DEMOCRATIZATION *and* HUMAN SECURITY *in* POSTWAR SIERRA LEONE

Edited by Marda Mustapha *and* Joseph J. Bangura

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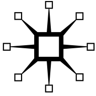

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Foreword

Salone, as it is affectionately called, is a country that that leaves nobody untouched. The foreign visitor arriving by plane during daytime will be received with spectacular views over long white sandy beaches, a beautiful blue bay, and a city that spreads out between the lush green mountains of the Western Peninsular and the Atlantic Ocean. Coming closer, one can also make out the grey water of creeks spilling their waste water into the bay, the typical pattern of crowded shanty towns, and the wounds of deforestation and erosions along the mountain slopes. Once on the ground, the traveler is welcomed by a large crowd of very friendly but apparently unemployed mostly very young Sierra Leoneans amid visible deep poverty and a totally confusing organization. This contrast between the country's natural beauty and its charming people on the one hand and its yawning problems and the difficulties of finding workable solutions on the other is what dominates Sierra Leone's political life to this day. It is also what ultimately this book is about.

Democratization and Human Security in Postwar Sierra Leone is a book that could hardly have come at a more appropriate time. Sierra Leone, a country that has barley recovered from its exceptionally brutal 11-year long civil war (1991–2001), is now suffering one of the most devastating outbreaks of the Ebola epidemic. Probably never before has the relationship between democracy and human security been more evident.

Sierra Leone, a country born with the scars of transatlantic slavery and the exploitation of what would later be called blood diamonds, did not have a good start at independence. In its first 40 years since independence in 1961, the country had a series of coups and attempted coups, 31 years of authoritarian military and one-party rules, and 11 years of a deadly and senseless rebel war. In the process, anarchy set in and the country became a failed state, creating hell on earth for ordinary Sierra Leoneans and the subsequent near disintegration of the country. These problems were essentially structural; the decline of Sierra Leone's democracy led to

bad governance and subsequent breakdown of human security culminating into war and destruction.

In 2004, Sierra Leone's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) concluded that the causes for the rebel war were the "endemic greed, corruption and nepotism that deprived the nation of its dignity and reduced most people to a state of poverty [in which] successive political elites plundered the nation's assets, including its mineral riches, at the expense of the national good." And about the country's institutions the TRC said, "government accountability was non-existent, institutions meant to uphold human rights, such as the courts and civil society, were thoroughly co-opted by the executive." These are very strong words indeed! They need to be remembered if this lovely country is not to slide again into a downward spiral with all its disastrous effects.

For the last 13 years, Sierra Leone had peace. However, the outbreak of the Ebola in 2014 could jeopardize all of this. The Ebola crisis goes much deeper than the numbers of those killed by the disease; its fallout on the country's economy, on its intercommunal relations, on its social services, and ultimately also on its still fragile democratic system cannot yet be fathomed. The feeling of helplessness would now only amplify the destructive effects of Ebola. What Sierra Leone now needs more than ever is to strengthen its resolve to bring the country forward! For this it would need an open and inclusive debate about what went wrong, about solutions, about the way forward. What would a post-Ebola Sierra Leone look like? What should be its priorities? What would be the role of the government, of political parties, of parliament, of the justice system, and of the country's civil society, its sizable diaspora, its religious and traditional leaders, its media, and its general public in overcoming this crisis and its aftermath? If Sierra Leone would find the strength for such a public debate that involves all aspects of its society, this country could emerge from the Ebola crisis stronger with better institutions and a more self-reliant society.

For such a debate this book could make a great contribution! And that is why the chapters should primarily be directed at Sierra Leone's political, economic, religious, traditional, civil and academic elites. Surely, not everybody will agree with all of their findings, but this should not prevent discussing them. It would be a great shame if this book would be pushed aside because of narrow party politics; Sierra Leone needs such books.

Marda Mustapha and Joseph Bangura, two eminent Sierra Leonean academics, compiled and edited this book. Both bear witness to the

exceptional diversity and vitality of Sierra Leonean intellectual community around the world. It would be a great sign of national maturity if Sierra Leone could make greater use of the many talents in its expatriate community for its own development.

Michael von der Schulenburg
United Nations Executive Representative of the
Secretary-General to Sierra Leone
2008–2012

Democratization and Human Security in Sierra Leone: An Introduction

Marda Mustapha

Democratization, like democracy, is a contested term in governance studies, and, as such, has elicited varied definitions, conceptualizations, and theorizing. Early conceptualizations were narrowly focused on political transformation from an undemocratic political system to an accountable and representative government (Grugel 2002). Laurence Whitehead (2002) cautioned, however, that the term should not be defined by "some fixed and timeless objective criterion," which often invokes the turnover test or transformation alluded to by Grugel. Such a definition, Whitehead argues, is at once both too "permissive for some cases and exacting for others." To avoid such, Whitehead conceives democratization as a "long term, dynamic and open-ended process . . . progress towards . . . rule based, more consensual and more participatory type of politics" (26–27).

Definitional disagreements notwithstanding, there is agreement that democratization is both contingent and dynamic, that countries have different experiences with democratization, that there are recognizable democratization patterns, and that the end goal of democratization is democratic governance. These patterns of democratization are influenced by basic elements, including, but not limited to, a process that allows for competition, cooperation, conflict, and a unifying outlook and the importance of the agency of individuals in the decision-making process in democratization (Rustow 1970). While many would agree that the end goal of democratization is democracy, it should be noted that democracy is not an end in itself but rather another process aimed at achieving, among other things, state security, institutional stability, and, with a recent paradigm shift, human security.

It is our contention therefore, that democratization in Sierra Leone must lead to both democracy and human security, but not necessarily in a linear fashion. This argument is born of the fact that there are essential relationships between democratization and democracy, on one hand, and human security, on the other. The relationship between democratization and human security is epitomized in the socioeconomic and political guarantees of individuals' freedom from fear and freedom from want. In short, democratization is not only limited to salvaging the state but is also instrumental to meeting human needs (IDEA 2006). Both state and human security are confronted by similar threats notwithstanding the fact that the state, through democratization, can develop the capacity to provide the necessary institutions for human security (Landman 2006).

As an analytical tool for human development, the term "human security" was used in a United Nations Development Program report (UNDP 1994: 23) that defined it as "first, safety from such chronic threats as hunger, disease and repression. And . . . protection from sudden and hurtful disruptions in the patterns of daily life—whether in homes, in jobs or in communities." Scholars like Graham and Nana Poku (2000), Hammerstad (2000), and King and Murray (2001) have reoriented focus to individuals as beneficiaries of human security, marking a major paradigm shift in security studies, from both the analytical and the functional perspectives.

Human dignity encapsulates what Kofi Annan (2000) contends as the actualization of "freedom from want, freedom from fear, and the freedom of future generations to inherit a healthy natural environment," which he calls "interrelated building blocks of human—and therefore national—security." Human security in a nutshell includes economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security, and political security.

This book shows that notwithstanding the semblance of state security and institutional stability, concerns about human security caused by corruption, discrimination, persistent poverty and (youth) unemployment, and an all-pervasive neopatrimonialism in government continue to pose daunting obstacles to democratization. The inability of the state in Sierra Leone to fully address these challenges leads to questions about its relevance and strength, a situation reminiscent of the years leading up to the civil war. In short, this volume contends that the democratization process in Sierra Leone has failed to adequately deal with the threats to human security. The book is divided into two broad thematic sections: the first deals with the democratization of institutions considered necessary

for democracy to take hold in a country, while the second delineates the absence of human security in key areas of social and economic life.

The literature on postwar Sierra Leone has for the most part focused on the democratization process with a heavy emphasis on state and institution building (Bangura and UNRISD 1999; Bangura 2000; Bellows and Miguel 2006; Fanthorpe 2006). This focus has been a consequence of a widely held belief that the absence of (or the presence of weak/nonfunctional) democratic institutions led to the eventual collapse of the state. Reconstruction of collapsed states like Sierra Leone invariably meant the creation of what are considered democratic institutions, which in turn, it is assumed, would prevent further breakdown. As such, multilateral agencies like the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, Department for International Development, and other donor agencies focused almost exclusively on institution building. These institutions include, but are not limited to, the police, military, various branches of government, and the National Electoral Commission.

The focus on democratic institutions as a foundation of state reconstruction is not unique to Sierra Leone. It is however a recent phenomenon that emerged in the 1990s after the end of the Cold War and the collapse of communism, a departure from past practice where collapsed and dysfunctional states were annexed by more powerful ones (Ottaway 2002). From the standpoint of donor agencies and international actors in Sierra Leone, the goal of state reconstruction was to facilitate democratization through institution building and eventually to hold democratic elections. International development partners and donor agencies that pushed for institution building in reconstructing postwar Sierra Leone did not seem to pay much, if any, attention to human security. This book seeks to move the discussion on Sierra Leone beyond democratization, postwar state security, and state and institution building, to exploring the relationship between the country's democratization process and human security.

Democratization in Sierra Leone

Influenced by global events that started in the last two decades of the twentieth century, such as the fall of communism in several countries across the world and the Berlin Wall, Sierra Leone joined other undemocratic nations in the democratization frenzy. Joseph Momoh, then president of Sierra Leone, impaneled a thirty-five-member constitutional review committee to review and recommend alternatives to the 1978 One Party Republican Constitution and governance structure in Sierra Leone. The new constitution, later known as the Peter Tucker Constitution, was adopted in 1991 and subsequently reinstated multiparty politics in Sierra Leone. However,

a military coup in 1992, led by Valentine Strasser and his National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC), ousted the government of President Momoh and suspended the constitution. This was to be the first in a series of hiccups in the democratization of Sierra Leone.

In November 1993, the NPRC yet again announced a timetable for returning the country to multiparty democracy. The NPRC subsequently released a "Working Document on the Constitution," which served as a road map that led to a constitutional referendum in 1995. The continuation of the democratization process was threatened by a coup d'état led by the deputy leader of the NPRC, Brigadier General Julius Maada Bio, who, notwithstanding the fears that he would derail the democratization process, conducted presidential and parliamentary elections in February 1996. The dominant paradigm of democratization would characterize the elections in 1996 as a completion of the democratization process, but the Sierra Leone situation raises serious questions about that assertion. Democratization in Sierra Leone was more or less a stop-and-go experience rather than a linear march to democracy.

With large swaths of the country under rebel control, the reintroduction of democracy in Sierra Leone was to prove a hasty decision. The rebels not only challenged the legitimacy of state authority, but also posed an existential threat to the state by steadily capturing more territory and getting ever closer to the capital. This phenomenon and the subsequent near-complete breakdown of state authority question the prudence of calling for multiparty elections while the war was still raging. In fact, the security situation in the country was such that Chief Electoral Commissioner James Jonah suggested a proportional representation electoral system and it was agreed at a national consultative conference (Bintumani I) in 1995 that a closed list proportional representation electoral system be used instead of the first-past-the-post system.

In March 1997, barely a year after the 1996 general elections, the new, democratically elected government of Sierra Leone was overthrown in yet another coup, this time by a group of soldiers who called themselves the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). The soldiers suspended the newly implemented 1991 constitution and invited the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), a rebel group that had waged war on the state since 1991, to join them in governance (Truth and Reconciliation Commission 2004). After series of failed negotiations with the coup plotters, the Nigerian-led Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group initiated military action to dislodge the AFRC and RUF from the city on February 5, 1998. Democratic rule was subsequently restored but only for a short while as the combined forces of the RUF and AFRC successfully attacked and recaptured the capital city, Freetown, nine months later on

January 6, 1999. It took a few weeks to dislodge the rebels from the city. The last attack and capture of the city brought the government of Sierra Leone and the international community to the realization that the possibility of winning peace through war was slim. The Lomé Peace Accord was later signed in 2000 between the government of Sierra Leone and the rebels (Mustapha and Bangura 2010). While this accord also experienced few hiccups, it was largely responsible for the stability in the country that led to the next elections in 2002.

The 2002 elections paved the way for institution building for democratic governance in postwar Sierra Leone. It must be noted at this juncture that building institutions for democracy has been part of Sierra Leone's political history albeit through constitutional developments fraught with consequences, as Joseph Bangura argues in Chapter One. According to Bangura, constitutional development, as introduced by the colonial government, set in motion ethnic entrepreneurism which affects the political landscape in the country to this day. In short, the introduction of constitutions and the creation of legislative assemblies making provisions for Sierra Leonean representation, beginning with the Stevenson Constitution of 1924 up to independence, triggered a series of events that culminated into elites using ethnicity as a tool to gain and maintain power. While postindependence discourses on ethnicity focused on language and region, Bangura also demonstrates that the initial discourse on ethnicity during the early processes of constitutional development in colonial Sierra Leone focused exclusively on the divide it created between the elite Creoles and the traditional Chiefs of the protectorate. In the same vein, during the postwar institution building, the traditional Chiefs became an important aspect of institutional rebuilding and the reform process for peace building.

Joseph Lansana Kormoh argues in Chapter Two, however, that the reform trajectory employed for the institution of chieftaincy was not conducive for liberal peace building. Furthermore, what was generally referred to as reform was actually a restoration of the institution of chieftaincy. The institution as conceived for the maintenance of liberal peace in Sierra Leone is heavily influenced by Western conceptions of liberal democracy or leadership. Kormoh argues that traditional institutions such as chieftaincy should incorporate indigenous factors that inform the lives and experiences of the people for whom the institution is being reformed.

Like the institution of chieftaincy, reforms were also implemented within law enforcement, specifically the police force, which had been in disrepute since independence (Freida Ibiduni M'Cormack, James B. M. Vincent, and Joseph P. Chris Charley, Chapter Three). Notwithstanding decimation by the war, political interference, and cross-national problems like trafficking, reform programs in the police were largely successful. These reforms, the

authors argue, in a democratic institution like the police force, are relational to human security in Sierra Leone. The reforms of institutions that were undertaken in Sierra Leone were meant to ensure not only the democratization process but also the sustenance and consolidation of democracy.

Participation in the democratization process was not limited to domestic organizations, citizens living within the state, or foreign organizations. In Chapter Four, Mariane Ferme shows that Sierra Leoneans living in the diaspora contributed and participated in many ways to the democratization process within the country. The affordability of communication tools and personal computers enhanced the ability of Sierra Leoneans in the diaspora to create cyber communities where they participated. For instance, some Sierra Leonean journalists in the diaspora were able to challenge what they perceived as government crackdown on the press by creating public space on the Internet to publish news that otherwise would not have been allowed in the country in the latter part of the 1990s. Diaspora participation in politics was by no means limited to cyberspace, many Sierra Leoneans returned home to run for national office. Ferme contends that 40 percent of all paramount chieftaincy offices were occupied by Sierra Leoneans from the diaspora and they were considered good resources for development of their chiefdom. In addition, the diaspora regularly contest general elections. Some consider such participation positive, but Ferme points out some of the disadvantages of Sierra Leonean diaspora returning home to occupy elected office.

Problems with diaspora participation in the democratization process, especially contesting elections, seem to be a microcosm of some of the problems with elections in Sierra Leone. One frequently used indicator of a country achieving democracy after a democratization process is elections, and Sierra Leone's case is no different. The 2012 elections were the first postwar elections held without much international community assistance and/or interference, and they were declared relatively peaceful and free and fair by organizations like the United Nations, the British Commonwealth, and the European Union, an indicator of democratic consolidation. In Chapter Five, I argue that the international organizations' characterization of the 2012 elections is wrong, that the elections were manipulated, and that Sierra Leone is actually a semi-authoritarian regime and not a consolidating democracy.

