A Comparison of Post-Conflict Disarmament Programs in Sierra Leone and Liberia

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Abstract

This paper explores the post-conflict disarmament programs implemented in Sierra Leone and Liberia at the end of their respective civil wars. It gives a brief history of each country's relevant political and historical background leading up to and including their civil wars. It then details the policy developments that led up to the creation of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Liberia and the Lomé Agreement in Sierra Leone. These two agreements were the foundation for each country's successful disarmament program. The paper then explains how each country implemented its disarmament process, followed by an analysis of why each program succeeded. It compares the disarmament programs to each other and concludes that Sierra Leone's program was superior because the entities in charge had better coordination with each other and engaged in more security sector and transitional justice reforms after completing the initial disarmament. It ends by noting that while Sierra Leone conducted a highly successful disarmament program, disarmament is not a one size fits all concept and must be adapted to each conflict's unique circumstances.

Acronym Guide

AFL: Armed Forces of Liberia
AFRC: Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
APA: Abidjan Peace Accord
APC: All People's Congress
AU: African Union
CA: Conakry Agreement
CIVPOL: UN Civilian Police
CCP: Commission for the Consolidation of Peace
CCSSP: Commonwealth Community Safety and Security Project
CDF: Civilian Defense Forces
CPA: Comprehensive Peace Agreement
DSRSG: Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General
EC: European Commission
ECOMOG: ECOWAS Ceasefire Monitoring Group
ECOWAS: Economic Community of West African States
EO: Executive Outcomes
GoL: Government of Liberia (Charles Taylor)
IGNU: Interim Government of National Unity of Liberia
IMATT: International Military Advisory and Training Team
ISF: International Stabilization Force
JIU: Joint Implementation Unit
JMC: Joint Monitoring Committee
LNDF: Liberian National Defense Force
LNP: Liberian National Police
LPA: Lomé Peace Accord
LPC: Liberia Peace Council
LURD: —Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy
MODEL: movement for democracy in Liberia
MONUC: United Nations Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo
NFPL: National Freedom party of Liberia (Charles taylor)
NPFL: National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NTGL: National Transitional Government of Liberia
NTLA: National Transitional Legislative Assembly
QIP: Quick Impact Project
RSLAF: Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces
SCSL: Special Court for Sierra Leone
RUF: Revolutionary United Front
SLA: Sierra Leone Army
SLP: Sierra Leone Police
SLPP: Sierra Leone People's Party
SSR: Security Sector Reform
TRC: Truth and Reconciliation Commission
TWP: True Whig Party
ULIMO: United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy
UNAMSIL: United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone
UNDP: United Nations Development Programme
UNMIL: United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNOMSIL: United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone

Introduction

      For the past twenty-four years the United Nations (UN) has widely used Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) programs years to help end conflicts and to stabilize regions post-conflict. The UN defines disarmament as "the collection of small arms and light and heavy weapons within a conflict zone."[i] Demobilization is defined as "the process by which parties to a conflict begin to disband their military structures and combatants begin the transformation into civilian life."[ii] Reintegration is defined as "the process which allows ex-combatants and their families to adapt, economically and socially, to productive civilian life."[iii] In 1989 the UN Observer Group in Central America (ONUCA) was the first peacekeeping operation to implement a program with a disarmament and demobilization component.[iv] The 1990's saw the UN taking on a more development-oriented approach to DDR, but these programs were still implemented sequentially rather than simultaneously with other transitional peace-building measures and did not sufficiently consider context-based problems.[v] In the later part of the 1990's the international community increased its emphasis on implementing DDR programs in conjunction with peace-building efforts "such as rule of law, security sector reform and economic recovery."[vi] In 2000 a UN report on peace-building operations known as the Brahimi report was released, stating that UN peace-building missions needed to focus on improving the integration of peace-keeping operations, including DDR programs and improving security, with peace-building operations, such as democratic institution building and support for the rule of law.[vii] Funding for DDR in peacekeeping missions was still voluntary until 2002, when the UN implemented the recommendations of the Brahimi report and the UN Organization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo (MONUC) received funding in its mandate for disarmament and demobilization.[viii] Then in 2003, for the first time ever, funding for

reintegration was included in the mandate for the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), marking a new milestone in the integration of DDR programs with peace-building missions.[ix] The UN has established DDR programs as an integral component of its operations in post-conflict situations and has included DDR in the mandates of its last seven peacekeeping missions.[x] While DDR is certainly an essential component of peacekeeping strategy, "it is not a panacea and can be undermined if an appropriate security framework is not in place. Nor is it a conflict resolution tool, when implemented in isolation."[xi] Two countries that incorporated this lesson in their post-conflict peacekeeping strategies were Sierra Leone and Liberia, which, in collaboration with the UN, were able to carry out successful disarmament programs in their respective countries. Liberia and Sierra Leone's post-conflict disarmament strategies succeeded because they were implemented with close coordination between national governments, combatant groups, and the United Nations, and were undertaken in the context of larger security and transitional justice reforms. Both countries were successful, but Sierra Leone was the more successful of the two because its UN mission was better run and funded and its transitional justice and security reforms measures were more effective.

Background: Liberia

Liberia has recently enjoyed an improvement in its political stability and national security, but this relatively new peace was only achieved after countless years of war and strife. The discord within Liberia began almost as soon as it was founded; freed black slaves from North America established Liberia as an independent state in 1847 and from the start developed poor relations with the indigenous people.[xii] The settlers feared attacks by the indigenous people and used military force to assert themselves as the dominant, ruling class.[xiii] They formed the political party known as the True Whig Party (TWP), which won every election from 1877 to

1980, allowing them to maintain their position of supremacy for more than a hundred years after declaring independence.[xiv] Inequality remained rampant in Liberia throughout this time; as recently as 1963, 97 percent of the Liberian population was not allowed to vote and there was widespread economic inequality between the descendents of the settlers and indigenous population.[xv] William Tolbert was the last member of the TWP to rule as president, and remained in power until 1980, when he was overthrown by Samuel Doe, a member of the indigenous Krahn ethnic group. The coup was sparked partly by the economic tensions of the time, but also by the anger of the long-repressed indigenous people.[xvi] Doe's regime was brutal and corrupt, and sought to establish the Krahn ethnic group as the new dominant class.[xvii] In 1989 Charles Taylor's NPFL forces invaded Liberia and began the first Liberian Civil War, which lasted until 1996. Doe was murdered by NPFL forces and the situation grew steadily worse as more warring factions emerged and vied for power.[xviii] In 1997 Charles Taylor was elected president and two years later the country again devolved into civil war. Taylor ruled through violence and intimidation, and under his reign Liberia was again consumed by factional fighting.[xix] This conflict continued to devastate the country and displace civilians until it was at last ended in 2003 with the signing of a peace agreement between the warring parties. The human rights violations and mass displacement of refugees that occurred during the fighting garnered international attention from groups such as the UN and the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). The UN was heavily involved in addressing the post-conflict situation and one of the main tools they used was disarmament, through the implementation of DDR programs.[xx]

