with by (a) showing letters of introduction from my Supervisors declaring the bona fide nature of the research endeavour; (b) assurances as to anonymity, but (c), if requested, or necessary, by referring contacts to my Supervisors at the University of Surrey. MSF has been involved in emergency mental and physical health and other post-conflict psychosocial related programmes since the end of the conflict in Sierra Leone. Emotional support can also be provided by specialist medical staff at Connaught hospital in Freetown if required. But all of these will be discussed with participants prior to face-to-face interview.

### **Where will the interview take place?**

All interviews/meetings will take place in public places in Sierra Leone, the study country after mutually agreeing on the location/venue with the participant. Before any interviews are conducted or meetings held, I will use what is called the 'seal envelope system'. This is where a seal envelope is handed to a third party, usually a friend containing my telephone number, name and other details of the participant instructing the third party to open the envelope if s/he did not see or hear from me after a set period of time. This is done to maintain confidentiality and anonymity of participants involved.

### **How will data collection for this study proceed?**

As pointed out above, data collection for this study will take place in Sierra Leone between April 2015 and September 2015. The semi-structured interview process will involve approximately 35 - 40 participants; they will include former combatants, academics, policy makers, NGO staff, community members/leaders and interlocutors. The would-be participants are expected to provide valuable individual information to the success of this study because of their direct participation in the conflict and the DDR process, or because of their individual knowledge in the reintegration of former combatants following their disarmament and demobilisation.

### **Will my participation in this study be recorded?**

Yes. All interviews for this study will involve voice or video recording. For participants in Sierra Leone, the method for data collection will involve some semi-structured interviews. So yes, participant's voices will be recorded and will be stored in accordance with University of Surrey's data storage Act.

**Will my taking part in the study be kept confidential?**

Yes. All of the information you provide will be anonymised so that those reading reports from the research will not know who has contributed to it. However, should you disclose that you or someone else is at risk, then I as a researcher may need to report this to the appropriate authority. And where information is required by authorities, it is beyond me as a researcher to withhold such information. All data/information that you provide will be stored securely in accordance with the University of Surrey's policy pertaining to research process, which states that all research data must be stored for a minimum of ten years and research project data for a minimum of six years before they are disposed of. This process will be strictly followed.

**What are the possible benefits of taking part?**

It is unlikely that you will benefit directly from this study, however it is hoped that the research will give 'voice' to marginalised sections of people in the community as the voices of former combatants will be heard. By listening to their narratives, the research hopes to add value to their accounts. You may experience personal benefits as a result of taking part in the research, such as having an opportunity to express your views or feeling and that your views will influence policy change in your community. However, it cannot be assumed that such benefits will occur in this study.

**What happens when the research study stops?**

This research hopes to be completed and published by 2018. Therefore, if you would like to access any information that you provide for the research, I will make the final PhD thesis available in pdf form and on line.

**What if there is a problem?**

Any complaint or concern about any aspect of the ways you have been dealt with during the course of the study, please do not hesitate to contact the Principal Investigator:

Professor Mark Olssen, Department of Politics,  
Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences,  
University of Surrey, Guildford, UK, GU2 7XH.  
Tel : 01483682120.  
Email [m.olssen@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:m.olssen@surrey.ac.uk).

You can also contact the Deputy Head of School:

Professor Alex Warleigh-Lack  
Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences,  
University of Surrey, Guildford, UK, GU2 7XH  
Tel : 01483683589,  
Email : [a.warleigh-lark@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:a.warleigh-lark@surrey.ac.uk).

**Contact details of researcher:**

Abdul Rashid Koroma,  
Doctoral Researcher,  
School of Politics,

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University of Surrey, Guildford, UK, GU2 7XH,  
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**Who is organising and funding the research?**

The research is self-funded.

**Who has reviewed the project?**

The study has been reviewed and received a Favourable Ethical Opinion (FEO) from the University of Surrey Ethics Committee.

Thank you for taking the time to read this Information Sheet.

## **Appendix 4: Sample Letter for Snowballing Recruitment**

Dear Sir/Madam,

Thank you very much for your interest in my research: 'Lost Voices, Fragile Warriors: Social Capital, Reconciliation and the Reintegration of Former Combatants in Sierra Leone'. I am writing to ask whether you would be willing to pass along the enclosed information to friends, colleagues and/or family members who may also be interested in my research. My point of asking you is because you have great knowledge and long-term experience pertaining social reintegration of former combatants following the end of violent conflict in Africa and elsewhere, which is broadly understood as a state of reconciliation between former combatants and civilian communities. As such, your willingness to notify others on my behalf would greatly facilitate my efforts to seek additional interviewees for my study, should I choose to approach them.

As you may be aware, the study which is being conducted is for my PhD where I am registered in the Department of Politics, Faculty of Arts and Human Sciences, University of Surrey, UK. This study focuses on social reintegration. It adopts ethnographic research design through semi-structured interview method with participants, and snowballing technique for the identification and selection of participants. By adopting social capital approach, this study finds a deeper and a more meaningful explanation of what holds or brings society and its people together in order to co-habit and foster social relationship after conflict has divided them. Focussing on social reintegration, the study presents a snapshot of the social dimension of the overall reintegration process in relation to the receiving community members. The study sought to address the following research questions:

*How does the reintegration of former combatants link in with the reconciliation process in Sierra Leone?*

*What kind of relationship do former combatants form with the community in order to coexist peacefully?*

Any assistance you can offer me would be greatly appreciated. You are under no obligation to share this information, and whether or not you share this information will not affect your relationship with me and the University of Surrey in any way.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration.

Yours sincerely,

Abdul Rashid Koroma

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University of Surrey, Guildford, UK, GU2 7XH,  
Email : [a.koroma@Surrey.ac.uk](mailto:a.koroma@Surrey.ac.uk).