Human (In)Security in Sierra Leone

Human security in Sierra Leone includes, but is not limited to, protection from natural disasters, disease, and epidemics of malaria cholera, Ebola virus disease (EVD), and HIV/AIDS; protection from maternal and child

mortality; and access to health care. Beyond these securities, the following human security issues have also been manifested in Sierra Leone: economic security, food security, health security, and political security. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) report, among other things, highlighted economic insecurity and political insecurity as contributing factors to the outbreak of the war. The TRC (2004) concludes that "the central cause of the war was endemic greed, corruption and nepotism that deprived the nation of its dignity and reduced most people to a state of poverty."

It went on to state: "Institutions meant to uphold human rights, such as the courts and civil society, were thoroughly co-opted by the executive" (TRC 2004). The TRC report in other words clearly stated that the Sierra Leone war was a consequence of pervasive human insecurity reflecting "an extraordinary failure of leadership on the part of all those involved in government, public life and civil society" (TRC 2004). While the absence of war improves human security in some ways (Kaldor and Vincent 2006), this volume contends that notwithstanding the efforts being made by various groups, certain aspects of human security in Sierra Leone are precariously near if not at the prewar level, as the chapters of the human security section show. One sector the TRC held responsible for the failure of the state was composed of civil society organizations (TRC 2004).

The importance of civil society in the democratization process in Sierra Leone cannot be underestimated as by definition, civil society "holds everyone accountable for their actions, it . . . reflects the will of the people . . . it pursues equity and justice, human rights for all, . . . it reflects and upholds the dignity of all people" (Poverty Eradication Network 2007).

Groups ranging from nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) to civil society organizations (CSOs) and community-based organizations (CBOs) were active participants in the democratization process in Sierra Leone. All things being equal, they were expected to negotiate and advocate for issues affecting human security. However, while the dominant paradigms of democracy would identify such participation as evidence of the development of democratic pluralism and human security, Diane Szántó takes a different view of NGO and CSO participation.

In Chapter Six, Szántó argues that the NGO and CSO boom in Sierra Leone was more a scramble for donor funds and had very little, if anything, to do with democratic transformation. She further argues that the NGO and CSO boom had very little local Sierra Leonean agency as there was political interference from international organizations which influenced grassroots dynamics. Szántó calls such interference and influence the "NGOization" of civil society. Outside influences invariably reinforced the very patrimonialism that the local NGOs and CBOs were supposed to challenge. These interventions, both global and local in the development

of civil society in Sierra Leone, ended up recalibrating the functions of the groups to simply containing potential civil unrests. Szántó suggests that getting rid of the West-bound definition of civil society is important in recognizing genuine forces of transformation and the subsequent invigoration of the concept as a whole.

The donor-driven civil society phenomenon is echoed by Vandy Kanyako in Chapter Seven albeit in the context of peace building during the democratization process. Kanyako, like Szántó, highlights the weaknesses of CSOs due to the focus on donor-driven service delivery, arguing that such focus impedes CSO creativity and growth of grassroots advocacy. In short, the growth of CSOs did not create alternative public spheres for effective engagement with the most critical areas of the country's peace building—good governance, accountability, and human rights.

While the TRC report focuses on civil society and internal factors (institutions, courts) as responsible for the lack of human security in Sierra Leone, Conteh-Morgan in Chapter Eight cites internal and external factors for the food insecurity in Sierra Leone. Situating his argument in historical context, Conteh-Morgan argues that these factors include, but are not limited to, the introduction of cash crops during the colonial period, price suppression by the Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Board, foreign aid to countries like Sierra Leone, low budgetary allocation to agriculture, gender inequality, and smuggling as contributing factors to food insecurity in Sierra Leone. Since food security is still widespread in Sierra Leone more than ten years after the war, Conteh-Morgan concludes, among other things, that human security at the individual level could lead to failure or collapse of the state, especially if such individual insecurities become pervasive. In addition, internal and external actors, according to Conteh-Morgan, have to ensure and enhance basic human security as a foundation for an all-encompassing human security, which includes health care.

Like food, health is also an integral aspect of human insecurity in Sierra Leone. In Chapter Nine, Fredline M'Cormack-Hale and Fredanna M'Cormack examine the Free Health Care Initiative (FHCI) that was adopted in 2010 in Sierra Leone. The initiative was to accord access to health care for the most vulnerable population in Sierra Leone—women and children. The authors argue that an improved implementation of the initiative will require a continuing synthesized domestic and international effort. Following a review of the health care system in Sierra Leone, the chapter discusses the extent and focus of the FHCI coverage and how the initiative is financed. The chapter concludes that while there are optimistic signs of improvement in the health situation of the target groups, there are also signs of an overstretched system. As such, the FHCI should seek ways of

building on the strengths of what is locally available, like CSOs, to help ensure successful policy implementation and local ownership.

In Chapter Ten, Jenise R. DePinto's discussion of EVD as a total disease underscores the terrible condition of the health care system of Sierra Leone—continuing the arguments put forward by M'Cormack-Hale and M'Cormack, Szántó, and Kanyako in their respective chapters—and the general condition of human (in)security in Sierra Leone as a whole. DePinto lays out the role and consequences of corruption in the spread of EVD. These consequences manifest themselves in critical areas of human security such as food insecurity due to a reduction in agricultural output and economic insecurity as household incomes dropped, gross domestic product shrank, government revenue depleted, and manufacturing output fell. In short, this chapter effectively elucidates the democratization, governance, and human security nexus that this volume presents.

The concluding chapter encapsulates the entire discussion and specifically delineates the overarching rationale for the perspective adopted in this volume. It makes a case for the importance of examining the relationship between democratization and human security in understanding governance as a whole in Sierra Leone. It acknowledges the shortcomings of the present governance outlook in the country while pointing out promises and suggesting some solutions.

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Section 1

Democratizing Sierra Leone

1

Constitutional Development and Ethnic Entrepreneurism in Sierra Leone: A Metahistorical Analysis

Joseph J. Bangura

Introduction

This chapter explores the history of constitutional development and its impact on identity formation and politics in colonial and postcolonial Sierra Leone, particularly Freetown. It argues that the use of the majoritarian principle by the colonial government created a recipe for ethnic entrepreneurism and identity politics in the colony and postcolony. The elitist Creoles and ascendant Temne in colonial Freetown, the seat of power, configured and shaped their identities for hegemonic advantages. A careful examination of historical documents shows that Sierra Leone's political trajectory is characterized by ethnic tension driven by the desire for dominance of the state apparatus. In other words, members of different ethnic communities flocked in and out of various ethnic groups for instrumental reasons. The chapter notes that the circumstances and factors which resulted in the adoption of various constitutions between 1863 and 1951 induced a labyrinthine process of ethnic entrepreneurism and ethnoregional politics. The principles which undergirded the various constitutions impelled the dominant ethnic groups to adopt measures that gave them demographic advantage over others. The atmosphere created by this process resulted in the colony–protectorate divide, which in turn created the atmosphere for the formation of Sierra Leone's second oldest

political party, the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) and its main rival, the All People's Congress (APC). As Crawford Young (2012) argues, the colonial past shaped the contemporary African state and its intrastate and international relations. He also states that "ethnicity is intimately tied to high politics at the state level" (Young 2012, 314). In reinforcing this point, Englebert and Dunn note that "the crystallization of social and political roles along ethnic lines by the colonizers allowed for an increase in the political salience of ethnic identity" (Englebert and Dunn 2013).

The bulk of the primary data for this chapter was obtained through field work carried out in Sierra Leone between 2003 and 2010 and a research visit to the National Archives in the United Kingdom in 2012. Other primary sources of information were obtained from colonial newspapers in various libraries in the United States.

For purposes of organization, the chapter is divided into two sections and the conclusion. The first section surveys Sierra Leone's constitutional trajectory between 1863 and 1978. As one of the oldest British colonies in sub-Saharan Africa, Sierra Leone became one of the first states in West Africa to experience constitutional order in the nineteenth century. However, the process also created a milieu which produced a sharp divide between the colony and protectorate. It shows that the actions of the colonial authorities undermined political cohesion and created the ambience which undermined group solidarity. The second section examines the complex historical process which influenced the construction and instrumental use of identity by the two dominant groups, the "Creoles" and the "Temne" in the colony. It shows that the insistence on the majoritarian principle as a policy by the colonial administration spurred both groups to construct and to some extent "invent" their ethnic identities over time for hegemonic and sociopolitical advantage. This speaks to Englebert and Dunn's (2013) observation that "ethnic identity can be invented, constructed, or rendered more or less salient" (70). The conclusion underlines the historic link between constitutional development and ethnoregional political alliances in the colony and postcolony. It draws attention to the role of ethnic entrepreneurs in configuring the identity of ethnic groups for material advantage.

Constitutional Development and the Politics of Elite Representation

To appreciate the long tradition of identity formation in the capital of Sierra Leone, a survey of its constitutional trajectory is in order. The history of the founding of the Sierra Leone colony has been the subject of

numerous scholarly discourses. Thus its examination in this chapter will be cursory.

In the eighteenth century, Sierra Leone became the first British experiment in social engineering in West Africa with the resettlement of four batches of freed slaves—the Black Poor, Nova Scotians, Maroons, and Recaptives, all of whom I refer to as "repatriates"—from Europe and the Americas. British philanthropists who secured the land (comprising Freetown and the peninsula towns) to resettle the former slaves supervised the settlement until the British government assumed its responsibility and declared it a Crown Colony in 1808. The repatriates and their descendants lived alongside the original occupants of the territory (Fyfe 1962; Porter 1963; Bangura 2006). The colonial authorities created a series of laws to govern the colony without formally adopting a constitution.

Nonetheless, in 1863, Sierra Leone became the first British colony in West Africa to adopt a constitution—the Blackhall Constitution named after the then governor—comprising Legislative and Executive Councils. The constitution came into force as a result of the mulish agitation of the Mercantile Association in 1853 forcing the secretary of state to act decisively. The petitioners resolutely objected to the idea of taxation without representation (Hargreaves 1956; Collier 1970). In response, Governor Blackhall introduced a constitution granting Africans a symbolic representation on the Legislative Council. The new constitution allowed only two African representatives to sit on a Legislative Council dominated by Europeans; no African representation was allowed on the Executive Council (Collier 1970). The Legislative Council formulated laws for the colony, while the Executive Council comprising the Governor, the Chief Justice, the Queen's Advocate, the Colonial Secretary, and the Officer Commanding the Troops, executed the laws. In spite of the shortcomings of the Blackhall Constitution, its introduction inaugurated the beginning of constitutional rule based on British principles and ideals in Sierra Leone and British West Africa.

It is important to note that the provisions of the 1863 Constitution restricted its jurisdiction to territories comprising the colony (i.e., Freetown and the peninsula towns) and excluded the Sierra Leone hinterland, until 1895. In 1896, the colonial government caved in to pressure and expanded its territorial annexations to include greater Sierra Leone, that is, the hinterland comprising territories within and beyond the immediate vicinity of the colony. Political and economic factors influenced the desire for this territorial expansion. The colony traders who engaged in commercial transactions in the hinterland wanted protection for the trade from the wars in the interior (sometimes erroneously described as "tribal"). Apparently, colony traders and the colonial administration attributed the decline in the colony's revenue base to incessant wars in the hinterland. In addition,

Britain feared a possible assault on its sphere of influence by France, her main European rival. The French possessed large tracts of territories including Guinea, which bordered the hinterland of Sierra Leone. The above factors goaded the British colonial authorities into action. Thus they declared a protectorate over the hinterland in 1896 (Fyfe 1964; Fyle 1982).

The declaration of a protectorate over the hinterland of Sierra Leone had broad sociopolitical ramifications. First, the declaration of a protectorate meant that a new constitution was to be introduced to unite the two territories—the colony and the protectorate—under a unitary administration. Second, it meant that protectorate and colony politicians were to share the same political environment—a phenomenon colony elites did not envisage and loathed throughout the colonial period although the colonial authorities declared openly that descendants of repatriates were British citizens while protectorate denizens remained British Protected Persons (Bangura 2009).

The inadequacies of the 1863 Constitution prompted the adoption of a new constitution in 1924 by the new Governor—Ransford Slater. The Slater Constitution, like the Blackhall Constitution, established Legislative and Executive Councils with much bigger representations. The Legislative Council comprised 12 official members and 10 unofficial members. Of the 10 unofficial members, 3 elected representatives came from the colony and 3 were elected from the protectorate while 2 elected members represented European interests. Overall, Africans had 8 representatives on the 22-member legislative body (Collier 1970). The adoption of the Slater Constitution proved especially notable in the political history of Sierra Leone. For the first time, the constitution brought the colony and the protectorate under a unitary administration based in the colony (Freetown). Aside from this, by bringing both territories under one administration, the constitution exposed the cultural and ideological chasm between the two regions. Colony representatives on the Legislative Council resented and rejected the presence of protectorate representatives, particularly the chiefs, as members of the council. They argued that the chiefs lacked the ability to engage in meaningful deliberations because of their lack of western education. They also underlined the vulnerability of the chiefs to British influence during Legislative debates. In objecting to the presence of chiefs on the council, a leading colony politician, E. S. Beoku Betts wrote in the *Sierra Leone Weekly News* (one of West Africa's premier newspapers at the time):

> As this article is written from a constitutional point of view, I will content myself with making only a passing remark on the folly of nominating Paramount Chiefs to the Council on the ground that there is no guarantee

> that the Chiefs will be literate, nor can anyone guarantee whatever be given that they will not be subject to the influence of the Commissioners from whose provinces they will come.
>
> (*Sierra Leone Weekly News* 1924)

Despite the validity of the above claim, the authorities sided with the Paramount Chiefs, that is, the administration considered the chiefs to be the legitimate and natural representatives of the people. The action of the governor set the stage for the colony–protectorate divide, which affected sociopolitical relations between the two regions. When the attack on the integrity of the chiefs failed to slant the debate in their favor, colony politicians resorted to legalistic arguments describing protectorate people as "aliens and not British subjects," that is, they noted that it was "contrary to the fundamental principle of the British constitution for aliens to legislate for British subjects" (Kilson 1966). Unimpressed by such vituperative remarks, the colonial authorities adopted the constitution and continued with plans for further constitutional reform. This move ostensibly angered colony elites such as Herbert C. Bankole-Bright, E. S. Beoku Betts, and Tuboku Metzger, among numerous others, who felt betrayed by the stubborn stance of the colonial authorities.