Policy Development and Implementation in Liberia

Liberia's first attempt at utilizing DDR came in 1993, with the signing of the Cotonou Agreement between the Interim Government of National Unity of Liberia (IGNU), the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), and the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO).[xxi] The Cotonou was a cease-fire agreement between these three parties to attempt to bring stability and peace to Liberia. In Article VI of the agreement the parties agree to disarm under supervision of ECOMOG, which would be monitored and verified by the UN Observer Mission.[xxii] The disarmament agreement also provides that all weapons and warlike materials in the possession of the signing parties will be given to ECOMOG, where they will be documented, inventoried, and stored in their armories.[xxiii] Under Article VII the signing parties agree to the encampment of their combatants at ECOMOG encampment centers to facilitate disarmament and demobilization, and to use these sites for the education, training, and rehabilitation of former combatants.[xxiv] Article IX included three provisions regarding demobilization: all non-Liberian combatants would be repatriated or expelled by the Liberian government, the Liberian government requested programming and financing for DDR programs from the UN, other international organizations, and other countries, and a community education program was created to explain the cease-fire agreement and DDR programs.[xxv] The agreement also included provisions for forming the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL), humanitarian assistance, repatriation of refugees, and a general amnesty for all persons and parties who were involved in the Liberian civil conflict.[xxvi] This agreement was a major commitment by the three parties involved and was intended to be a major step towards bringing peace to war-torn Liberia.

Less than a year after it was created the peace process put in place by the Cotonou agreement fell apart due to factional disagreements, insufficient security, and a lack of

coordination between the NTGL, the UN, and ECOMOG.[xxvii] The factions present in Liberia were "unpredictable and at every level faction leaders reacted more readily to immediate local pressures regardless of whether their actions might jeopardize the success of the peace process."[xxviii] The factions failed to unify because of the lack of an over-arching authority that could assure their security; the NTGL's actual power was severely limited and hardly extended beyond the capital of Monrovia.[xxix] This failure to create a coordinated peace process came from the Cotonou's lack of clarity and coordination in designating responsibilities to the UN and ECOMOG.[xxx] The UN was largely in charge of the peacekeeping activities, while ECOMOG was responsible for security and civil order; leading to breakdowns in order and UNMIL operating in areas not protected by ECOMOG [xxxi] Since the UN did not have the authority to order the ECOMOG to provide security in direct accordance with its disarmament and demobilization efforts, the UNMIL peace efforts lacked the proper security force and credible backing to create a smooth, integrated disarmament campaign.[xxxii] When attempting to disarm and demobilize several different opposing factions, a lack of perceived, unified security can create uncertainty and fear among groups that if they are disarmed then they will be in danger and unable to protect themselves, which leads to groups refusing to disarm.[xxxiii] These breakdowns in communication and planning between the organizations involved, the weakness of the central government, and the resultant lack of unity between political factions caused the disarmament process to fail.

Following the collapse of the Cotonou agreement and the fighting that continued in its wake, the Akosombo Agreement of September 1994 was crafted and signed by the National Freedom party of Liberia (NPFL), the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO), and the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL).[xxxiv] Supposedly created to amend the

Cotonou agreement, the Akosombo Agreement would have actually resulted in the leaders of the three signatory groups replacing the transitional government altogether.[xxxv] However, the Akosombo Agreement was mired in conflict from the outset and was never actually implemented.[xxxvi] Shortly after the creation and failure of the Akosombo Agreement, the Accra Agreement was created in December 1994, which was intended to clarify the Akosombo agreement and create a new cease-fire that would begin on 28 December 1994.[xxxvii] Unfortunately, the Accra Agreement did little more than the Akosombo Agreement to improve the situation, and fighting once again continued to engulf the country.[xxxviii]

The next agreement was the Abuja Agreement, which was created in August 1995 to further amend and supplement the previous three agreements. The Abuja Agreement was signed by the AFL, the Liberia Peace Council (LPC), the NFPL, both factions of ULIMO, and two other armed factions.[xxxix] It created a cease-fire agreement and provided for elections within twelve months of the signing, as well as for the disarmament of armed factions within Liberia.[xl] However, action was not taken until the Abuja II Agreement of 1996, which resurrected the defunct DDR program.[xli] Combatants were registered, given counseling, and then integrated into work and training programs upon their disarmament, which involved the exchange of weapons and ammunition for food and reintegration coupons.[xlii] By February 1997, about 24,500 combatants were disarmed and 9,570 weapons were collected.[xliii] However, benefits from this round of disarmament were short-lived; in 1997 armed rebel groups rose up against the newly-elected President Taylor and the country devolved to its war-stricken state once more.[xliv] Disarmament failed to produce results in this case because the abusiveness of Taylor's regime against the Liberian people led to a resurgence in fighting in an effort to overturn his power.[xlv] If the government and national actors cannot provide security and a supportive framework for the

DDR process, then it is inevitably doomed to fail.[xlvi] Taylor's government not only failed to support these measures, but actually caused them to fail because his abuse of power led to repression and a lack of structured security that resulted in armed groups rising against him and reigniting civil war.

The agreement that finally marked a true turning point in Liberia's situation was the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA), which was signed in August 2003 by the Blah government, Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), and the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL), which gave power to an interim power sharing government.[xlvii] The Monrovian businessman Gyude Bryant was chosen to be the new Chairman of the interim government.[xlviii] The mandate of the interim government was to extend until 2006, when a new, elected government would take over.[xlix] Under Part Three, Article VI the CPA established disarmament as one of its main goals, as part of a general DDR program that also included cantonment and rehabilitation in its objectives.[l] Article VI outlined the framework under which DDR would take place, indicating which actors would be responsible for operations and detailing the steps they should take.[li] The International Stabilization Force (ISF), which would be responsible for conducting the disarmament of all combatants, including paramilitary groups, was requested to deploy to all disarmament and demobilization sites to monitor the process, and was placed in charge of monitoring all arms and ammunition.[lii] After disengagement, all forces were to withdraw to cantonment locations, while the AFL would be confined to barracks and their arms and ammunitions held in storage.[liii] The Joint Monitoring Committee (JMC) was put in charge of verifying information provided by the disarming factions and overseeing the location and movement of the disarmed forces, which were to remain in the authorized locations until reintegration activities were completed.[liv] An interdisciplinary and

interdepartmental National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (NCDDRR) was created to oversee the process and work with the ISF, and was to be comprised of members from relevant NTGL Agencies, the Government of Liberia (GOL), LURD, MODEL, the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the UN, the African Union (AU), and the International Contact Group on Liberia (ICGL).[lv] The transitional government was also required to request financial and technical resources from the international community to fund the DDR process.[lvi]