The Slater Constitution remained in force until the appointment of Sir Hubert Stevenson as the new governor of Sierra Leone. Upon assumption of office, Governor Stevenson submitted proposals for the adoption of a new constitution—the Stevenson Constitution—which aimed at expanding the African majority on the Legislative Council. In light of the post–World War II global trend of decolonization, Governor Stevenson seemed disposed to place Sierra Leone on the path of self-determination. The constitution recommended a sharp increase in the number of representatives on both the Legislative and Executive councils. It proposed that the protectorate representatives on the Legislative Council be increased to 10 and the number of colony representatives to 4 (Cartwright 1970). These proposals received mixed reviews from all stakeholders: the chiefs and colony and protectorate educated elites. Though the chiefs agreed to all elements of the proposal, the colony and protectorate educated elites opposed some aspects that gave too much power to the chiefs. However, the alliance between the educated elites of the colony and protectorate collapsed largely due to the degree and vociferous nature of the former's opposition to the constitutional proposals. Nonetheless, the breakup of the alliance failed to dampen opposition from colony politicians. In fact, their opposition intensified and turned ugly; the tension quickly degenerated into a rumpus between colony and protectorate politicians—a feature of ethnoregional politics which to a large extent engulfed the colonial period

and immediate postindependence period. Editorials in the *Sierra Leone Weekly News* carried excoriating criticisms against the colonial administration's pertinacious position about chiefly representation on the Legislative Council. Colony politicians castigated the administration's arguments with a dose of twit:

> A legislative Council in the colony with a majority of foreigners, as British protected persons are in the Commonwealth, is contrary to the whole conception of British citizens. British citizens have the right that they shall be governed only by such persons as are of the same status as themselves. . . . By the suggested set-up of Protectorate majority, persons who are not British subjects would be empowered to make legislation that may seriously affect the rights of British subjects.
>
> (Collier 1970)

Governor Stevenson responded to the unrelenting attack from the colony. He stated:

> When considering the development of Sierra Leone the backward state of the Protectorate population must be borne in mind. A disproportionate amount of attention has been paid to Freetown and the Creoles have enjoyed far greater opportunities and advantages than the Protectorate natives. The comparatively small Creole community can most easily make itself heard and it has a preponderating influence over the unofficial members of the Legislative Council, but the Creoles have not firm roots in the country outside the Colony Peninsula and although they profess to have the interests of the Protectorate natives at heart, in reality they consider them an inferior race and their real interests lie in Freetown affairs and the welfare of their own kindred.
>
> (Colonial Office 1943)

The colonial administration's fierce determination to adopt and ensconce the principles of majority rule in Sierra Leone fanned the flame of ethnoregional tension and schisms. Colony politicians, described and recorded as Creoles, attacked the legitimacy of protectorate representatives on the Legislative Council. Hence, it can be argued that the declaration of a protectorate over the hinterland of Sierra Leone and the subsequent adoption of the 1947 Stevenson Constitution proposals marked the start of ethnoregional and identity politics in Sierra Leone. In other words, regional considerations nurtured group alliances, coalescence, and mobilization. In 1950, those recorded as Creoles formed the National Council of the Colony of Sierra Leone (NCSL) "following upon the failure of Colony groups to alter materially the substance of the 1947 constitutional proposals"

(Kilson 1966: 225). To manifest "Creole" solidarity, I. T. A. Wallace-Johnson who initially criticized Creole cultural arrogance joined the NCSL under the leadership of the overbearing and pedantic Bankole-Bright. It should be noted that Wallace-Johnson at the start of his career became a fiery trade unionist allied with organized labor, the proletariat, and Sierra Leoneans of all stripes including protectorate residents (Denzer and Spitzer 1973; Denzer 1995). The NCSL showed great contempt toward protectorate politicians partially because majority of the power brokers in the protectorate lacked formal western education. Thus the NCSL made appeals to its members in the diaspora requesting financial support for promotion of its activities:

> Owing to the present Political Crisis in which the people of the Colony (The Descendants of the owners by purchase and conquest of this Settlement) find themselves consequent on our local Government attempting to infringe on our prescriptive Rights by endeavouring to bring into Force a New legislative Council which is to have foreign majority to pass Laws for the British Colony.
>
> (Colonial Office 1951a)

Furthermore, the petition noted:

> The National Council is hereby making an appeal to all Sierra Leoneans and their friends through our local press and press of all British West Africa and Liberia as well as the press of Great Britain, France, America[,] etc. for contribution towards a National Council Fund of not less than Fifty thousand pounds (50,000 with a view to the National Council).
>
> (Colonial Office 1951b)

As the drama over the adoption of the 1947 constitutional proposals prolonged, colony politicians sharpened and increased their attacks. In 1950, a colony apologist, J. C. Zizer, condemned the colonial government and argued that the colony was founded "for the sole benefit of the Free Community of Settlers, their Heirs and Successors" (*Sierra Leone Weekly News* 1950). He noted that the colonial authorities erred when they allowed protectorate politicians to share the same political stage with colony politicians. Another colony advocate, Bamikole Sawyer, writing in the *African Standard*, also lampooned the administration for allowing protectorate participation in the political process (*The African Standard* 1949). As a matter of fact, a member of the NCSL ridiculed protectorate politicians on the Legislative Council with pasquinade referring to them as foreigners "Prepondering in our Legislative Council" (Kilson 1966). Another observation in the *Sierra Leone Guardian* newspaper states that there was

nothing common between the "Mendis, Timanees . . . and the Creoles" (*The Sierra Leone Guardian* 1919a). In response, Dr. Milton Margai, spokesman for the protectorate course intemperately upbraided the colony position. He stated:

> Sierra Leone, which has been the foremost of all the West African colonies, is still saddled with [an] archaic constitution with official majority. The reason for this backwardness is evidently due to the fact that our forefathers, I very much regret to say, had given shelter to a handful of foreigners, who have no will to cooperate with us and imagine themselves to be our superiors because they are aping the Western mode of living and have never breathed the true spirit of independence.
>
> (Colonial Secretary's Office 1950)

Tension between the two groups continued to mount in spite of the government's intervention. In 1951, in an apparent move to bring closure to the rancorous debate, the colonial government promulgated an Order-in-Council introducing a new constitution which replaced the 1924 Constitution. The 1951 Constitution truly reflected the 1947 constitutional proposals and marked a turning point in Sierra Leone's progress toward attaining self-rule (British Information Services 1960). The new constitution increased the number of African representatives on the Legislative Council and also allowed for the appointment of Africans on the Executive Council, which made them eligible to hold cabinet-level positions for the first time (Cartwright 1970). At the same time, the promulgation of the 1951 Constitution marked the start of active party politics in Sierra Leone.

The 1951 Constitution remained in force until the government modified it in 1956. Two years later, in 1953, the colonial administration for the first time appointed a cabinet full of Africans as ministers of government. A few years following these slight constitutional changes, Dr. Margai, leader of the protectorate representatives under the banner of the SLPP on the Legislative Council, became leader of Government Business and later chief minister in 1956 (Kilson 1966). In that same year, responding to a request from Dr. Margai and his associates and despite strong objection from colony politicians, the colonial government established a House of Representatives, which replaced the Legislative Council (Cartwright 1970). In the ensuing year, the government conducted general elections with the SLPP winning a majority of the parliamentary seats. In fact, a year after the general elections and the sweeping victory of the SLPP, the administration replaced all British officials on the Executive Council save the governor general. Thus Sierra Leone's move toward political independence became evident at this point. This aspiration reified itself on April 27, 1961, when the colonial government granted what Paul Nugent (2012) calls "flag

independence" to Sierra Leone, thus making the country enter what Colim Legum (1999) calls the "Romantic Period" in Africa.

Despite winning its political independence from Britain, the Queen of the United Kingdom remained Sierra Leone's Head of State, represented by a governor general, until 1971, when Prime Minister Siaka Stevens "declared the State a Republic after a Republican Constitution had been approved by Parliament and passed into law with a majority of 53 in favor and 10 against" (Report 1980). With the introduction of a Republican Constitution Siaka Stevens replaced the Queen as head of state. Mr. C. O. E. Cole, former acting chief justice became the first occupant of the post replaced shortly by Stevens, Sierra Leone's longest serving executive president under the banner of the All Peoples Congress (APC) (Report 1980).

The next major constitutional development occurred in 1978 with the introduction of a One Party Republican Constitution, which officially and practically banned opposition parties in Sierra Leone. Gustav Deveneaux argues that President Stevens reluctantly adopted a One Party Republican Constitution as various segments of the Sierra Leone electorate persisted in their calls for the adoption of such a constitution in a bid to subdue blusterous political parties (Deveneaux 1982). Other observers sharply dispute this claim and perceived Stevens's move as an attempt at suppressing dissent. In adopting the One Party Republican Constitution, Stevens trumpeted the need to curb violence which had characterized the general elections. He asserted:

> The government's effectiveness and the country's advancement were even more handicapped by internal obstacles of political instability induced by threats of sabotage, abortive coup plots, tribal tensions, insidious and selfish rabble rousers, from the political dissidents and malcontents in our society . . . now thoroughly convinced about the unworkability, inapplicability and undesirability of the multi-party system, the APC Government has at last yielded to the undisputed desire of the people of Sierra Leone by formally enacting a single-party Republican Constitution.
>
> (Deveneaux 1982: 107–108)

Stevens remained convinced that a One Party Republican Constitution was the only option to prevent an infernal state collapse. In other words, he argued that he introduced a one party system of government if "violence and molestation of peaceful citizens, such as occurred at the last general election, are to be avoided" (Report 1980). However, observers reject this claim noting that the government perpetrated violence as a repressive tactic against opponents while using the need to curb violence as an excuse to stamp out political pluralism (Koroma and Koroma 1996). Between June 5 and June 12, 1978, the APC government held a referendum on the

One Party Constitution. The official results showed that "over 97% of the 2,215,592 voters declared themselves in favor of the new Constitution" (Report 1980). Some scholars and observers described the referendum as a farce, that is, they claim that government agents manipulated and highly influenced the outcome of the vote. Following the referendum, Sierra Leone officially introduced a One Party Republican Constitution in 1978. The constitution abrogated the practice of multiparty electoral politics while the APC became the de jure political party. It can be argued that the 1978 Constitution led to authoritarian politics by Stevens's regime, which firmly put Sierra Leone on the path of neopatrimonialism. This is because the adoption of a one party system and its attendant drawbacks suppressed political pluralism for a long period of time. The dominance of the political landscape by the APC between 1971 and 1992 led to acute corruption, cronyism, poor economic growth, and poor governance—an element of neopatrimonialism as expounded by Bach (Bach and Gazibo 2012). In addition, cronies and allies of the APC dominated and controlled the state apparatus during more than two decades of patrimonial dictatorship (1968–1992) by the party.

The ban on opposition parties remained in force until 1991 when Stevens's hand-picked successor and confidante, Major General Joseph Saidu Momoh, constituted a Constitutional Review Committee to review the 1978 One Party Constitution. The Committee headed by Dr. Peter Tucker produced a new constitution famously referred to as the "Peter Tucker Constitution." The Constitution lifted the ban on political dissent and practically invigorated a new culture of political pluralism in Sierra Leone (The Constitution of Sierra Leone 1991). The spirit and intent of the 1991 Constitution was to minimize ethnoregional and identity politics, that is, flag bearers of political parties were urged to select running mates from regions other than their place of birth.

Accordingly, Sierra Leone experienced an intriguing path toward constitutional order. The introduction and subsequent adoption of the various constitutional provisions between 1924 and 1978 led to a crevice between the SLPP, representing the protectorate in the early 1950s, and the NCSL, broadly representing "Creole" interests. In contrast to the 1978 Constitution which illegalized political pluralism, the Peter Tucker Constitution ushered in a new political dispensation and contributed to the sustenance of Sierra Leone's fledgling democracy.

The next section addresses the historical process of identity formation in colonial Freetown. It notes that the adoption of various constitutions triggered identity politics based on instrumental and hegemonic considerations. Because the colonial administration privileged the majoritarian principle over the concept of quality representation, electoral politics became influenced by demographic considerations.

Identity Formation and the Emergence of Ethnoregional Politics: The Colonial Context

Identity politics has underlain Sierra Leone's political culture since the colonial period. As Bruce Berman et al. (2004) posit, ethnicity has a deep taproot in political interactions in Africa: this continues to be ubiquitous in various societies on the continent. Like most instances of identity formation in Africa, ethnic groups which emerged in Sierra Leone contested the political terrain for social, economic, and political advantages in a polity fraught with labyrinthine relationships. This section explores the historical context and intricate process which created the colony-protectorate political divide in the colonial period. It focuses specifically on the activities of ethnic entrepreneurs among those described as "Creole" and "Temne" in Freetown. The section challenges the perspective advanced by Christopher Fyfe, Arthur Porter, Leo Spitzer, Magbaily Fyle, Akintola Wyse, Gibril Cole, David Harris, and others who portrayed the "Creoles" and/or "Krio" as a group with fixed identity and bound culture since the nineteenth century. It argues that the term "Creole" was "invented" by colonial elites and culture brokers in reference to the descendants of former slaves in the colony—a feature of the discourse on identity formation in Africa long addressed by Terrence Ranger, Thomas Spear, Jonathon Glassman, and others. However, those described as "Creoles" used the identity instrumentally rather than culturally in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. The available evidence shows that the identity of the so-called "Creoles" was "multiple, unstable, in flux, contingent, fragmented, constructed and negotiated" (Cooper 2005). Put succinctly, those described as Creoles used different identities at different times depending on the material circumstance in each instance. The impact of this shift in identity is that "Creole" identity became indistinct contrary to the apologia of its advocates.

In spite of this observation, Fyfe states that "the colony-born children were called 'Creoles,' a name used in many countries with different connotations, but in Sierra Leone for Recaptives' descendants" (Fyfe 1962).[1] Further, he stresses that the term "'Creole' was satisfactorily defined and unashamedly used, by members of the Sierra Leone Community during the nineteenth century" (1980). Aside from Fyfe, Porter also notes that the "Creoles were descendants of settlers and Liberated Africans in Sierra Leone and others who had cultivated their habits and had come to accept their way of living" (Porter 1963). Spitzer points out that the "Creoles viewed themselves as special, different from or even superior to Africans who had not experienced prolonged cultural contact with Europeans" (Spitzer 1974). Wyse, Fyle, and Cole on the other hand, used the imagined term "Krio" to describe the same group (Wyse 1990, 1991, 1979; Fyle 2005; Cole 2013). In fact, Harris (2014) states that "the Krios are a reasonably

cohesive social group which [is] acknowledged as African, but it [is] striking in its cultural and linguistic difference from the old metropole" (12). This assertion is based on the assumption that Krio identity existed as a fixed identity with bound culture. The historical documents clearly contradict this assertion.

It is discernible that colonial authorities and elites ascribed the term to descendants of the settler population in the colony. A careful examination of historical documents shows that the group described by Fyfe and Porter et al. as "Creole" did not consistently carry the identity. Other identities used by the so-called "Creoles" and the colonial intelligentsia in various instances, such as official documents, reports, and newspaper accounts, include among others, "British subjects," "Sierra Leonean," "African," "Creole," and "Black Englishman." This evidence challenges the perspective of Porter who argues that after 1870 the various descendants of ex-slaves in the colony evolved a fixed identity with bound culture. It also contradicts Fyfe's point that the term "Creole" was unashamedly used by the Sierra Leone Community. Moreover, this speaks to Ranger's point that missionaries, ethnographers, mission-educated Africans, and the colonial authorities "imagined" tradition and ethnic identities in Africa, especially in the twentieth century. He states that Africans were not mere "laboratory assistants" in the process of colonial "invention" of tradition (Ranger and Vaughan, 1993).

As a matter of fact, leading newspapers owned and controlled by descendants of ex-slaves used different descriptions in reference to the group. The *Sierra Leone Weekly News*, for example, referred to descendants of the settler population as "British subjects" (*Sierra Leone Weekly News* 1889).[2] In another instance, the paper used the word "Creole" to refer to the same group: "the fact that some of the Constables posted . . . never carried mail packets themselves to the next Police Station but would ask or employ some passers-by—Creole or Timeneh—to perform the task for them" (*Sierra Leone Weekly News* 1890). The above quotes used different designations—"British subjects" and "Creole"—to refer to residents in the colony of settler descent in the nineteenth century. In the mid-twentieth century, the term "Creole" was also used, alongside the designation "British citizens," by a certain Mr. Nuumoe. He wrote to the editor of the paper stating that "the Creole population—descendants of the original colonists—have always considered themselves as 100 per cent British citizens and a cut above their bush brethren in the protectorate who only have protectorate status" (*The Sierra Leone Weekly News* 1950).