The disarmament program under the CPA began in December 2003 and was effectively run by UNMIL in collaboration with the NCDDRR.[lvii] This round of disarmament initially met with failure, as UNMIL significantly underestimated the number of combatants that would participate in the program.[lviii] UNMIL deviated from policy guidelines and tried to disarm just the pro-government fighters in the initial phase, but combatants from the other two factions also showed up at this stage, which completely overwhelmed UNMIL's disarmament sites.[lix] This communication failure was caused by UNMIL's lack of local knowledge of the situation; without the necessary contacts and flow of information between UNMIL forces and faction leaders, UNMIL failed to coordinate timed staging of the disarmament process.[lx] UNMIL managed to disarm 13,490 combatants and collect 8,679 weapons before the process was disbanded, only 10 days after it had begun.[lxi] After being abandoned, the program was suspended to allow for reevaluation, which led to an increase in UNMIL personnel and the number of combatants per disarmament site was limited to about 250 per day.[lxii] Disarmament resumed in April 2004, beginning in Gbargna and continuing with the establishment of other disarmament sites throughout the country, including Buchanan, Tubmanburg, VOA, Zwedru, Ganta, Voinjama, and Harper.[lxiii] By January 2005, UNMIL had disarmed and demobilized 103,019

combatants and collected 27,000 weapons and 6,183,425 units of total ammunition.[lxiv] At the time when the combatants surrendered their weapons, they would undergo five days of trauma and career counseling, receive $150 of a total $300 disarmament payment and a bag of rice, and be demobilized into a community of their choice.[lxv] They were also given the option of participating in a training program where they could choose from vocational skills, formal education, or agricultural employment.[lxvi] The DDR program officially concluded on October 30th, 2004, though the reintegration and rehabilitation aspects continued to be implemented.[lxvii]

Disarmament Analysis in Liberia

There were several key differences that caused this most recent round of disarmament in Liberia to succeed where previous attempts had failed. The command hierarchy and roles of the groups involved were well structured so that it was clear which entity was in charge of which objective.[lxviii] Overseeing the whole process was the NCDDRR, which had representatives from the NTGL, the UN, the ECOWAS, the fighting factions, the US, and the European Commission (EC).[lxix] The NCDDRR carried out DDR information campaigns, assisted UNMIL in the identification of combatants, provided policy guidance, and served as an intermediary when program participants had complaints.[lxx, lxxi] Directly under the NCDDRR was the Joint Implementation Unit (JIU), comprised of UNMIL, the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), and the Office for the Coordination of Human Affairs (OCHA).[lxxii] Tasked with the on the ground operations of the DDR program it divided the program parts amongst its different members; UNMIL conducted the disarmament and demobilization, OCHA was in charge of information and sensitization, and the UNDP oversaw rehabilitation and reintegration as well as monitoring and evaluation.[lxxiii] The breakdown of responsibilities helped ensure that each group

was able to focus on its allotted task and avoid being overwhelmed by multiple, ongoing programs.[lxxiv]

UNMIL learned from previous failures and conducted this round of disarmament in a more organized manner, with better planning and understanding of what was needed to achieve success.[lxxv] In January 2004 UNMIL conducted an information campaign, which raised awareness and educated combatants about the DDR process to help avoid the massive influx of misinformed combatants that caused the previous attempt to disband.[lxxvi] Instead of focusing on only pro-government fighters, this time UNOMIL covered combatants from all three of the major warring factions, Government of Liberia (GoL), LURD, and MODEL, in addition to fighters from other, smaller factions.[lxxvii] Disarmament in Gbargna and VOA mainly served combatants of GoL, Buchanan mainly served MODEL, and Tubmanburg mainly served LURD; all these sites were opened within fifty days of each other and completed their operations within a six-month time period or less.[lxxviii, lxxix] This is significant because failing to disarm rival groups simultaneously can result in inequality between the military capabilities of each group, causing some groups to fear attack from other groups and consequently refuse to turn in their weapons.[lxxx] To accommodate the concurrent disarmament of multiple groups without overwhelming the available facilities, the number of UNMIL personnel was increased and the number of combatants that could be processed at a single site was limited to 250 per day.[lxxxi]

The procedures that UNMIL used to process and document participants helped the disarmament process to run smoothly and efficiently.[lxxxii] Once combatants arrived at the sites, they were processed and registered to collect personal information and keep track of the program's performance.[lxxxiii] Each combatant's personal information, faction affiliation, and the weapons and ammunition surrendered were recorded and entered into a database that would later

be used during the reintegration process.[lxxxiv] This registration process was crucial to obtaining accurate information about weapons and ammunitions surrendered and the demographics of the disarmed combatants, as well operating a streamlined system to disburse payments, all of which contributed to the success of the disarmament program[lxxxv]

      Liberia's disarmament eligibility requirements were relatively easy to meet, which meant that a larger number of combatants, particularly women and children, were disarmed than would have been under a more stringent set of requirements.[lxxxvi] To be eligible an individual had to meet at least one of three criteria; turn in a weapon or ammunition, be a child under eighteen associated with a fighting force, or be a woman associated with a fighting force.[lxxxvii] On one hand, this was a positive feature because it meant that more weapons and ammunition were handed in overall, but on the other hand the larger numbers of people taxed the operational and funding capabilities of the program.[lxxxviii] The disarmament process in Liberia had the most inclusive eligibility requirements of any DDR program to date, which caused a certain degree of abuse of the system, but also led to high participation levels, which were essential for success.[lxxxix]

      Following the disarmament stage of the program was the reintegration phase, which was a mixture of failure and success. The early launch of the reintegration component, five months before disarmament ended, was a great success because it meant that as combatants could be reintegrated immediately.[xc] Over 38,000 participants chose to return to the formal education sector, making it one of the largest formal education components ever run as part of a DDR program.[xci] Many of the combatants who went the through the reintegration program enjoyed an increase in their socio-economic situation and reported that they were accepted back into their communities without trouble.[xcii] However, the reintegration component also experience myriad

problems, many of which stemmed from insufficient funding.[xciii] Limited resources meant that economic reintegration efforts were pursued at the expense of social integration measures.[xciv] For instance, counseling was available for the five days a combatant spent in cantonment, but after that they had to rely on whatever resources they had available in their community.[xcv] On this count the reintegration program failed its participants, as five days of counseling is hardly sufficient after years spent at war. Other problems included lack of infrastructure, failure to coordinate movement of combatants from one stage of the program to the next, and an over-concentration of discharged combatants in certain areas.[xcvi] Reintegration in Liberia was a mixed affair; it provided services for a large number of people, but also suffered from a lack of coordination and funding that meant some people received benefits late and sometimes not at all.[xcvii] Despite shortcomings, some reintegration efforts were certainly better than none, and overall the reintegration efforts improved the post-disarmament situation for most combatants.