The *Sierra Leone Times*, another leading newspaper in the colony, also disparately described descendants of the settler population. In 1892, for example, an agitated colony resident wrote a letter to the editor fuming

that "the inspector general does not care to have listed any Creole in the civil branch of the Constabulary" (*Sierra Leone Times* 1892). In the same year, the same newspaper bemoaned "the Creole labourer, rather than the indigent Sierra Leonean who scorns the idea," of serving his fellow countrymen (*Sierra Leone Times* 1892). Three years later, the newspaper again used contrasting depictions in discussing the shortage of labor in the colony. Its editorial lamented the scarcity of laborers and porters "who call themselves Creoles—i.e., Sierra Leoneans" (*Sierra Leone Times* 1895). Parallel to this, in 1897, the *Sierra Leone Times* defined "Creoles" as "descendant of the Liberated Africans . . . born here [Freetown]" (1897). The disparate characterizations of descendants of the settler population imply that the designation "Creole" also meant "Sierra Leonean," and "British subjects." In addition, the population census conducted by the colonial authorities in 1900 did not use the term "Creole" in its data. The census returns highlighted the existence of over 40 "tribes" in the colony with the ascendant groups being "Timneh," "Eboe," "settler," and "Aku" (*Sierra Leone Times* 1900; *Sierra Leone Blue Book* 1901). The conclusion to be drawn from this is that if "Creole" existed as a cultural entity with fixed identity since the nineteenth century as Porter, Fyfe, and Harris et al. distinctly enunciate, the census returns would have specifically recorded their existence as an ethnic identity, which was the function of the census. Furthermore, the report cautioned that in reading the census data it should not be concluded that "Creoles are dying away"; rather, they are "gradually making way for Sierra Leoneans" in the future (*Sierra Leone Times* 1900). This highlights another ambiguous use of the terms "Creole" and "Sierra Leoneans"—both characterized as the same.

In 1898, when the House Tax War (also referred to as Hut Tax War—a misnomer in the literature) broke out in the protectorate, an observer lamented on what he refers to as "a horrible massacre of Sierra Leoneans, who had been captured at Morfuay and Sumbuys and detained as prisoners" (*The Sierra Leone Times* 1898). In a letter to the editor, another ostensibly flustered observer also bewailed the experiences of "Sierra Leoneans" in the protectorate: "the general impression . . . of the Mendies appears to have been that it was the Sierra Leoneans who 'nampharrah' (slander) them, to make the government ask them for tax" (*The Sierra Leone Times* 1898). The author is commenting on the experiences of victims he calls Sierra Leoneans, also known as Creoles, who were targeted during the war in the protectorate.

Apart from the sundry use of the word in newspaper reports, prominent descendants of settlers, such as A. J. Shorunkeh-Sawyer, confronted the issue of identity headlong. Shorunkeh-Sawyer referred to fellow descendants of settlers as "mainly the descendants of various West African

tribes who were set free here [from] slavery by British philanthropy about the year 1787 . . . they are products of the current century, for before then the Sierra Leone native [did] not form one of the constituent populations of Africa. They are Black Englishmen" (*Sierra Leone Weekly News* 1893). Shorunkeh-Sawyer did not use the term "Creole" to refer to his compatriots nor did he carry the Creole identity himself. He believed that the "Sierra Leonean . . . white or black is an Englishman" (*Sierra Leone Weekly News* 1893).

In all, in the nineteenth century, descendants of the settler population carried multiple identities based on contingent occurrences and material accompaniments. Clearly, those described by Fyfe et al. as "Creole" used multifarious identities in public discourses. Africanus Horton, one of the first Sierra Leoneans to qualify as a medical doctor in Britain, interchangeably used the term "Creole" with "natives of Sierra Leone" to describe himself and his compatriots (Horton 1970). Similarly, the first Sierra Leonean historian, A. B. C. Sibthorpe, who Fyfe describes as "Creole," did not use the term "Creole" to refer to himself or his fellow countrymen/countrywomen in his maiden work, *History of Sierra Leone*. Rather, Sibthorpe describes his compatriots as "Sierra Leonese," "Africans," "natives," and "native African" (Sibthorpe 1970). In the twentieth century however, a consistent identity category emerged and the term "Creole" became widely accepted as a group designation in reference to descendants of the settler population born in colonial Freetown. From 1919 onward, those who carried Creole identity distinguished themselves as "proper" Creoles in contrast to those perceived as "synthetic" Creoles. An observer notes that "a good many of the people in Freetown who claim to be Creoles are Mendis" (*Sierra Leone Guardian* 1919). Spear supports this point when he argues that ethnicities are constructed in relation to people's own immediate needs, which in turn affect their relationships with others (Spear and Waller 1993). Thus by the mid-twentieth century Creole identity became widely accepted as a group distinction. In contrast, the appellation "Krio," used by Wyse, Fyle, Cole, and Harris in their works, is anachronistic and a misnomer. There is lank documentary evidence to suggest that in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, descendants of the settler population in colonial Freetown used the term "Krio" as a vertical or horizontal identity. Therefore, it is tenable to state that the persistent use of "Krio" in place of the widely accepted twentieth-century term "Creole" is based on hermeneutical conjecture by culture brokers and imaginers of the register. In sum, it is plausible to argue that descendants of the settler population adopted Creoleness as a horizontal identity due to political and social considerations in the twentieth century. This is because over time, the intelligentsia and those who carried the identity equated Creoleness—an identity disregarded and

discrepantly used in the nineteenth century—with superior status and Western values.

The privileging of the majoritarian principle over the concept of quality representation by the colonial authorities galvanized party politics, which led to the Creoles adopting the "us versus them" principle in forming the NCSL. Historical documents show that the NCSL proved to be an anti-protectorate party as its members insistently rejected protectorate representation in the branches of government. It is reasonable to assume that the adoption of the 1948 Constitution in 1951 created the charged ethnoregional political binary, which blighted colony–protectorate relations. Tersely put, the adoption of the 1948 Constitution resulted in the SLPP–NCSL divide with attendant ramifications.

Analogously, the preponderant non-Creole group described and recorded as "Temne" also constructed an image of its primordial identity for social and political advantage. An examination of the oral evidence shows that those described as "Temne" in the dominant literature molded their identity over time, particularly in colonial Freetown. A number of factors influenced this historical process. First, the so-called "Temne" constructed an image of their identity for hegemonic reasons in a competitive polity. This came about through a carefully designed social process, that is, through the formation of what sociologists call voluntary associations. The associations conferred solidary benefits on those who signed on as members. Second, the "Temne" used cultural associations to enhance group solidarity and achieve what Cooper calls "group boundedness" (Cooper 2005). Commenting on the rise of voluntary associations, Peter Schraeder (2003) argues that they are formed based on "the willingness of individuals to join groups and cooperate to achieve a certain goal" (88). The associations became social instruments used to halt the exodus of Temne-speaking young men and women to Aku and Mandingo-speaking communities considered prestigious because of their beloved dance associations: Egungun, Orjeh, Tarancis, and Yankadee (Banton 1957). Banton argues that the Mandingo and Aku looked down on the "Temne" who had no cultural associations of their own. Temne young men and women became sensitive to this scorn and some felt ashamed to identify themselves as Temne-speakers: "that strangers should look down on them was a particular blow to Temne pride," (Banton 1957) because the land on which Freetown stands was once Temne territory. They believed that "to be considered favorably was to call yourself Mandingo, Creole or Aku" (Banton 1957). Allen Howard supports this perspective when he avers that the "Susu, Mandingo, Serakuli, and other Mande identities, communities, and institutions" were stimulated in colonial Freetown during the

nineteenth and twentieth centuries "through negotiations within communities, among communities, and between communities and the British authorities" (Howard 2000). Howard's point shows the complex process of identity construction for economic and political advantage. Finally, leaders of the Temne-speaking community used membership of cultural associations as a source of prestige, pride, and substitute for Western education, which many of them lacked in the colonial period, seen by Porter (1963) as a "royal road to success" in the complex cosmopolitan environment of Freetown. "Temne" cultural elites used the associations to raise the profile of the community and widen the bounds of what mattered in society. They also considered leadership of cultural associations as a mark of prestige and cachet.

The two principal Temne associations, Alimania and Ambas Geda, established in Freetown in 1924 and 1945 respectively, contributed immensely to constructing a splendid Temne image (Gbonko 2003).[3] The associations became attractive to lots of ethnic communities—Mende-, Limba-, Loko-, and Fulah-speakers in particular—largely because of their social and economic standing. Oral sources show that those certified as "Temne" through descent gained automatic membership of the associations. However, non-Temne applicants were required to publicly shed their primordial identities and "become Temne" to receive admission. They were also required to learn and speak Theimne, learn Temne songs, and sing them during public performances.[4] Further, association rules required all members, new and continuing, to wear customary dress, which symbolized Temne values and traditions. In succinct terms, the Alimania and Ambas Geda became bastions for Temne coalescence and mobilization to assert cultural hegemony. Founding members of the associations recollect that non-Temne-speakers, particularly the Loko, Limba, and Fulah-speakers, passed off as irrefragable Temne members (Haja Sukainatu Bangura 2003).[5] The process gave an extensive meaning to what it meant to be "Temne." In other words, being Temne became a vertical identity associated with "hegemonic culture and pride," "ownership of Freetown," and bona fide membership of the famous Ambas Geda and Alimania (Gbonko 2003). Over time, being Temne transmogrified and it particularly proved difficult to distinguish between a bona fide Temne, that is, being Temne through ancestral descent, and ersatz Temne, that is, being Temne via associational membership. The latter constituted those who learned and spoke Theimne and then claimed to be Temne. It can be assumed that there were others who did not join any of the cultural associations but learn to speak Temne and thus claimed Temne identity. Clearly, by the mid-twentieth century, Temne identity became "political, contingent and circumstantial" (Spear 2003). The cultural associations became mutual aid societies and social welfare wagons as they

provided financial, juridical, and social services to members. The membership of these associations ranged from 200 to 500. They graced wedding ceremonies for members, singing and dancing in colorful costumes. The associations also performed for non-Temne community members for a fee. It is therefore reasonable to posit that because of the benefits provided and the prestige associated with the euphoric public performances of the associations, members from other ethnic communities gravitated toward Temne identity in the early twentieth century.

Concisely put, "being" Temne consistently referred to Temne-speakers identified through ancestral descent in the nineteenth century. Nonetheless, in the early to mid-twentieth century, "Temneness" became fluid as ethnic entrepreneurs constructed the identity for political advantage. This historic process had demographic ramifications and implications. First, Temne elites widened the bounds of who can pass off as Temne and thus increased its numerical value in a competitive environment. Temne elites used the numerical strength of the Temne community as an electoral asset from the mid-1950s to the postindependence period. This is because the insistence of the colonial administration on majority representation against quality representation in the legislative arm of government gave protectorate politicians the impetus to unite against their indefatigable opponents—the Creoles. Thus this atmosphere resulted in the forging of a political alliance between Sierra Leone's largest ethnic groups, the Temne- and Mende-speakers. Alongside other ethnic communities, the Temne–Mende alliance strengthened the SLPP against the Creole-dominated NCSL. Over and beyond this, Temne elites used their demographic advantage to challenge the dominance of Mende-speakers in the political landscape by helping to establish the APC, a rival group to the SLPP. Hence, the APC became associated with the Temne community.

Conclusion

This chapter shows that the adoption of the various constitutions which ushered in the democratic experiment in Sierra Leone also fanned the flames of ethnoregional and identity politics. The concept of majoritarian rule adopted by governors Stevenson and Beresford-Stooke led the dominant ethnic communities in the colony to shape, imagine, and "invent" their identities. In the end, Creoleness and Temneness were determined by cultural elites and ethnic entrepreneurs as identity gatekeepers for material benefits. Berman et al.'s (2004) observation is instructive here: "Contemporary ethnic communities and identities in Africa did not and will not fade away. . . . They are the outcomes of continuous and continuing

processes of such construction emanating from the encounters of indigenous sections with [the] political economy and culture of the West, as well as the deliberate manipulations of the diverse political factors." This is evident in the historical formation of the three major political parties—the NCSL, SLPP, and the APC—in Sierra Leone. All three political parties were founded and configured on the basis of ethnoregional and/or ethnic imperatives.

Sierra Leone's first political party, the NCSL, had an exclusive Creole membership. The leadership of the party advocated separating the colony from the protectorate, which was merged through a well-crafted constitutional process under Governor Slater. In sum, with staid determination to prevent active participation of protectorate people in the political process, the Creoles used the NCSL as a means to an end. Withal, historical documents indicate that the NCSL helped nurture democracy in Sierra Leone. In spite of the party's supercilious criticisms of colonial authorities and the overweening prejudice harbored by some of its members, the NCSL contributed to the formation of one of West Africa's oldest political parties—the SLPP. An examination of the available historical evidence also reveals that the presence of the NCSL to a large extent kept the British colonial government in check. And lastly, the activities of the NCSL helped expose the complexity of Britain's colonial agenda and the impact of its famed "divide and rule" policy, a feature of British imperialistic meanderings and maneuverings in colonial Africa.

Parallel to the above, regionalism also influenced the formation of the SLPP, particularly in response to the exclusive politics of the NCSL. An offshoot of several organizations, the SLPP transformed itself into a political party in 1951 with the aim of serving, to some extent, protectorate interests. The party's leadership effectively challenged Creole cultural arrogance and political claims and showed determination to close the achievement gap in education, government service, and politics between residents of Freetown and protectorate inhabitants (*Sierra Leone Observer* 1952). Beyond this, the SLPP proved far more inclusive with a broad-based executive, including prominent politicians resident in Freetown. As a matter of fact, the SLPP, with its overwhelming majority in the National Assembly, led Sierra Leone to independence. Nonetheless, the party experienced intraparty ethnic cleavage, especially between its two preponderant groups—the Temne and those described as Mende. The Temne in the SLPP felt marginalized by the leadership of the party. When the SLPP formed a grand coalition or a national unity government to facilitate independence from Britain, some aggrieved Temne members in the party did not react to the news with fervor. They complained that they did not gain any new ministerial appointments or positions of leadership in the SLPP-led coalition

(West Africa 1960a). Siaka Stevens tapped into the seeming disharmony within the SLPP and shrewdly used the opportunity to initiate the practice and concept of identity politics. He "invented" his identity by claiming to be a Limba-speaker from northern Sierra Leone and renounced the identity decades later during his long patrimonial rule (Stevens 1984). In addition, Stevens used his imagined identity to form the APC and coaxed Temne- and Limba-speakers to join the new party.

Like the NCSL, the APC based in the north and west proved exclusively regional at its core. Clearly, the formation of the APC put SLPP members with northern roots in a dilemma as many of them seemed sympathetic to the APC platform (Kamara 2003). One such SLPP political heavyweight was Kande Bureh, head of the Temne Tribal Authority in Freetown in the 1950s (Bangura 2006). Though a cabinet member in the SLPP government the party's leadership viewed him with suspicion. This came to light when Prime Minister Margai who was also leader of the SLPP recalled Bureh from a political rally he was addressing on behalf of the party in Port Loko, an APC stronghold. A correspondent of *West Africa* described the tension and commented on the Prime Minister's action: "It is a pity that the Prime Minister at this time appear[s] to be in conflict with the one man who like himself is prepared to go anywhere in the country and face any group or community with confidence" (West Africa 1960b).

Politics in colonial and postindependence Sierra Leone proved to be an imperious irony. The promotion of exclusive politics by NCSL for hegemonic advantage planted the seeds of its demise. The leader of the party, Bankole-Bright, died a glum and impecunious man (Wyse 1991). On the other hand, the two dominant political parties in the history of Sierra Leone—SLPP and APC—continue to use identity as a key tool in electoral politics. While the APC under Stevens appealed to a Temne–Limba coalition including other electorally insubstantial groups in the northwest, the SLPP heavily relied on Mende-speakers and other exiguous communities in the southern and eastern regions (Kilson 1966). This trend remains unbroken to this day even though the overarching spirit of the Peter Tucker Constitution revolved around the need to minimize identity-based electoral politics.

Despite the fact that the SLPP is one of the first major political parties and the second oldest, the APC is the longest ruling political party in Sierra Leone. On the basis of this, it is tenable to expound that the adoption of the one party system by the APC led to patrimonial politics, that is, Stevens, widely perceived as quick witted and guilefully venal, and Momoh, broadly viewed as a gullible and maladroit leader, to some extent personalized power and institutionalized corruption and purloining of the national treasury. This became clear when Stevens manipulated Parliament into

amending the 1978 Constitution, which allowed him to hand pick one of his cronies as successor in 1985. Political observers believe that Stevens and Momoh perpetrated clientele politics whereby core supporters of the party enjoyed privileged positions in government while perceived and real opponents and critics faced marginalization.

Overall, then, the chapter shows that the milieu created by the introduction of constitutional rule in the nineteenth century and the start of party politics in Sierra Leone in the 1950s led to a sharp colony-protectorate divide; this blighted politics in the colony and postcolony. Put another way, "the European colonial project relied on the institutionalization, reification and in some cases invention of ethnic identities" (Englebert and Dunn 2013: 293). The historical sources show that leaders of the two dominant protectorate-based political parties in the colonial and postcolonial periods initiated and benefited from identity politics. Thus Sir Milton Margai and Albert Margai of the SLPP effectively perpetrated and basked in identity politics. It can be assumed that this is one of several reasons Bankole-Bright described Sir Milton Margai as "greedy," manipulative and opportunistic (Manifesto 1951). In addition, some political observers perceived Sir Albert Margai as one of the inaugurators of identity politics in postindependence Sierra Leone. On the other hand, the historical sources show that Stevens and Momoh manipulated and to some extent institutionalized identity politics. As the chapter shows, it is evident that in the mid-twentieth century many political activists instrumentalized ethnic identities for sociopolitical reasons. Since the 1950s, Temne and Creole identities in particular have shifted over time. Because of this shift, it is clear that culture brokers and ethnic entrepreneurs determined who "became" Creole or Temne.

On account of the preceding analysis, it is apparent that the body politic and political elite should confront the malaise of identity politics in the postcolony if democratization and human security are to be achieved or if the chances of averting state failure and state collapse are to be drastically reduced. In other words, until the political leadership dispassionately and unyieldingly curbs identity politics, postwar Sierra Leone's transition to democracy will continue to stumble.

Notes

1. The Recaptives represented slaves captured by European slavers en route to the Americas and rescued by British naval boats and set free in Sierra Leone.
2. The *Sierra Leone Weekly News* was one of the leading newspapers in West Africa in the nineteenth century. Most leading newspapers in the colony were believed to be controlled and owned by the Creole intelligentsia.

3. Chief Adikalie Gbonko was a junior chief representing the Temne tribal headmen in Mountain Cut, east of Freetown. He claimed to have been a founder member of some of the associations and leader of one of them. See Joseph J. Bangura, PhD dissertation, for a full discussion of cultural associations in colonial Freetown.
4. *Theimne* is the language spoken by Temne speakers.
5. Haja Sukainatu Bangura was interviewed by the author in 2003. She was a leading businesswoman and part of the leadership of the Sierra Leone Women's Movement in colonial Freetown.

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2

Chieftaincy Reform and Liberal Peace-Building in Sierra Leone

Joseph Lansana Kormoh

Introduction

This chapter explores a broad perspective of chieftaincy in precolonial and colonial Africa, especially Sierra Leone. It examines the typologies of chieftaincy in West Africa based on centralized and noncentralized political systems. It argues that the colonial establishment relied on chiefs in the construction and governance of the colonial state. Chieftaincy was one of the diverse forms of traditional political leadership in Africa in the precolonial, colonial, and postcolonial periods. This study examines the following questions: What structure or character should chieftaincy reform adopt? Should such reform(s) take into consideration the variegated nature of chieftaincy practice and structure in Sierra Leone? Did the reform of the chieftaincy institution under the aegis of the liberal peace paradigm succeed? What are some suggestions for such reforms? In investigating these issues, this chapter will be divided into three major sections: the first deals with the general debate surrounding the institution of chieftaincy in Africa (including typologies); the second deals with chieftaincy and its reforms in postwar Sierra Leone; and the third discusses the liberal peace thesis and its implication for chieftaincy reform in Sierra Leone. The chapter concludes with suggestions for chieftaincy reform in the country.

In this chapter, I argue that unfavorable chieftaincy practice(s) constituted one of the factors that created the situation for war in Sierra Leone. I also argue that the reform of the chieftaincy after the war under the

liberal peace paradigm is not only ineffective as a postconflict peace-building mechanism, but also that an attempt at peace building should take into cognizance the local context(s).

Chieftaincy and Statehood in Africa

Chieftaincy is defined as the rule of a chief who is generally regarded as the most important individual in a group or body of people (*Webster's Third International Dictionary of English* 1993). The title "chief" is given to a person of stature ruling over a political unit at the local level known as "chiefdom." There are two broad categories that have been identified by the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) in traditional African political systems—the centralized and the noncentralized traditional sates. In the centralized systems, power rested with the monarchs and chiefs and other officials. The systems of checks and balances were relatively better defined with constitutional provisions. In the noncentralized state political control was based more on clanship.[1]

David Francis has observed that the variety of traditional political structures, modus operandi, and organizational forms of some of these precolonial communities in Africa have aspects of what we regard as statehood.[2] The colonial project had a devastating and fundamentally transformative effect on what we know today as modern state formation and nation building.[3]

Mohamed Ayoob, on the other hand, argues that colonialism led to the creation of administrative units by the imperial powers without regard for Africa's population's precolonial affinities and loyalties.[4] Arbitrary and cavalier construction of colonial political boundaries in the mid-1880s that cut across ethnic, tribal, religious, and linguistic ties dismembered established political units and lumped diverse colonial entities into easy administrative unions. Of particular relevance to the debate about chieftaincy and state formation in Africa, is the fact that the colonial powers did not create a unified customary law or administrative system for all "natives." The result was the existence of two different forms of state, that is, the colonial civic state and the native state (to which the people owed loyalty).[5]

Ayoob points out that the policy of indirect rule practiced by the British utilized traditional structures for the exercise of colonial bureaucratic authority. This introduced impediments to the creation of modern authority structures based on rational principles and legitimacy. Postcolonial African states, therefore, had to compete with these traditional authority structures for the loyalty of their populations. Ayoob's argument is that there is "inadequate stateness" in the South and therefore he draws "heavily on the state building experiences of Europe since the seventh century."

The security predicament of Third World states is generated largely by the twin pressures of late state making and their late entry into the system of states.[6]

Francis agrees with other scholars like Joseph Strayer and Charles Tilly that the building of the state in Europe took a long period—centuries, in fact—before reaching the stage that they now are. Unfortunately Third World state makers and their states cannot afford the luxury of prolonging the traumatic and costly experience of state making over hundreds of years, as was done in Western Europe. The demands of competition with established modern states and the demonstrated effectiveness of socially cohesive, politically responsive, and administratively effective states in the industrialized world make it almost obligatory for Third World states to reach their goal within the shortest time possible or risk international ridicule and permanent marginalization within the system of states.[7]

It has been argued that there is a fundamental difference between the Westphalian concept of sovereignty and that of the African context. Precolonial sovereignty is not the same as the imposed postcolonial concept of sovereignty. The view is that political control in large parts of Africa was exercised over people rather than land or territory. Land, which was in abundance, was not a constraining resource; exercising political power primarily meant control over people.[8] Francis also observes that precolonial African practices were thus not that different from feudal Europe.

The point should be made here that postcolonial states in Africa were at complete variance with precolonial states in their nature and character. Francis again drives home the point that the concept and practice of modern European and postcolonial African states as territorial entities are fundamentally different from precolonial Africa.[9] Furthermore, sovereignty in precolonial Africa tended to be shared, in that communities were predisposed to have nominal obligations and allegiances to more than one political center.[10] The exercise of political authority was not defined spatially and few political centers could hope to wield unquestioned authority. Thus, the imposition of colonial rule and the arbitrary creation of territorial states caused severe disruption in the precolonial African political system.[11] While the nations made the state in Western Europe, postcolonial Africa was faced with the difficult and complex task of building states out of diverse nations.[12] Thus, Clapham argues that the attributes ascribed to states by the mythology of statehood do not reflect the reality of statehood in Africa.[13]

Another very important feature of postcolonial African states is that the leaders inherited a colonial state system predicated on control based on extraction of resources and domination of society. With limited options and in a haste to consolidate their grip on state power, independence

leaders merely replicated colonial bureaucratic authoritarian control.[14] The imposed state system in Africa and its associated Western-style institutions, such as Parliament, political parties, and bureaucracies, have brought spectacular difficulties for African governments. Hence, the African state in the postcolonial era has not succeeded in shedding her colonial past or legacy.[15]

Of very serious significance to the debate about chieftaincy is Mamdani's position about chieftaincy in Africa. What is specifically interesting about chieftaincy today is not what some perceive as "continuity of tradition" but precisely what he sees as the "break in continuity."[16] To him chieftaincy exists as we know it today not as a result of its own legitimacy, but because of its cooperation with the colonial and apartheid states.[17] He argues that, for the subject population of "natives," indirect rule signified a mediated—decentralized—despotism. Indirect rule, therefore, signified a rural tribal authority. It was incorporating "natives" into a state-enforced customary order.[18] Reformulated, direct and indirect rule are better understood as variants of despotism: the former centralized, the latter decentralized. As they learned from experience, colonial powers generalized decentralized despotism as their principal answer to the "native question."[19] Like all colonial powers, Mamdani asserts, the British worked with a single model of customary authority in precolonial Africa. That model was monarchical, patriarchal, and authoritarian.[20] It presumed a king or queen at the center of every polity, a chief on every piece of land, and a patriarch in every homestead or kraal. Whether in the homestead, village, or kingdom, authority was considered an attribute of a personal despotism.[21] He concludes on a very negative note that colonial conquest built on the administrative powers of the chief, introducing a highly bureaucratic command-and-control system.[22] Thus he belongs to the school that advocates for the eradication of chieftaincy, which in my view falls short of any serious explanation of the continued relevance and role of chiefs in many rural communities in Africa.

Like Mamdani, radical modernist theorists are all proposing the abolition of traditional institutions. Most of their arguments focus on the "ideal state." Zack-Williams and Kilson, argue that chieftaincy has been corrupted by the colonial state and by the clientelism of the despotic postcolonial state and is, therefore, no longer subject to accountability to the populace.[23] At the heart of the debate also, is the issue of development. Mboya asserts that chieftaincy impedes the pace of development as it reduces the relevance of the state in the area of social services.[24] The view that the chiefs have been compromised and co-opted as a result of their relationship with the colonial state and postcolonial despotic state supports their argument that the chiefs do not have any place in the new democratic dispensation.

But the point should be made that chieftaincy carries different meanings in different societies and contexts. Chieftaincies that are driven and supported by strong sodality institutions like the Poro, Wonde, Gbangbani, Sokoyafui, and Sande secret societies tend to give a different meaning and focus, especially in the case of Sierra Leone. From this perspective, chieftaincy is viewed as a form of, or an issue of, collective identity.

Fokwang observes that Mamdani and Maloka tend to treat chiefs as a uniform category.[25] According to his logic, all chiefs have been implicated in the violence and exploitation of the colonial era and should therefore be excluded from participating in the new democratic dispensation.[26] But most of their discussions are largely based on scholarship that is not well grounded on intensive ethnographic inquiry. Their theories tell us little about the relationship between chiefs and the people on the ground today; neither do they demonstrate that the alternatives they advocate are any better.[27]

Maloka, in his article "Traditional Leadership and the Current Transition" posits that the chieftaincy institution in contemporary South Africa is totally outmoded and hence in an urgent need of replacement by democratic institutions. He believes that the status of chief is no more than former Bantustan petty bourgeoisie "hoping to further [their] own careers in the new dispensation by exploiting tradition."[28] He reduces chiefs to the marginal role of serving in advisory and ceremonial capacities in elected local government structures. He invites "progressive forces" to galvanize and campaign vigorously to reduce the material basis for the legitimacy of chieftaincy.[29] His position is that the abolition of chieftaincy is part and parcel of the consolidation of democratic institutions and structures.

He erroneously predicts that it would not be the chiefs but the newly constituted local governments in South Africa that would exercise "popular participation at the local level." This argument runs contrary to the reality on the ground in Sierra Leone where chieftaincy reform is supposed to be playing a complementary role in postconflict state reconstruction predicated on decentralization and local governance. It must be reiterated that bad chieftaincy and overcentralization were part of the problem that led to the war in the first place. Therefore, any reasonable approach to state reconstruction and peace building must also consider that being part of the problem, they are, as well, part of the solution.

Doe, on his part, argues that the "ethnic rivalry that plagues postindependence Africa is not a consequence of its mosaic of cultures and ethnicities. Rather it is a result of the centralized nature and determination of state builders to homogenize African societies."[30] He argues that decentralization and cultural pluralism are the immutable realities of the African state. He concludes that "decentralization and cultural pluralism determine the structures of governance and polities of Africa."[31]

Much of the current literature on chieftaincy provides substantial evidence for the compatibility of chieftaincy and democratic good governance as exemplified by the current decentralization, local government, and chieftaincy "reform" in Sierra Leone. The debate revolves around traditional institutions as being indispensable for political transformation in Africa. Fallers believes that "political and economic development would be more successful when rooted upon widely shared institutions and cultural values."[32]

Scholars like Sklar, Ayittey, Ake, and others acknowledge the limitations of traditional institutions—that the "Colonial state largely transformed chieftaincy into its intermediate administrative institution and that the postcolonial state often co-opted chiefs to facilitate the extension of despotic control over its citizens."[33] This view, nonetheless, recognizes the fact that traditional institutions constitute crucial resources that have the potential to promote democratic governance and to facilitate access of rural communities to public services.[34] If this is the case, then chieftaincy can provide the bedrock upon which to construct new mixed governance structures, since chiefs serve as custodians of, and advocates for, the interests of local communities within the broader political structure.

Osaghae, on his part, argues that the "conception of traditional institutions that the source and *raison d'être* of power is the collective good of all members of society, provides a strong philosophical basis for establishing accountable governance."[35] Given that overcentralization of power in the hands of predatory states often obfuscates community-based initiatives and democratic practices at the grassroots, good governance can materialize only through the articulation of indigenous political values and practices.[36]

Nonetheless, few gaps are identifiable in the literature on chieftaincy. The analytical problems associated with its relevance emanates from the generalization that all chiefs availed themselves of the "blessings" of both colonial and postcolonial despotic states to the detriment of their subjects. Granted, many chiefs did, but there are examples of chiefs who actually stood up to the colonial state by leading anticolonial uprisings. A very good example was Chief Bai Bureh of Kasse, who led the anti-house tax uprising against the colonial government in Sierra Leone in 1898. Another is the case of the Kabaka of Buganda, Uganda, who was exiled by the colonial governor for defying his authority. Also, chiefs have been widely accused of contributing to conflicts in Africa; but like in South Africa, no chief was accused of gross human rights violations by the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and no chief was indicted by the Special Court in Sierra Leone.