Another factor that was vital for the disarmament program to succeed was the warring factions' willingness to cooperate and commit to the process. The factions' adherence to the cease-fire agreement was incredibly significant, as every peace agreement that preceded the CPA had been broken by factional fighting, as discussed above. This resulted in disarmament programs that either never came to fruition at all, or, if they were carried out, resulted in only short-lived success as groups re-armed and resumed fighting. Under the CPA the signing groups not only complied with the cease-fire agreement, but also followed through on their agreement to disarm, resulting in approximately two-thirds armed groups' weapons being handed over by the end of the program.[xcviii]

The factions not only participated voluntarily in the disarmament process, but also made three particular agreements under the CPA that helped ensure that larger-scale peace-building

efforts would succeed.[xcix,c] The first agreement that contributed to the success of the CPA was

the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in order to address the need

for truth-telling and national healing.[ci] The TRC was a compromise between the armed factions

and civil society groups; the factions wanted amnesty, while the civil groups were in favor of

creating a war crime tribunal.[cii] When it became clear that the inclusion of a war crime tribunal in

the CPA would cause the factions to withdraw and completely derail the peace process, both

groups settled for the TRC instead.[ciii] While there is debate whether the TRC sufficiently

addressed the crimes that took place during the war, it still played a significant role because it

allowed the peace agreement to go forward by settling the dispute over amnesty and war crime

tribunals.

The second agreement was that the NTGL would include ex-members of the armed

factions.[civ] In the National Transitional Legislative Assembly (NTLA), which formed the

legislative branch of the NTGL, each of the three major factions (LURD, MODEL, and GoL)

was allotted twelve seats.[cv] The remaining seats were divided among the political parties, which

received eighteen seats, civil society and interest groups, who received seven seats, and the

fifteen counties of Liberia, which each received a single seat.[cvi] "In calling for the establishment

of an interim executive and legislature the CPA ensured a measure of Liberian ownership for the

reconstruction process" (Furley & May, 193).[cvii] While the interim government had only limited

power in reality, it was still an important symbol of Liberian inclusion in rebuilding the

nation.[cviii]

The third agreement was that in October 2005 democratic elections would take place to

establish a new, permanent Liberian government.[cix] International and external forces can provide

funding and training, but they cannot provide political will; forming a functioning government

was crucial to begin establishing Liberian ownership of governance and independence from international support.[cx,cxi] In 2006 Ellen Sirleaf-Johnson won the election and became the first elected female head of state in Africa. Her reign proved beneficial for Liberia; she obtained forgiveness of millions of dollars of Liberian debt and has maintained peace in the country since her election.[cxii] "It is essential that international intervention is predicated on local ownership, which alone can guarantee sustainable security and development" (Ebo, 30).[cxiii] Even though some international support might still be required, returning governance and control of the country to a permanent and democratically elected Liberian president started the transition towards autonomy and self-sufficiency.

The Liberian disarmament took place as part of a larger peace-building and transitional justice reform process, which was essential to its long-term success. The establishment of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) was one of these transitional justice measures, though its success was somewhat mixed. The TRC was created to "address issues of impunity, as well as an opportunity for both the victims and perpetrators of human rights violations to share their experiences, in order to get a clear picture of the past to facilitate genuine healing and reconciliation" (Comprehensive Peace Agreement).[cxiv] The TRC took down over 20,000 statements in its first three years of operation, beginning in 2006.[cxv] The TRC provided a forum for people to tell their stories, played an important role in national healing, and facilitated the pursuit of justice by recording testimony of the crimes committed during the war.[cxvi] However, the TRC lacked the ability to conduct criminal trials, which significantly undercut its image as an institution of authority.[cxvii] The people of Liberia were dissatisfied with the lack of criminal prosecutions; they wanted the perpetrators of war crimes to be held accountable and punished.[cxviii] The paucity of correctional infrastructure and funding was the main reason that

war crimes went unpunished, though there was also concern that prosecutions would make people reluctant to tell the truth for fear of repercussion.[cxix] Liberia's failure to address war crimes and crimes against humanity was a major flaw in its transition away from war; however the TRC provided some level of national healing and helped maintain the post-disarmament peace.

Liberia also undertook Security Sector Reform (SSR) in its effort to uphold and further the peace process. Much like the experience with the TRC, the results of SSR have been mixed. The attempt to reform the Liberian National Police (LNP) failed; they remain ineffective and corrupt, contributing little if anything to the peace-building process[cxx] More positively, the US took the lead on reforming the AFL into the new Liberian National Defense Force (LNDF), pledging $200 million to create a new force of 6,500 troops, later adjusted to 2,000.[cxxi] The US made several accomplishments: it established three military bases, demobilized over 13,000 AFL soldiers, and screened recruits for the new army.[cxxii] The screening process for recruits was incredibly vigorous in order to ensure those with human rights abuses and criminal records were not admitted.[cxxiii] Despite these successes, there have been critiques of the new LNDF. There was a noticeable lack of national ownership in the reform process, everything was US-run or subcontracted out to a US owned company, which created a power vacuum in positions of command.[cxxiv] Funding was somewhat erratic, causing progress to be slow and fall behind schedule.[cxxv] 2,000 LNDF soldiers had been trained by 2009 and the process was considered an overall success, but it lacked high-level operational capability and strong, internal leadership.[cxxvi] While not as effective as hoped, the LNDF reform was an important step towards Liberian self-sufficiency in peace-building because it encouraged national ownership of security and helped to

provide jobs for ex-combatants. It contributed to the success of the disarmament process because it reinforced the image of a government that has military capabilities and force behind it.

Liberia's disarmament program faced many difficulties, such as funding shortages and security sector issues, yet it still succeeded. There is room for improvement and growth, particularly in the security sector and transitional justice measures, but the Liberia's accomplishments should not be downplayed because of these shortcomings. It ran an enormous disarmament program that established peace and maintained a cease-fire agreement, which finally put 14 years of civil war to rest.

The experience that each country has with the DDR process will differ based on its unique history and situation, however many factors are universal to DDR, such as the need for a coordinated authority, sufficient funding, and a larger peace-process.[cxxvii] The DDR experience in Sierra Leone shared many commonalities with Liberia, but there were several differences, particularly the UN's level of involvement and the transitional justice process that changed the Sierra Leonean disarmament experience.

Background: Sierra Leone

In 1787 the British established a settlement for freed black slaves in what is now modern-day Freetown, which became an official crown colony in 1808. Sierra Leone was ruled by the British until 1954, when it obtained the power of self-government, which was headed by Sir Milton Margai. This was followed shortly after by national independence in 1961. In 1968 Siaka Stevens took over the government in a military coup and declared himself president for life.[cxxviii] Under his rule, Sierra Leone was declared a one-party state, with the All People's Congress (APC) as the sole political party. His regime was characterized by a level of political corruption that left the country destitute and on the brink of an economic collapse.[cxxix] Stevens retired in

1985 and handed power to the commander of the armed forces, Major-General Joseph Momoh. Momoh's leadership was little better than Stevens'; corruption remained rampant and the economic situation deteriorated even further.[cxxx] In March 1991 the civil war began when the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), headed by Foday Sankoh, invaded Sierra Leone in an effort to topple the corrupt Momoh regime. The Sierra Leonean army fought to defend against the attack at first, but in the following year a group of junior military officers staged a coup against the Momoh government and Captain Valentine Strasser became the new head of state. Strasser continued the fight against the RUF with the aid of the South African mercenary firm Executive Outcomes (EO), until he was ousted by another military coup, this time by his own minister of defense, Brigadier-General Maada Bio. Bio bowed to overwhelming pressure for democratic elections, and in March 1996 Ahmad Tejan Kabbah was elected president. His reign lasted roughly a year before he was deposed by yet another military coup, in collusion with the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). In March 1998 Kabbah was reinstated with the aid of Nigerian-led ECOMOG forces. Throughout the many changes in government fighting continued to devastate the country; costing roughly seventy-thousand lives and displacing over two and a half million people over the course of the war.[cxxxi] After eleven years of devastating fighting the war was finally declared over in January 2002, due in large part to the significant aid of the UN, which was responsible for conducting the post-conflict disarmament of the RUF.[cxxxii]

Policy Development and Implementation in Sierra Leone

Disarmament was first attempted in Sierra Leone under the November 1996 Abidjan Peace Accord (APA), which was signed by Kabbah's government, representing the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), and the Sankoh-led RUF.[cxxxiii] Article V stated that disarmament of combatants would occur upon entry to a designated camp, which would be supervised by the

government of Sierra Leone and the Commission for the Consolidation of Peace (CCP).[cxxxiv] In Article VI the parties agreed to commit to DDR, which would be overseen by a Demobilization and Resettlement Committee (DRC), and to begin the program one month after the signing of the APA[cxxxv] Articles VII and VIII stated that the DRC would identify the areas to be used as demobilization and disarmament sites and that the parties would request assistance from the international community.[cxxxvi] In addition to the DDR program, the APA also created the CCP, amnesty for RUF members, the RUF's transformation into a political party and its inclusion in the political process, restructuring of the military, the removal of the EO and the repatriation of foreign troops out of Sierra Leone.[cxxxvii] It was hoped the APA would finally bring peace, but unfortunately it was never implemented.[cxxxviii]

Disagreements between the CCP and the RUF, such as how many peacekeeping forces were to be deployed, delayed the start of mandated programs.[cxxxix] Then, in March 1997, a group of frustrated RUF members staged a coup against Sankoh and were immediately recognized by the Sierra Leonean government as the new leaders of the RUF.[cxl] The RUF commanders who were loyal to Sankoh interpreted this as a government conspiracy to get rid of their leader and also blamed the Sierra Leonean government for Sankoh's later arrest in Nigeria.[cxli,cxlii] When a peace delegation that included the new RUF leaders went to negotiate with rebel combatants, the Sankoh-loyalists abducted the RUF leaders along with the Sierra Leonean ambassador to Guinea.[cxliii] The instability in the RUF was matched by that of the Sierra Leonean government when it was overthrown in a coup by a group of Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) junior officers in May 1997.[cxliv] The coup was sparked by the officers' fears of recrimination by a democratic government, financial cutbacks to the military, the use of the Kamajors against RUF forces, and corruption within the senior ranks of the military.[cxlv] After the

coup the officers, who formed the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), invited the

RUF to join them and rule in a military junta.[cxlvi] The political turmoil in conjunction with a lack

of commitment by international groups caused the DDR program to collapse; poor funding and

combatant feelings of insecurity caused by a lack of UN forces resulted in disarmament sites not

being properly constructed and a failure to disarm RUF combatants.[cxlvii]

The next endeavor for peace came from the Conakry Agreement (AC), which was signed

in October 1997 by the AFRC/RUF and a five-man committee set up by ECOWAS.[cxlviii] The AC

was different from the APA because it did not make any provisions for a larger peace-building

process; it focused only the immediate transition back to the Kabbah government.[cxlix] It called for

a cease-fire, disarmament and demobilization, complete immunity from prosecution, and the

restoration of the Kabbah government after six months.[cl] Just after his reinstatement, Kabbah

attempted to implement the DDR process, but met with failure almost immediately.[cli] The

process lasted from only September to December of 1998 due to lack of funding, program

weaknesses, and ECOMOG's failure to provide security.[clii] The AFRC/RUF refused to disarm,

instead stockpiling weapons and attacking ECOMOG forces.[cliii] In response ECOMOG attacked

the junta's forces, drove them out of position in Freetown, and forcibly reinstated the Kabbah

regime. The AFRC/RUF responded with the January 1999 attack on Freetown, which caused

horrific casualties among the Freetown civilians.[cliv] After the brutality of the Freetown attack,

Kabbah came under intense international pressure from Nigeria, the US State Department and

Congress, and Britain to create a peace agreement with the junta.[clv]

This international pressure resulted in the formation of the Lomé Peace Accord (LPA) in

July 1999, which was the first comprehensive agreement in Sierra Leone and, most importantly,

the first agreement that successfully established peace, albeit only after its second attempt.[clvi] The

LPA, signed by the government of Sierra Leone and the RUF, called for an immediate cease-fire, the inclusion of the RUF in the government, a blanket amnesty for all combatants, and the implementation of a DDR program.[clvii] Article XVI of the accord addressed the issue of DDR, and laid out four criteria for its implementation. The APA called for a neutral peace keeping force comprised of the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL) and ECOMOG to disarm the combatants of the RUF, the Civilian Defense Forces (CDF), the Sierra Leone Army (SLA), and other paramilitary groups.[clviii] The SLA would be restricted to its barracks and its weapons and ammunitions would be placed under neutral peacekeepers' surveillance.[clix] The UNOMSIL was to be present at all demobilization and disarmament sites to oversee the process and provide security.[clx] Upon signing the agreement the government of Sierra Leone agreed to request funding and assistance from the international community for its DDR program.[clxi] With these provisions laid out, peacekeeping forces initiated the DDR process in October 1999.