The question is why is it that with all the accusations levied against chiefs, the rural population still remains protective of it. There must be

a relationship between the chieftain and his/her people, which may be difficult for an “outsider” to comprehend. To the rural population, chieftaincy transcends that of leadership or power. It is an expression of collective identity and refuge from the oppression of the state. Thus analysis of chieftaincy should be all embracing, taking into account the strengths of the institution and not only its weaknesses.

Osei Tutu, speaking at the fourth African Development Forum, concedes that the colonial and postindependence eras had profound impact on traditional institutions, in particular chieftaincy.[37] He argues that the colonial system ostensibly enhanced chieftaincy through the system of indirect rule. But the perception that chiefs and kings ultimately derived their power from the colonial powers eventually undermined their power.[38] In some African countries, the colonial authorities appointed chiefs directly thereby underscoring the uncomfortable fact that they were colonial creations; such chieftaincies were ultimately abolished with the demise of colonial rule.[39]

As a traditional chief himself, Osei Tutu posits that as far as postcolonial regimes were concerned, traditional leaders and authorities were seen as a dangerous bastion of rival political power and these regimes largely succeeded in dismantling or attenuating their authority,[40] which led to the dilution of the institution of chieftaincy. The reality, according to him, is that in most African states “traditional systems have been divested of their formal executive, economic and judicial powers except in narrowly defined areas”.[41] Even more critical is the fact that they were denied the requisite resources for effective functioning even though chieftaincy was guaranteed in the constitutions of many postcolonial African states: the chief today cannot act in the way his predecessors behaved.[42] He is now neither the military leader nor the legislator he once was. But this does not mean that the chief has no meaningful role in the modern era.[43]

Osei Tutu’s point should be stressed that even though his position is guaranteed by constitutional provisions, yet he still keeps a very huge space in his imagination about the collective and useful purposes that the chief plays in his various capacities today. Nonetheless, a UN study, conducted in 2005, notes that those chiefs often operate as custodians of customary law and communal assets, especially land. They dispense justice, resolve conflicts, and enforce contracts.[44] They also serve as guardians and symbols of cultural values and practices. Unfortunately, chiefs operate largely in an informal setting without clear definitions of their authority.[45] Some countries that have realized the resilience of the institution, such as South Africa and Uganda, are still grappling with how to incorporate chieftaincy and monarchy into their modern governance structure.[46] It is against this background that various intellectual engagements have

focused on how chieftaincy can be reformed to fit into modern democratic structures and governance.

Oladipo strongly believes that traditional institutions still hold a very important place in the collective imagination and many Africans are still attached to them.[47] These institutions have some values—the idea that power is derived from the people for whom it is held in trust, search for consensus when dealing with some controversial issues, existence of checks and balances, cohesion of the group and identity building—which can contribute to the edification of a more embedded state.[48]

Von Trotha has contributed to the debate by proposing the idea of transforming the "administrative chieftaincy" to "civil chieftaincy." The argument is that this transformation would be more just, responsive, and responsible just as "the new type of central government would be."[49] Thiyembe, on his part, talks about what he calls in French *republicanisation du pouvoir traditionnel*, which translates as the "transformation of traditional power into the republic." This is a kind of marriage of convenience between the different levels of politics. "Its viability requires that tradition gets into the republic and the republic into tradition. In concrete terms, African institutions should be associated with the state project."[50] At the microlevel, this process implies, among others, the recognition of traditional power and the rehabilitation of its institutions, so that there are chieftaincy governments and assemblies.[51] Chieftaincy should be endowed with a legal status and the consequent administrative structure. It will become the place where people will be introduced to and will familiarize with democracy.[52]

Thiyembe certainly has a strong argument about the recognition and rehabilitation of chieftaincy institutions. However, his proposal of an assembly where the people will be introduced to the tenets of democracy tends to present the people as being totally ignorant about democracy, which is actually not the case. Also, his proposal invokes the fear of the replication of the British colonial creation of the Protectorate Assembly in Sierra Leone, which was supposed to be an attempt at "tutelary democracy" which ended up fostering the sharp political divide between the hinterland of Sierra Leone and the colony Krios. This colonial creation still haunts that country's fledgling democracy as the Krios still look at the southerners and easterners as those who prevented them from taking over governance after the British colonial exit.

Also the level of "political awareness and the level of education of the community can also be expected to affect the ability of the community to articulate its demands and exert pressure on chiefs."[53] In a democratic environment where the population exercises control over the activities of the state, "the demands that the latter places upon chiefs can be expected to

coincide largely with those of the communities. A democratic system can also be expected to allow chiefs the freedom to choose political positions without reprisals from the state."[54] Under these conditions, it is unlikely that the administrative role of chiefs would deviate significantly from the harmonious demands of the state and the community.[55] This is so true because this era of democratization opens up the political space for serious popular political participation that even the chief cannot afford to be left out in the process; otherwise, he risks being exposed to extinction by his constituents in the rural communities.

The chiefdom, over which the paramount chief governs, is the largest political unit which is subdivided into sections, towns, and villages. The paramount chief is assisted by a speaker who makes public all important decisions taken by the chief and the subchiefs to all parts of the chiefdom. If we are to equate the chief to that of the monarch in the United Kingdom because that was how it was, then the chiefdom Speaker could be likened to the prime minister.

African chieftaincy institutions have gone through a lot of changes in many parts of the precolonial up to the postcolonial eras. African political systems were highly decentralized, with law making, social control, and allocation of resources carried out by local entities such as lineage groups, village communities, and age sets.[56] In decentralized systems decision making is based on consensual arrangements, which vary from place to place. The fundamental principles that guide the consensual-based (decentralized) authority systems include curbing the concentration of power in an institution or a person and at the same time averting the emergence of a rigid hierarchy.[57] In this system conflicts are resolved through negotiations which produce winners and losers. The authority systems are based on respect for individual rights and privileges. However, although the decentralized system has its own strengths, the major drawback of this system is that decision making is protracted and time consuming.

It is pertinent to point out that although in the chieftaincy system there was centralization at the top, there was a great deal of autonomy at the bottom. At the grassroots level, the chiefs merely played the role of facilitators in the consensual decision-making process by the elders of the community. Thus, at the grassroots level, the chieftaincy system overlaps in many respects with decentralized consensus-based systems. For example, the administrative structure of the Ashanti of Ghana allows each lineage, village, or subdivision to manage its own affairs, including the settling of disputes by the elders through arbitration.[58]

While acknowledging the fact that the above classification (centralized and decentralized systems) helps us to understand African traditional institutions, the point should be stressed that their usefulness can only be

viewed as an analytical entry point. The UNECA 2007 report also posits that any rigid classification of how chieftaincy was and is practiced may be flawed especially judging from the diverse nature of the institution across Africa. Furthermore, there are intricate characteristics that are lost in these generalizations. For example, such a rigid classification masks significant variations among the characteristics of each type and similarities between types, because it lumps together various chieftaincy systems with differing levels of accountability. Finally, this typology makes it a bit difficult to identify and distinguish between which aspects of the chieftaincy institutions are obsolete and which are relevant.

Figure 2.1 shows the different traditional systems based on chiefdoms: one in which the chieftain has absolute rule, a second that has either well-defined checks and balances or limited checks and balances, and the third based on consensus. The chiefdoms with checks and balances have grassroots chiefs who relate directly with their subjects at all levels. The consensual system in which decisions are taken in consultation with the people takes into account the age set and, more importantly, the village and kinship system. The overall argument, however, is that not all traditional systems had effective checks and balances.

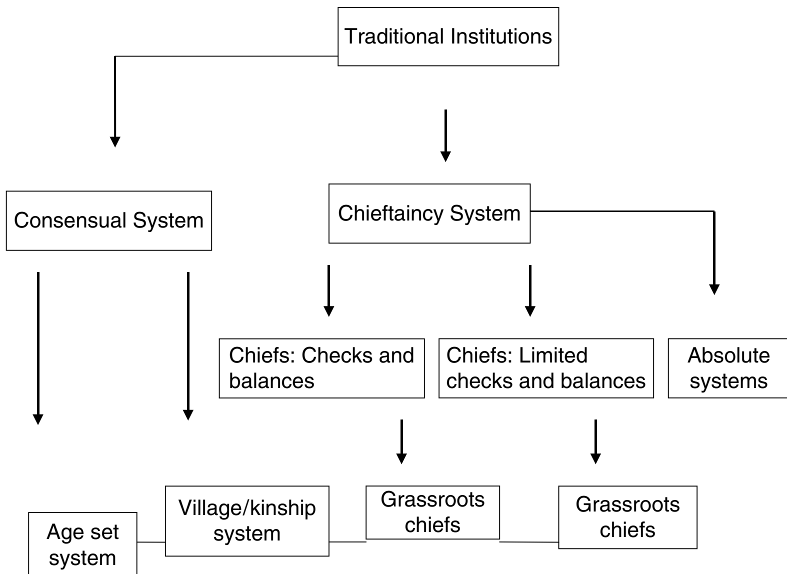


Figure 2.1 Typology of Traditional Institutions on the Basis of Accountability
Source: UNECA (2007).

Table 2.1 Some Examples of the Typology

Typology	*Examples*
Centralized systems with absolute power	Abyssinia (Ethiopia), Rwanda, Swaziland
Centralized systems with limited checks and balances	Nupe, Buganda, Zulu, Hausa, Yoruba, Igala
Centralized systems with relatively well-defined systems of checks and balances	Ashanti, Busoga of Uganda, the Sesotho of Lesotho, Tswana of Botswana
Decentralized age-set systems	Oromo, Kikuyu, and Masai of Kenya
Decentralized village/ kinship systems	Ibo village assembly of Nigeria, Eritrean Baito, Tiv of Nigeria, Owan Society of Nigeria, and the council system of the Berbers in Ethiopia
Chieftaincy supported by sodality institutions in Africa	Poro, Wonde, Sokoyafui, and Gbangbani Societies

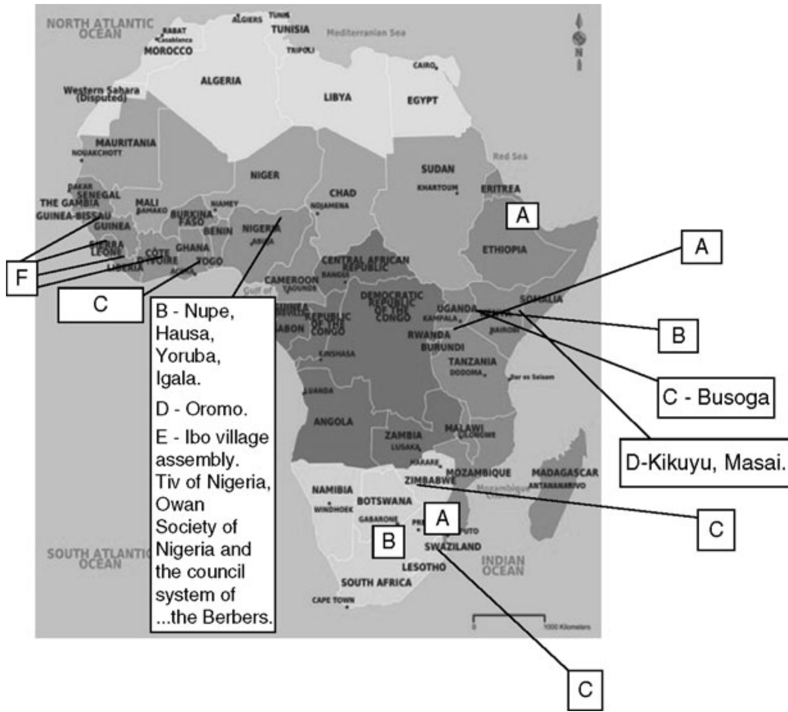
Source: UNECA (2007).

Table 2.1 gives examples of centralized and decentralized systems. Under the centralized systems with absolute powers are Abyssinia, Swaziland, and Rwanda. Ashanti, Busoga, the Sesotho of Lesotho, and Twasana are examples of centralized systems with relatively well-defined systems of checks and balances. The centralized systems with limited checks and balances are Nupe, Buganda, Zulu, Hausa, Yoruba, and Igala.

The Oromo, Kikuyu, and Masai in Kenya and the Ibo village assemblies, the Baito of Eritrea, the Tiv and the Owan of Nigeria and the council systems of Berbers are very good examples of decentralized age-set and village/kinship systems. They are also reflected on the map of Africa (see Figure 2.2).

Chieftaincy and Its Reform in Postwar Sierra Leone

Before the advent of colonial rule, rural communities or villages came together under one traditional leadership because they believed that through their combined efforts they would realize their common aspirations of peace and security, physical and spiritual welfare, and progress. The precolonial chieftaincy system could be likened to the form of the modern state based on Rousseau's "Social Contract" between the rulers and those they governed. The people collectively agreed to surrender to a chief or a king to rule over them and in the process the chief also pledged to provide security, protection, spiritual powers, and the equitable distribution of resources. In other cases, bravery in warfare elevated someone to



Key

A - Countries with centralized systems with absolute power

B - Centralized system with limited checks and balances (e.g., Nupe, Hausa, Yoruba, Igala)

C - Centralized systems with relatively well-defined systems of checks and balances (e.g., Ashanti)

D - Decentralization age-set systems (e.g., Oromo)

E - Decentralization village/kinship systems (e.g., Ibo village assembly, Tiv of Nigeria, Owan Society of Nigeria, and the council system of the Berbers)

F - Chieftaincy supported by sodality institutions in Africa (e.g., Poro, Wonde, Sokoyafui, and Gbangbani Societies)

Figure 2.2 Map of Africa Showing Typologies of Chieftaincy
Source: UNECA (2007).

the position of a chief, which was patterned very much on the empire- and kingdom-building process of "might is right."

However, chiefs were co-opted as part of the colonial governance system and are still being co-opted in domestic politics based on neopatrimonialism and clientelism. This seems to be one of the main reasons

why external peace-building interventions in postwar Sierra Leone focused on "reforming" the chieftaincy institution as part of the liberal peace-building agenda.

With the cessation of hostilities and the signing of the Lomé Peace Accord, on July 7, 1999, Sierra Leone had entered a new phase in its quest for lasting peace and development. The international community, especially the United Kingdom's Department of International Development (DFID), placed strong emphasis on chieftaincy reform as part of the post-war rebuilding and reconstruction effort. DFID supported the Paramount Chiefs Restoration Program (PCRP), the Local Governance Reform, and Public Sector Reform. The main objective of the PCRP was to address allegations against chiefs that contributed to the grievances that led to the war. It was also meant to restore the dignity of the chieftaincy institution that had been eroded during the war and to reform the institution to meet acceptable modern standards without interfering with its traditional ethos.