The first round of DDR under the LPA took place from October 1999 until May 2000 and disarmed 18,898 combatants, less than half of the target 45,000 set out in UNAMSIL's mandate.[clxii] The UNAMSIL suffered from under-funding, with a $19 million shortage by mid-2000, as well as under-staffing, with the 6,000 troops that were in charge of the DDR process taking four months to fully arrive on scene.[clxiii] In the face of manpower and money shortages, the UNAMSIL also had to deal with non-compliant RUF forces and leaders.[clxiv] Sankoh was uncooperative throughout the process, refusing to allow disarmament in areas such as Kailahun and the Kono district, the region that produced the diamonds that sourced his funding.[clxv] RUF troops attacked UNAMSIL forces at a disarmament camp in Makeni in April and again in May at a camp in Magburaka, resulting in the destruction of the camps in both cases. [clxvi] In the midst of

this unrest, the Nigerian-led ECOMOG forces, which had been supporting the peacekeeping effort, withdrew from Sierra Leone, leaving peacekeeping duties solely to UNAMSIL and effectively removing the only peacekeeping forces with any fighting capability.[clxvii] This resulted in disaster for UNAMSIL's authority, and in the month of May RUF forces on multiple occasions disarmed UN forces, detained its members, and abandoned demobilization camps by the hundreds.[clxviii] The whole DDR process ground to a halt when the RUF abducted 500 UN peacekeepers in May 2000, which spurred further violence and caused the LPA to completely unravel.[clxix] In response to the abduction, civil rights groups and activists staged a protest at Sankoh's house, where his men opened fire on the protestors and killed more than twenty people.[clxx] At this point the British sent troops to intervene in the violence and Sankoh was arrested, along with other RUF leaders.[clxxi] Sankoh's arrest marked a turning point in Sierra Leone's situation; he was replaced as leader of the RUF by Issa Sesay and negotiations between the RUF and the Sierra Leonean government finally began to yield results.[clxxii]

Sesay, the Sierra Leonean government, and other armed groups created the two Abuja Protocols, which were added on to the LPA, and in which they agreed to a cease-fire and a second attempt at implementing the original LPA.[clxxiii] Tripartite meetings between the government, the RUF, and UNAMSIL were held each month to assess the level of disarmament and discuss any hindrances, as well as to select a pair of districts for disarmament, which would be simultaneously disarmed within the month.[clxxiv] DDR implementation was resumed on May 18th, 2001 and began in the Kambia and Port Loko Districts.[clxxv] Disarmament took place at camps around the country and was carried out in five steps: assembly and processing of combatants, collection of personal information and type of weapon or ammunition delivered, collection and disabling of weapons and ammunition, eligibility verification by UN personnel,

and transportation of disarmed combatants to demobilization centers.[clxxvi] At the demobilization centers ex-combatants received reinsertion and travel allowances, benefits packages, and counseling before being discharged into the community, whereupon they had the choice to enter vocational training programs to ease their transition.[clxxvii] They were also provided with trauma healing services, information and sensitization seminars, and civic education during the demobilization process.[clxxviii] This round of disarmament also allowed for group disarmament, where a group of people could present one weapon between them and still be eligible for the program, which was not allowed in prior rounds and helped encourage greater participation.[clxxix] The successful completion of the DDR process was a huge accomplishment; when the process was declared officially over in January 2002, 47,781 ex-combatants had been disarmed and demobilized, and 26,001 weapons and 935,495 rounds of ammunition had been collected during this round of DDR.[clxxx]

Disarmament Analysis in Sierra Leone

There were several significant factors that were essential for success that differed from previous rounds in the implementation of the DDR program under the Abuja Protocols.[clxxxi] The first among these was the difference in relations with the RUF. Once Sankoh was arrested and removed from leadership and replaced by Issa Sesay, the RUF became a much easier force to reckon with.[clxxxii] Sesay was much more diplomatic than Sankoh and held a much friendlier stance toward the UN; he wanted the RUF to be seen as a legitimate political party and so was willing to cooperate during negotiations.[clxxxiii] The number of human rights abuses by the RUF also saw a sharp decline under his rule.[clxxxiv] Sesay agreed to opening access to UNAMSIL of roads that ran through RUF-controlled territories and allowing NGOs to resume work in those areas[clxxxv] In May 2001 he also agreed to return all UN weapons, the release of child combatants,

and to readily disarm and cooperate upon UNAMSIL's deployment to RUF-run areas. [clxxxvi,] [clxxxvii] Sesay's agreements here were in stark contrast to Sankoh, who had made active efforts to disrupt the previous DDR process, as discussed above. Sesay's willingness to negotiate came partially from his wish to turn the RUF into a valid political party, but also from other external pressures, such as the RUF's conflict with Guinea and international crackdowns on the diamond trade.[clxxxviii] The attacks from Guinea weakened the RUF militarily, while the increased regulation of the diamond trade by the Sierra Leonean government through a certification-of-origin system cut into one of the RUF's primary sources of funding.[clxxxix] These external forces combined with Sesay's more complicit leadership contributed considerably to the RUF's compliance during the DDR process. There were still some skirmishes and disagreements between the RUF, UNAMSIL, and the government during the process, but these were relatively minor and were eventually overcome.[cxc]

The second major factor in the success of the Abuja DDR process was the restructuring and improvement of UNAMSIL, which needed to restore credibility after its previous failures.[cxci] The UNAMSIL leadership changed; Lieutenant-General Daniel Opande of Kenya was appointed the new Force Commander and Major-General Martin Agwai of Nigeria was appointed the new Deputy Force Commander.[cxcii] This addressed the conflict that had arisen between Vjay Kumar Jetley and Mohammed Garba, the previous two holders of these posts, which had proved detrimental to UNAMSIL operations.[cxciii] Two new Deputy Special Representatives of the Secretary-General (DSRSG) were appointed; Behrooz Sadry for the department of Political and Administrative Affairs and Alan Doss for the department of Governance and Stabilization.[cxciv] Doss also served as the Humanitarian Coordinator and Resident Coordinator for UNAMSIL and UNDP representative.[cxcv] Doss' appointments greatly improved coordination between the UN

agencies and the mission on the ground; his multiple positions were representative of the UNAMSIL's more integrated approach, intended to improve communication and coordination between different mission components.[cxcvi] In addition to restructuring its leadership, UNAMSIL also grew enormously in scope, increasing from 6,000 troops to 17,455 by March 2001, and costing $700 million a year, making it both the largest and most expensive peacekeeping mission ever created.[cxcvii] This increase in size demonstrated that UNAMSIL was serious about making the DDR process a success and led to increased trust and cooperation from the RUF, who now saw it as more credible and powerful threat.[cxcviii] These changes to leadership and the structural framework of UNAMSIL addressed some of the coordination pitfalls that had led to the downfall of the previous DDR process.

UNAMSIL also began using other operations and tools that were not present in its previous round of DDR. It began supplying new, detailed maps, satellite imagery, and using pre-deployment reconnaissance missions to improve coordination and communication for forces on the ground.[cxcix] A Military Information Cell was also created to develop a network of different sources around the country that provided pivotal information for UNAMSIL on how and when to address problems as they arose.[cc] To restore its image with the people of Sierra Leone UNAMSIL conducted a public information campaign, run by its Public Information Section.[cci] Radio UNAMSIL was broadcast over ninety percent of the country and in a variety of the local languages, including Mende, Temne, Limba, and Krio.[ccii] The station combined popular music with important news and helped bring cohesion and accurate information about the war to the people.[cciii] UNAMSIL also reached out to the people by rebuilding community infrastructure that had been destroyed in the fighting, such as schools and mosques.[cciv] These projects helped improve relations and foster connections between peacekeeping forces and civilians.[ccv] These

initiatives helped create a level of communication and interaction between UNAMSIL and Sierra Leone's civilians that had been absent in prior DDR attempts and which played a significant role in gaining the trust and cooperation of the people. [ccvi]

The final factor that made the disarmament process a success was that it was implemented in the context of larger peace-building and transitional justice measures. Somewhat surprisingly, as it is considered an essential pillar of the DDR process, reintegration efforts were not entirely successful in Sierra Leone.[ccvii] Certainly accomplishments were made; 63,545 combatants were reintegrated and given access to education and a variety of vocational skills programs.[ccviii] However, these accomplishments were mitigated by several significant problems. There were often delays in the receipt of cash payments, sometimes as much as six months, as well as delays in the training process itself.[ccix] Many of the ex-combatants had a very limited education, leading to difficulties integrating into the formal job sector, which was already very difficult to accomplish due to the scarcity of jobs available.[ccx] The job scarcity issue was exacerbated by the fact that most of the jobs that were available were in the agricultural sector, yet the reintegration program focused on mainly vocational skills rather than farming.[ccxi] The majority of ex-combatants opted for skills training because the benefit package given for it far outstripped that given for agricultural sector jobs and the agricultural lifestyle held little appeal for ex-soldiers.[ccxii] So while the reintegration process saw some modicum of achievement, it was overall one of the weaker points in the disarmament success story.

Apart from its mediocre reintegration program, the majority of the Sierra Leone's post-conflict peace-building and transitional justice measures were highly successful and instrumental in maintaining the peace after disarmament had been completed. The democratic elections, held in May 2002, were primarily a peaceful affair and were deemed "as free and fair as possible

given the circumstances…none of the problems reported were serious enough to have affected the outcome" (Olonisakin, p. 113).[ccxiii] Kabbah was reelected president by a large margin and the RUF did not win a single seat in parliament.[ccxiv] UNAMSIL continued to provide support and security throughout the election process; registering voters, conducting voter education campaigns, setting up electoral observer offices throughout the country, and providing security forces in particularly dangerous areas.[ccxv] This was a key move by UNAMSIL in making sure the elections succeeded because without a strong national government or functioning security force to oversee and run the election, someone had to step in to fill the power vacuum. Sierra Leone needed to reform its security sector promptly because "without the establishment and maintenance of the rule of law, all the other investments in the fragile state, and the peace process that is to culminate in democratic elections, will come to nothing" (Malan et al.).[ccxvi] Once the issue of elections and the presidency was settled under the watch of UNAMSIL, the Sierra Leonean government turned its attention to the issue of Security Sector Reform (SSR), particularly the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) and the Sierra Leone Police (SLP).[ccxvii]

The RSLAF had experienced decades of corruption and mismanagement, and by the time the civil war was winding down the situation was so dire that Kabbah was contemplating abolishing the RSLAF altogether.[ccxviii] Instead of getting rid of the army, Kabbah agreed to reform it when he signed the LPA. When the LPA fell apart, the United Kingdom stepped in and took control of reforming the RSLAF.[ccxix] This was accomplished mainly through the International Military Advisory and Training Team (IMATT), which was created to train the RSLAF into a professional and disciplined new army.[ccxx] Through IMATT, British officers would take over key roles in the army and serve as role models until the RSLAF was self-

sufficient, at which point the British officers would gradually be phased out.[ccxxi] IMATT also sponsored the education of soldiers, constructed new military barracks, and oversaw the building of water supply and sanitation facilities.[ccxxii] IMATT did not just train soldiers; it was also intended to build "a culture of loyalty, service and respect for human rights within the armed forces, but it also means a complete departmental overhaul to ensure appropriate civilian oversight and probity" (Malan et al., p. 97).[ccxxiii] While the RSLAF still struggles to become fully self-reliant, it has nonetheless become "a cohesive military force that is accountable, responsive to the democratic authority, and respected and supported by the Sierra Leonean society" (Saunders, 107).[ccxxiv] This overhaul of the RSLAF improved internal and border security, both of which played an important role in maintaining the results achieved by disarmament, as a lack of perceived security often causes regions to destabilize and groups to re-arm themselves.[ccxxv, ccxxvi]

The SSR process in Sierra Leone also involved significantly reforming the SLP to make it more capable, transparent, and accountable to the government.[ccxxvii] The main goal of the SLP's reformation was to make a community police force that could be trusted by both citizens and the national government.[ccxxviii] To keep the peace after combatants had been disarmed, a strong police force was needed to provide a climate of stability and security; civilians had to learn to trust the police to control crime, rather than taking the law into their own hands.[ccxxix] Most of the manpower and funding for the reformation of the SLP came from the British, through the Commonwealth Community Safety and Security Project (CCSSP), and from UNAMSIL, through the UN Civilian Police (CIVPOL).[ccxxx] The CCSSP's mission was to make the SLP an effective and accountable police force, and provided direct funding for officer training, a police communication network, and equipment, such as uniforms, motorcycles, and ambulances.[ccxxxi] A Community Relations Department was created to reach out the civilians in

local communities, in order to emphasize the local needs-based nature of the new SLP.[ccxxxii] A Complaint, Discipline and Investigations Department was established to investigate complaints of police corruption in order to promote civilians' belief that the SLP was accountable to the people and would be subject to consequences for any misconduct.[ccxxxiii] Also established were the highly successful Family Support Units, which provided services to victims of sexual and domestic abuse, as well as raising awareness about these crimes.[ccxxxiv] New recruits and re-enrolled members of the SLP all received training in peace education, conflict resolution, and the proper role of a police force in a democratic, stable country.[ccxxxv] The SLP still faces some problems, such as complete self-sufficiency, but for the most part the reformation of the police force has proven successful.[ccxxxvi] Reforming the SLP helped to maintain the success of the disarmament program because "for the best chance of building faith in the peace process, effective disarmament needs to be coupled with ensuring security on the ground through effective policing" (Furley & May, 64).[ccxxxvii] Creating an SLP that was capable of bringing real security to the country also helped transition the country from its war-torn state of lawlessness towards becoming a more democratic and structured nation.[ccxxxviii]