The institution of chieftaincy has always played a central role in the overall administration of rural Sierra Leone. Amidst all the criticisms levied against it, the rural population jealously guards the institution because to some of the people and communities interviewed, chieftaincy is more than mere traditional political leadership—it is a part of collective identity. In most of the rural areas, the chiefs are the very first visible signs of authority, and, in fact, it is usual practice for all "strangers" visiting a particular chiefdom to visit the chief first to pay obeisance and make their presence known to him. The chief is also held in high esteem because of his position in the powerful sodality institutions like the Poro, Humui, Gbangbani, Sokoyafui, Wonde, and so on.

However, although rural residents highly revere and respect the institution, yet the chieftaincy itself has not been problem free right from independence in 1961. The colonial administration had infused a lot of unfavorable chieftaincy practices in the institution (such as patronage) to lubricate the engine of the colonial administration, especially at the grassroots or local level. This persisted in the postcolonial period when the institution was polluted and bastardized by postcolonial governments, especially under the one party dictatorship of Siaka Stevens.[59] Sierra Leone's postcolonial governments use the chiefs in exactly the same manner as their colonial predecessors did: as instruments for maintaining political control over the countryside.[60]

The two dominant parties in Sierra Leone, the APC and the SLPP, are both guilty of this state of affairs in which the chiefs find themselves. This is because each of these parties always presents a picture to the public that the chiefs should be allowed to do their work undisturbed, but at elections they use them to gain political favors from the rural electorate. Some of the critics of the chieftaincy even argue that poor chieftaincy was one of the

major factors that led to the war in the first place. In spite of widespread allegations against the chiefs about their authoritarian and dictatorial rule over the years, the majority of the people, especially the rural population, still cling to the institution and want to see it continue.

With regard to finances, it is important to point out that both before and after the civil war, chiefdom finances have always been inadequate for the demands of administration. So it is not right to only decry the chiefs for being corrupt; the bottom line is that chiefdom finances are in a very poor state and the systems for local revenue collection are inefficient and corrupt.[61] Decreasing grants from central government to chiefdom administrations are insufficient to pay the large numbers of chiefdom staff a living wage and to support rudimentary service delivery, fuelling further corruption. Even the Ministry of Local Government and Community Development, which is responsible for overseeing the activities of the chiefdoms, lacks adequate resources to supervise the proper functioning of the chiefdom authorities and administrations nationwide.[62]

Even talk of reforming the institution of chieftaincy has proved to be quite annoying to many chiefs and other older folks in the rural areas. I argue here that the whole issue of reform of chieftaincy based on the liberal peace project is a sham Further, the DFID's financial support to chieftains and the building of homes for some of them (about 30 out of 149 chiefs) are commendable, although even that is subject to serious analysis and criticism based on the situation on the ground at present.

The paramount concern of the government and its donors was to resettle the chiefs in their chiefdoms so that the large number of internally displaced persons could go back to their respective chiefdoms. This was because the displaced people had refused to go back because their chiefs had not returned. When asked to return, they would reply, "How can I go when 'Maada,' (a name of reverence for their chiefs) has not gone back yet?" This shows how much the rural people respect and also trust their chiefs for their protection and security.

The other argument for not inhabiting those DFID houses is the belief that chiefs do not live in three- or four-bedroom houses; they live in compounds—Chief compounds (*kateiyhun*)—with a small extension for adjudicating minor offenses and for receiving important visitors in the chiefdom. The DFID housing project was also viewed as a symbol of individualism and Western imposition of the nuclear-style of family, which is a contravention of the communal way of life in rural Sierra Leone. Little wonder therefore that the houses have been reduced to mere guest houses for passing visitors.

The first step for any meaningful reform of the chieftaincy system was to repair the relationship between the chiefs and their people and to

protect that relationship from political interference from above.[63] What we see, however, is the exact opposite, as that old patronage system is fast creeping into the chieftaincy system again and the co-optation of the chiefs in party politics is rapidly reemerging. A classic example is the chief of Mambolo in the Kambia District, Bai Shebora Somanoh Ka-Pen, who was forced to resign his position as chief because of the attacks on him allegedly by agents of the present government as he was perceived as belonging to the opposition SLPP. His house was also alleged to have been attacked on a number of occasions and all sorts of invectives used on him, which resulted in his resolve to call it quits.

The reform process as it is now debated ought to have involved issues around good chiefdom governance; accountability issues surrounding chiefly rule; human rights; expunging and or amending archaic laws inherited from colonial times, particularly the 1960 Chiefdom Councils Act; and the dissolution of the chieftaincy houses. The latter was a colonial creation and any meaningful reform of that institution begins with the issue of chieftains' ruling houses. In the precolonial period, people of stature, credibility, dedication, and bravery like Kailondo, Ndawa, Bai Bureh, and others were very good examples of chiefs which is why the people accepted them as their chiefs.

There is profound consensus even among the rural population that while Sierra Leoneans must be culture sensitive in dealing with chieftaincy reforms, the institution in its current form requires a total overhaul as a condition for engaging chiefs in the reconstruction[64] and peace-building process. In light of this, some conscious effort should have been made or should be made to accord some of their precolonial powers such as the dispensation of justice as the bastion for community stability and peace. Chiefs should have the authority to appoint their Speakers to give them the opportunity to choose people they think can best work with them for the good of the community.[65] This is cardinal to the smooth running of the chiefdom as there are in stances where paramount chiefs are at loggerheads with their speakers because the latter are also elected. There is a classic case of a chiefdom that I visited where the chief and his speaker have not been on speaking terms for years. This is a very serious matter for policy reform.

As part of the wider peace-building process, the election of the chiefs should be part of the reform process. One wonders why the practice of conducting paramount chieftaincy elections using an Electoral College system, commonly known as tribal authorities (TAs), still continues. The TA status is achieved by paying the local tax for 19 people plus oneself making 20, which is a very clear case of exclusion of the poor who cannot even afford to pay for themselves and or have a decent meal a day, much less pay for other people. It is very undemocratic, especially in some

chiefdoms where women and the youth can hardly achieve the status of TA. Opening up the voting population by allowing all tax payers to vote in chieftaincy elections is one way of opening the political space for more citizen participation at the local level.

Finally, the issue of remuneration for chiefs is cardinal to any serious reform of the institution. The current salary of a chief in Sierra Leone was Le. 100,000, which is about £17 at the time of this research; and this is to all intent and purposes grossly inadequate. If chiefs are to reclaim or regain their lost glory, dignity, and respect and at the same time respond to demands made on them by their constituents, then adequate remuneration must be a priority.[66] This is because both the colonial and postcolonial regimes did not adequately reward the chiefs and hence they resorted to malpractices and corruption. Because the people look to their chiefs for support in times of bad harvest, natural calamities, and lean periods, they need adequate resources to enable them to respond to these demands.[67] This is crucial to postwar state reconstruction and peace building because the rural population that was already poor before the war were rendered even more miserable by the war.

The Liberal Peace and Its Relevance to Chieftaincy in Sierra Leone

The liberal peace thesis advocates that when war ends, the primary way to achieve lasting and sustainable peace is to democratize, marketize, and build governance institutions. The theoretical underpinning, according to Edward Newman, is that "Liberal peace building is underpinned by the liberal peace: the idea that certain kinds of (liberally constituted) societies will tend to be more peaceful both in their domestic affairs and in their international relations than the illiberal states are." According to this argument, "consolidated democracies do not go to war with each other because consolidated democracies have institutional constraints upon leaders that make initiating conflict with other countries more difficult; in addition because such countries are interdependent economically, going to war may disrupt economic/trade relations."[68] Hence, the peace-building efforts in Sierra Leone were based on this paradigm.

However, looking at the specific context of Sierra Leone, it must always be remembered that the application of liberal peace with all its grand dreams to build and maintain peace in that war-ravaged country, is problematic. Liberal peace building based on the reform of chieftaincy has failed to deliver as a peace-building mechanism in Sierra Leone.

Ideally it has its own merits; but the point that is stressed here is that the liberal peace agenda has a problem of contextualizing, focus, and even

commitment in the postconflict context. The point is that peace building should take into account specific contexts and situations. Peace building should not be a "one size fits all" effort. It is not because it worked in totality in other countries that it should work in a similar manner in Sierra Leone. This is because almost all the structural issues that led to the war are still around us. People still remain poor and miserable (they still suffer from hunger and starvation), education is yet to be accessed by every child, and the justice delivery system is not responding to its own reform as we still have unethical practices and archaic laws for sedition and libel. Access to basic social facilities are still a problem, neopatrimonialism and clientelism are still prevalent, political interference in the chieftaincy system is persistent, graft has become the order of the day, a large population of the country still remains isolated and unemployed, youth are dissatisfied, and former ex-combatants are still a security threat.

Hence, some of these young ex-combatants moved into new war zones in the subregion as soldiers of fortune, some stayed in Freetown, and those who were fortunate are serving as personal bodyguards to politicians, while others who are not so lucky cause security problems at night and another category I describe as roaming ambassadors of violence. Thus the liberal peace paradigm really has to be revisited to reflect the sociocultural and political realities of countries emerging from war, having in mind their specific contexts.

Conclusion

President Ahmad Tejan Kabbah approached the British government to help restore the authority of paramount chiefs in the country and also to resettle internally displaced paramount chiefs in their chiefdoms. Under the Governance Reform Secretariat, DFID established the Chiefdom Restoration Program which was to handle the issues of chieftaincy reform and conduct country-wide consultations on the continued relevance of the institution of chieftaincy. The findings of those consultations proved that the people were still very much glued to their chiefs. Elections were conducted for chiefdoms where the paramount chief had died of natural causes or whose death was associated with issues relating to the war. Most of the chiefs elected under this process were highly educated—some with master's degrees—a credit that can be given to the DFID project.

With the chiefdom housing project, DFID completely missed out on realizing that paramount chiefs do not live in houses; they lived in compounds. Thus, for DFID to build a few four-bedroom houses for chiefs and call that reform makes complete mockery of the whole exercise. These houses that

were built were not even inhabited by the chiefs. It can be concluded that, the reform process based on the liberal peace paradigm has not been effective in the reform of the chieftaincy system in Sierra Leone.

Suggestions for Reform

Reform of the chieftaincy in Sierra Leone should have been broad and all encompassing. The process of succession and qualification to the office must be reevaluated in light of cultural evolution in postwar Sierra Leone. One such issue is that of the chieftaincy ruling houses established during British colonial rule. Only members of such ruling houses are eligible to become paramount chiefs (a practice that seems to have been crafted on the hereditary tradition of succession in the United Kingdom). Some of the ruling houses that were created were those individuals who were amenable to the nebulous and exploitative project of colonial rule. Unfavorable chieftaincy practices have been identified as one of the factors that contributed to the war. This is because of the type of people that the colonial administration appointed as ruling houses. Some of these people were never near power until colonial rule was established in Sierra Leone. Those who were the real chiefs such as Bai Bureh of Kasse, Nyagua of Panguma, and Kpana Lewis of Sherbro were disgraced and/or sent into exile.

Any attempt at reform of the chieftaincy should take into consideration abolishing all ruling houses and making chieftaincy open to anyone with a clean track record and who owns property in the chiefdom. Property here proposed (such as plantations, land, and cattle) is not only mansions, but anything that society reveres, which gives credibility to the individual, since every society has its own set standards by which they judge people. Such property may include but not limited to, Plantation, land, and number of cattle owned.

Literacy qualification at least to school-leaving or General Certificate of Education certificate level and universal adult suffrage can be a starting point for the reform of chieftaincy to make it more responsive to the growing demands of global democratic principles. It is not about killing tradition or traditional practices, but about allowing some amount of flexibility in a globalized world. It is assumed here that if a chief is enlightened, he is able to understand basic democratic values such as transparency, accountability, participation, and all the condiments in democratic catering. Universal adult suffrage would address the issue of disenfranchisement because the majority of the people are poor as mentioned above.

Another aspect of the reform process should have been the issue of the tenure of chiefs to reflect real democratic values. There should be a review

of the chief's performance in office for a particular term; if he does not perform then he should be voted out. Also, reform should take on board a careful review of voters' list and its publication in the National Gazette. Further reform should embrace issues of introducing paralegal personnel in the chiefdom courts and also the inclusion of youth in the governance of the chiefdoms. Finally, women should be empowered not only to be heard but also to be seen as being part of serious decision-making processes in the chiefdom.

Notes

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3. M. Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1996, p. 5.
4. M. Ayoob, *The Third World Security Predicament: State Making, Regional Conflict, and the International System*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1995, p. 1.
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6. Ibid.
7. Ibid., p. 30.
8. J. Herbst, "Responding to State Failure in Africa," *International Security* 2, no. 3 (1996/97): 127–128.
9. Francis, *Uniting Africa*, p. 41.
10. Ibid.
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50. T. Mwayila, *Republicanisation du pouvoir traditionnel*, Paris: L'Harmattan, 2001, p. 121.
51. Ibid.
52. Ibid.
53. Ibid.
54. Ibid.

55. Ibid.
56. Ibid.
57. Ibid.
58. Ibid.
59. Siaka Stevens was one-time president of Sierra Leone who established a one party dictatorship in the country and ruled for 17 years. Under his leadership, the country went through a lot of hardship and deteriorated. Education became a "privilege" and corruption was institutionalized. His tenure actually laid the foundation for discontent that was responsible for the 11-year war.
60. See the report "Reform Is Not Against Tradition: Making Chieftaincy Relevant in 21st Century Sierra Leone" about some recent consultations across the country on the reform of the institution of chieftaincy put together by some civil society organizations, namely, Campaign for Good Governance, Methodist Church Sierra Leone, and Network Movement for Justice and Development. This report was written and edited by consultants like Richard Fanthorpe and Mohamed Gibril Sesay with contributions by Abu-Bakr Sidique Sesay and Momo Taziff Koroma.
61. Ibid.
62. Ibid.
63. See R. Fanthorpe et al., "Reform is not against Tradition: Making Chieftaincy Relevant in 21st Century Sierra Leone," Campaign for Good Governance, Freetown, Sierra Leone, 2009, p. 3.
64. H. Momoh, "Bringing Traditional Rulers into Governance: Reconfiguring the State in Sierra Leone," Unpublished manuscript, 2011, p. 4.
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3

Reconciling Police Reform and Local Security Provision in Postconflict Sierra Leone

Freida Ibiduni M'Cormack, James B. M. Vincent, and Joseph P. Chris Charley

Introduction

This chapter considers reform of the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) following the end of the civil war in 2002—the aspects of the political and police force environment that helped engender change, as well as constraints faced. It considers how the officers actually carried out the task at hand, with particular reference to their interactions with local and traditional (or 'native') governance structures, which both pre-date and stemmed from the conflict. It also examines this process from a community perspective; considers the limitations of the formal reform process; and discusses the need to rebuild governance and human security structures from the village up, in order to consolidate the reconstruction of state institutions such as the police.

The international community has devoted considerable resources to the reconstruction of Sierra Leone but often has found progress very difficult. Typically, the focus of attention has been on restoring the structures of the central state—the army, the police, the national bureaucracy—improving their functioning and their ability to serve the citizenry. Much has already been written about Sierra Leone's security sector reform (SSR). The SLP, in particular, has received a lot of attention (Meek 2003; Baker 2005, 2006; Albrecht and Jackson 2009; Gbla et al. 2009; Albrecht 2010). This focus underscores the fact that one of the factors in Sierra Leone's collapse was

the poor performance of security structures and their exploitation of the citizenry. This focus on state institutions, however, sometimes fails to recognize that in Sierra Leone, as in much of Africa, the state has not only a direct relationship with its citizens as individuals but also a mediated one through rural governance systems that pre-date colonialism and may have greater legitimacy than the central state itself (Oliver and Fage 1966; Mamdani 1996). This chapter therefore considers these issues with reference to the SLP. It is based on (1) research conducted on the perspective of Sierra Leonean police officers who were key to the reform;[1] and (2) research in rural communities on their experience of local security governance structures, and their relationship with formal structures, including the police, during and after the conflict.