Another transitional justice reform that helped maintain the peace post-disarmament was the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). The TRC's purpose was "to create an impartial historical record of violation and abuses of human rights and international humanitarian law related to the armed conflict in Sierra Leone" (Dugal, 32).[ccxxxix] Its mandate was "to address impunity, break the cycle of violence, provide a forum for both the victims and perpetrators of human rights violations to tell their story, get a clear picture of the past in order to facilitate genuine healing and reconciliation" (Sierra Leone Peace Accord).[ccxl] Despite serious budget limitations, the TRC managed to gather almost 10,000 statements because of the widespread,

participation by civilians who wanted their stories told.[ccxli,ccxlii] The TRC placed a great deal of focus on addressing issues that were specific to Sierra Leone, such as sensitization towards victims of sexual abuse and amputee victims, to make sure that it reached out to the groups that most needed their stories told.[ccxliii] While the TRC provided an important forum for truth telling and symbolic healing, most of its impact came from its ability to make recommendations to the government, which was required to follow-up and take all possible steps to implement these recommendations.[ccxliv] The TRC's recommendation, coupled with pressure from civil-society, led to the establishment a reparations program for victims of the war, which provided services to amputees and other wounded persons, victims of sexual violence, and children.[ccxlv] There was some discontent with the TRC; some citizens simply wanted to forget the war and others were angry that ex-combatants received benefits packages while they received a mostly symbolic forum for truth-telling.[ccxlvi,ccxlvii] Widespread citizen participation and the eventual establishment of the victims' reparation fund helped address these issues, and the TRC provided a "way to erode barriers between fighters and civilians" (Keen, 302).[ccxlviii] The TRC provided a sense of justice for civilians after the war and led to the establishment of a reparation fund for victims, both of which helped maintain the peace and transition towards a more stable, healed nation.

The other transitional justice measure that went hand in hand with the TRC was the Special Court for Sierra Leone (SCSL), created by the Sierra Leonean government and the UN. The two were intended to complement each other; the TRC focused on civil society and healing through truth telling, while the SCSL addressed war crimes through trials and sanctions.[ccxlix] The SCSL was intended to remedy the climate of impunity and the "deep-seated popular anger" that had developed, where many civilians saw combatants emerging from the conflict without consequence, and in some cases with better benefits than the victims (Keen, 300).[ccl] The

objective of the SCSL was to "prosecute persons who bear the greatest responsibility for serious violations of international humanitarian law and Sierra Leonean law committed in the territory of Sierra Leone since 30 November 1996" (Agreement, 1).[ccli] To this end the SCSL indicted thirteen men for crimes against humanity in 2003, including Sankoh, Sesay, and Liberia's Taylor, as well as other leaders of the RUF, CDF, and AFRC.[cclii] Sankoh died in custody before his trial concluded, Sesay was convicted and received 52 years in prison, and Taylor was convicted and received 50 years in prison.[ccliii] The other group-leaders that were indicted were all convicted, and received sentences ranging from 6 years to more than 50 years.[ccliv] These indictments were a necessary step for the government to regain credibility as a mechanism of law enforcement and to address the atrocities committed during the war.[cclv] The SCSL greatly contributed to keeping the peace after disarmament was completed because it demonstrated what could happen to leaders of militant groups and satisfied the people's need for justice. The government's ability to bring sanctions against enemy combatants was an important show of the rule of law and responsiveness to the demands of its citizens.

Sierra Leone had an incredibly effective disarmament campaign, due mostly to UNAMSIL efforts. It disarmed and disbanded all armed groups, provided for their reintegration into society, and executed SSR and transitional justice measures. UNAMSIL is hailed as the model peacekeeping mission, carrying out successful, democratic elections and establishing a climate of security throughout the country.

Conclusions and Comparisons

Liberia and Sierra Leone both carried out successful post-conflict disarmament campaigns due to their governments' coordination with the UN and combatant groups, as well as their commitment to establishing peace through SSR and transitional justice reform. Both

countries experiences were similar in many ways, but Sierra Leone made several accomplishments that distinguished its program as the more successful of the two. Sierra Leone had the benefit of a much larger and better funded UN mission, which provided a higher level of security and stability while the country transitioned from war to peace and carried out elections. Once it was increased to its full size, UNAMSIL was also better equipped than UNMIL was to handle the influx of combatants during the disarmament and subsequent reintegration phase. UNMIL suffered from poor funding, which compromised its ability to carry out a thorough reintegration program and provide security. Lack of funds coupled with more participants than expected meant that UNMIL could not provide the level of reintegration programs that had been originally planned, particularly in the area of social reintegration. Sierra Leone also had an advantage in SSR, due to the British involvement in the reformation of the RSLAF. They managed to create a functioning, cohesive army that could stand primarily by itself. RSLAF were remade into an army that the people could trust, was accountable to the democratic government, and could provide security to its people, which was necessary to prevent armed groups from reengaging in fighting. This was something that the US failed to do in Liberia. The LNDF was an improvement from the totally corrupt and ineffective army that came before it, and its reformation was an important step towards achieving national security and autonomy, but it remained dependent on the US and struggled to achieve independence. Sierra Leone also successfully reformed the SLP, again with the aid of the British. This provided significant security gains and increased the trust of the people in their government to provide them with safety. In contrast, the LNP remained largely ineffective, rife with corruption, and unable to stand alone, instead relying on CIVPOL for security. The reformation of the LNP was a step towards trying to independently achieve security and did see some measure of success, but it was

not able to provide the same level of security that the SLP could give. Sierra Leone also created

the SCSL, which was endowed with the power to make indictments and mete out sanctions,

which delivered justice for crimes against humanity and satisfied the wish of the people for

retribution and closure. The government also acted on the recommendation of the Sierra Leonean

TRC by implementing a reparation fund for victims, which assuaged peoples' anger that

combatants were receiving better treatment than injured civilians. Liberia failed to create an

institution that could hand out punitive sanctions, which created anger among its people that war

crimes would go unpunished. Its TRC did provide a measure of reconciliation and dialogue, but

it did not deliver the type of justice that many had hoped for. Sierra Leone's disarmament

program yielded better long term results than Liberia's because of Sierra Leone's superior

resources, which enabled it to carry out more thorough and effective justice and security reforms,

creating a more stable and self-sufficient nation. Despite these shortcomings Liberia's

disarmament was still considered a success because it disarmed and demobilized the armed

groups within its borders and established peace. While there were clearly more successes in

Sierra Leone than Liberia, both countries disarmament programs were successful because they

disarmed the combatant groups within their borders and established peace.

However, this does not mean that the Sierra Leone method of disarmament and its

subsequent SSR and transitional justice strategies constitute a perfect solution for all situations.

The DDR process must adapt to the specific circumstances of each country and conflict; there is

no one size fits all solution, so while many lessons can be learned from past cases, the unique

context of each situation must be considered.[cclvi] For instance, the status of the security sector

may vary greatly from one country to another in a post-conflict situation. If a country has a

totally non-functioning police force and army, then those areas will require a great deal of

attention. These institutions will need to be reformed if they are corrupt and retrained to be accountable to the government and people. In each country requiring a disarmament program the security situation must be independently assessed; it cannot be assumed that because the security sector is corrupt in one country that will be that way in every other place. Attention to the individual characteristics of a country's situation and the subsequent tailoring of the disarmament process to address the issues is essential for success.

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