A set of questions thus arises: Has the international community erred in putting too much emphasis on building outwards from the central state and its institutions, such as the police? What role has been and could be played by local governance structures in re-creating order and human security? How has the governance capacity of these local institutions been affected by the civil war?

The first section begins with a background of the SLP, particularly in the run-up to the country's civil conflict, which began in 1991. It also documents the journey of the SLP through the conflict and the origins of the reform process. The second section discusses the experience of reform, while the third extends this, including engaging with community governance structures. A fourth section discusses the challenges that the SLP still faces at the institutional and community levels. It then examines the experience of being policed from a community perspective, before, during, and after the conflict, with a view to drawing key lessons about how the two experiences—international-led SSR, embodied by police reform, and community-level security provision, may be brought together to engender security for Sierra Leone's citizens. The chapter concludes that to some extent, the government has remained committed to the reform process. However, while the public thinks the police force has generally improved, it is still widely considered a corrupt institution, and many remain unconvinced of its effectiveness. While it is understandable that the government is constrained, security provision must not be compromised, and continues to require a society-wide approach.

Background of the SLP

The SLP originated in the West Africa Frontier Force, which, between 1863 and 1906, was responsible for maintaining Britain's colonial frontier in the region and maintaining law and order (essentially armed resistance against

Britain's attempt to govern its Protectorate). From 1906, the force was modeled after the British police force and became part of the colonial civil service. Local officers were sent on various training programs in Britain and/or other colonial territories. The Force was considered one of the best and well-disciplined forces in colonial British West Africa.

The SLP gradually evolved over the years and assumed the status of a community security force, moving away from a role that mainly consisted of defending British colonial interests. But it was a wholly colonial instrument, with its senior ranks staffed by retired and seconded British officers. Between 1955 and 1956, the force was twice highly commended by Royal Commissions for its excellent handling of civil disturbances in Freetown and the provinces.

However, as Sierra Leone began moving toward independence in 1961 and black Africans started taking on significant roles in government and civil service, SLP also became increasingly "Africanized," with the first Sierra Leonean commissioner of police appointed in 1963.

In 1964, Parliament passed an act to consolidate and amend the Law Relating to the Organisation, Discipline, Power and Duties of the Police, setting up, among other things, a Police Council, with the Minister of the Interior as Chairman. This Act further defined the roles of the SLP as "the detection of crime and the apprehension of offenders, the preservation of Law and Order, the protection of life and property, and the due enforcement of all Laws and Regulations with which they are directly charged" (The Sierra Leone Police Act, Act No 4 of 1964).

While before and shortly after independence, the police force maintained a neutral role in national politics, with the consolidation of power by then President Siaka Stevens and the introduction of the One Party Constitution in 1978, its role was radically altered and compromised. The commissioner of police was made a member of the ruling party, a nominated member of Parliament and a cabinet minister. This marked the turning point in the history of the force. The period also witnessed the change of nomenclature from commissioner of police to inspector general of police (IG), in 1985. This politicized position of the IG created imbalances in the political allegiance, which had far-reaching effects on police recruitment procedures, management, administration, and promotion. This lowered ethical standards and morale, contributed to a breakdown of discipline, and encouraged corruption. It also jeopardized police credibility among the citizenry.

As a result, most police officers developed a lackadaisical attitude toward their job, further eroding public confidence. This collective lack of confidence found expression in indifferent attitudes and even greater ineffectiveness in police service delivery.

The government made some attempts to reverse the decline of the police. For instance, in 1984, a Cadet Officer Program was instituted to promote recruitment among university graduates. The policy may have been instigated by Stevens in an attempt to limit the pressures exerted by members of his party to provide jobs for their dependents. The program ensured that graduates would enter the police force at the relatively senior rank of cadet assistant superintendents. The recruitment was somewhat successful, with 18 graduates from different backgrounds joining in the inaugural year.

As Chris Charley, one of the 18 notes:

> The police force at this time was perceived to be an organisation that attracted only mediocre people, so when the 18 of us came in, overnight we started getting attention—the media zoomed in on the SLP to see how these new graduates were getting on and what changes they would bring to the police force . . . the limelight was on us; anything we did came within the public domain and it has its own advantages and disadvantages.[2]

With regard to relations with other members of the police, however, there were distinct disadvantages. In a context where officers were threatened with dismissal for attempting to hold on to the basic competencies of the profession, corruption-resistant police often found their promotions blocked. At one point, most of the cadre that entered in 1984 found their expected promotion to the position of deputy superintendent of police blocked for four years.

With ambitious officers being held back, the force continued its downward spiral. This general malaise, which was reflected in all aspects of civil service and government conduct, was considered to be one of the main contributing factors to the Sierra Leone conflict that broke out in 1991. As community youth explained during a focus group discussion for this research:

> The SLP was the state actor that we had the least relationship with, as they used to intimidate community members in pre-war SL. During the war, the SLP were targeted in communities as they fell out with people and as a result were targeted by the youths and the rebels alike. They were hardly seen as they lost their credibility before the war and this was the situation till the end of the war.
>
> (Youths during a focus group discussion in Bo City, Bo District, 2010)

The SLP were a problem to themselves and the community. They were considered collaborators in that they allowed the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and its accomplices to come in easily with arms and ammunition

because they took bribes at check points. This further made them very unpopular and as a result they lost credibility among and the confidence of civilians they were supposed to work with. The SLP was marginalized and sometimes silenced because of the injustice they meted out to civilians in the prewar state. As direct representatives of a corrupt and ineffective government, police personnel and buildings became a particular target of the RUF insurgency.[3]

By the outbreak of the civil war in 1991 then, it was clear that the police were a wholly demoralized, heavily politicized, and unprofessional force. The military takeover in 1992 by junior elements of the army contributed to the further de-professionalization of the police, although initially steps were taken to address the failings of the previous government, such as the double promotion of eligible officers. Soon, however, it became apparent that little had changed, with senior elements being implicated in illicit activities such as passport forgery. On the eve of Sierra Leone's return to democratic multiparty rule, the SLP remained rife with corruption and devoid of legitimacy.

Initiating Institutional Reforms

In 1996, the military administration instituted wide-ranging reforms of government institutions, including overhauling the structure of the police force, as part of the democratic process. One such body was the Advisory Council on the Present and Future Challenges of the Sierra Leone Police Force, headed by Dr. Alhaji Tejan Kabbah, a former lawyer and retired senior United Nations Development Program (UNDP) official. The recommendations of the Council included:

- a restoration of the friendly image of the police, to ensure good community relations
- the establishment of a planning unit that would be able to project the training and equipment needs of the police force
- the establishment of a Police Council (a provision contained in Section 156 of Act No. 6 of the 1991 Constitution of Sierra Leone) with powers to make recommendations on policy issues affecting the police
- SLP decentralization, with an inspector general, a deputy inspector general, and a senior commissioner at the headquarters in Freetown; and officers at each provincial level and at divisional headquarters
- trimming of the SLP's ranks, keeping only essential, positively functioning policemen

- expanding the system of promotion and exams and encouraging the intake of capable university graduates by raising their rank at admission to cadet officers
- equipping the force adequately to enable it to operate efficiently, by improving the emolument and conditions of service of officers.

The separate Police Council was also established under the chairmanship of Vice President Albert Joe Demby. The Council developed a working document titled "Policing Ethics"—a 12-paragraph booklet setting the standards for the performance of police officers to meet by the new millennium. Furthermore, regional commissioners were appointed for the Northern, Southern, and Eastern Provinces.

Kabbah was elected as Sierra Leone's President in 1996. As former chairman of the Police Advisory Council, a priority for his government was to ensure that the recommendations of the Council were taken forward. In its efforts, the government was supported by a number of development partners including, significantly, the UK Department for International Development (DFID) and UNDP. Other agencies and international nongovernmental organizations, such as ActionAid, supported the rehabilitation of police infrastructures. Reputable national management organizations, such as the Institute of Public Administration and Management and CORD-Sierra Leone, also provided the SLP with training and materials.

Plans were derailed by a coup d'état on May 25, 1997, by members of the Sierra Leone Army (SLA), who collaborated with the RUF to create a joint Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC)-RUF regime. Upon entering Freetown their first activities included targeting the police and the prisons, releasing many prisoners. The military junta viewed the police with suspicion for having collaborated with the overthrown government and senior officers were summoned to the Cockerill Military Headquarters and warned against feeding information to the now-exiled government in Guinea. As a result, many senior police officers fled the country.

The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) eventually drove the AFRC-RUF alliance out of Freetown in March 1998 and restored the Kabbah government to power, which continued with the reform process. A special request was made to the Commonwealth and the United Nations (UN), which saw the arrival of two international police teams under the auspices of the Commonwealth Police Development Task Force (CPDTF) and the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL). The advisors came from different backgrounds and thus had differing experiences and models of policing,[4] which likely resulted in a greater commitment

to developing a model that was appropriate to the Sierra Leone context (Albrecht and Jackson 2009: 31).

President Kabbah issued the Sierra Leone Policing Charter in August 1998, which established the primacy of the police as providers of internal security in the country and reiterated the importance of police reform. Its overall aim was "to see a reborn Sierra Leone Police, which will be a *force for good* in our Nation" (Kabbah 1998).

Unfortunately, these lofty ambitions were summarily halted by an offensive on Freetown by AFRC-RUF forces on January 6, 1999. Once again they were repelled by a combination of ECOMOG and Civil Defence Forces (CDF) troops but the offensive took its toll on both the civilian population and the police, who were targeted once more.

The Criminal Investigations Department Headquarters was burnt down, causing an irrecoverable loss of documents, records, and case files. Recently acquired equipment under the funding assistance of UNOMSIL and the CPDTF was either vandalized or looted.[5] An estimated 250 police officers were killed, some along with their families and dependents. About Le164 million (over US$38,500 in today's currency) meant for police salaries was stolen from the Pay and Quarter Master's Offices at the Police Headquarters and the police armory in Kingtom[6] looted (Charley 1999).

The "January 6" invasion, as it came to be known, presented a huge setback, rendering the force unable to perform its duties, even after the invasion was repelled and calm restored. Nevertheless, after the war ended in 2000, the Kabbah government returned to its ambitious task of reforming the police, supported by its international partners.[7] The single most important action was Kabbah's interim appointment of the head of the CPDTF, Keith Biddle, a retired assistant chief constable from Manchester, United Kingdom, as Sierra Leone's interim inspector general of police.

As problematic as the appointment may have appeared, it proved to be a stroke of genius by the Kabbah administration. By bringing in someone with no political affiliation or attachments, the government ensured that difficult decisions to bring about change had a chance of being pushed through. Moreover, it was important to demonstrate a radical break from the past to the populace. Further, most Sierra Leoneans felt profound gratitude toward foreigners,[8] particularly the British, after the United Kingdom's military intervention in 2000 brought the war to a definitive end.[9] Also, the control of the SLP by the British during the colonial period was still part of many people's living memory. While the force had served as an instrument of the colonial government, it had at least been respected as a highly professional force.

Reform-minded police were in favor of the appointment, as the SLP did not have anyone who could have provided credible leadership at the time.

A further advantage of having a foreigner in place was that he was less susceptible to patrimonial politics.

Biddle pursued two strategies: In the first instance, he identified reform-minded, educated police officers to work with, whom he rapidly promoted and sent to the United Kingdom and other countries for training. He also sought to get rid of potential spoilers, either by retiring, or 'luring' them away from the SLP with secondments.[10]

Predictably, not all Biddle's tactics were particularly welcomed. His style was sometimes reminiscent of the "divide and rule" approach of the colonial regime in the 1800s and, particularly, as he focused on people *he* perceived he could work with, some competent, reform-minded police were left out of the reform process.[11]

In addition to personnel changes, several wide-ranging and ambitious recommendations of the Advisory and Police Councils were implemented. This included an internal restructuring process, led by the SLP's Research and Planning Department, which informed the force's strategic planning priority areas. Since 1999, the strategic planning cycle has been a major area of progress in the way the SLP works and contributes toward the SLP's aim to get the best use out of the organization's "scarce human, material and financial resources" (SLP 2008). It is a highly participatory exercise, comprising performance reviews; research on the operating environment; and extensive consultation with stakeholders, including members of the general public.

Another significant internal reform was the establishment of the Executive Management Board (EMB), comprising the IG, the deputy inspector general, and all the AIGs (there are AIGs for each main department of the SLP: Professional Standards, Operations, Crime Services, Support Services, and Personnel Training and Welfare, as well as for each of the four regions—North, South, East, and West). There is a clear chain for disseminating decisions made at the Executive Board level, which its members, the AIGs, are tasked with rolling out. In the regions they are responsible for, AIGs meet with their local unit commanders (LUCs) to discuss what has been decided on. The EMB model is replicated at divisional level, with each LUC heading a Tasking Coordination Group (TCG), which they are expected to convene regularly to review and plan policing within their divisions. This chain is supplemented by Force Orders (internal memoranda), and a lot of information is disseminated by being read at morning parades and so forth, ensuring that decisions flow from top to bottom.

Other significant changes pertain to recruitment (with new standards introduced for basic recruits), retention, promotion, and remuneration policies. These include being a Sierra Leone citizen; education at least until the fourth grade; ability to pass a written exam in English, Math, and

General Studies; no criminal record; mental and physical fitness (which involves passing a medical that includes an HIV test); and being between the ages of 18 and 25. Efforts were made to ensure that police officers were paid a living wage. Attention was also paid to other nonremunerative factors, such as ensuring officers were supplied with new uniforms and boots.

A related reform, but one that proved extremely unpopular, was the decision to change the ranking structure, reducing the number of ranks from 19 to 9. The previous bloated structure had been very inefficient, making oversight and decision making difficult, distorting roles, and hiding and allowing the promotion of incompetent officers. The move came under a lot of criticism, but efforts were made to ensure those who lost out still remained committed to the reform. For instance, the frustrations of the officers whose ranks were phased out were managed by ensuring that their salaries did not change when they were demoted.

Other internal control measures undertaken involved the creation of specialized departments, including (Charley 2008) the Complaint, Discipline and Internal Investigation Department, which deals with complaints from members of the public against SLP personnel; the Internal Audit Department, which carries out regular audits to ensure the organization adheres to financial and monetary regulations; the Corporate Service Department, which provides technical advice, guidance, and timely information to help management to formulate policies to allocate, manage, monitor, and control the use of SLP's limited resources; and the Equal Opportunity Department, which was set up to ensure that every member of the SLP enjoys equal opportunity irrespective of age, sex, religion, tribe, and so on.

Bottom-up policing was promoted through extensive consultations with members of the public at the start of the reform process. This included town and village meetings in rural areas, public perception surveys, and engagement with civil society actors. Apart from the Complaints Department, a variety of systems and procedures were also put in place to maintain good relations with the public. A proactive Community Relations Department works with communities. A Human Rights Unit and Media and Public Relations Department ensures that the public is both provided with timely information about police activities and supported to provide inputs to the Police Strategy and activities. Members of the public also have recourse to the Ombudsman.

Top-down oversight of the police was also reformed, with the reinstitution of a Police Council headed by the country's vice president. Its functions include advising the president on all major matters of policy relating to internal security and (with the president's approval) introducing regulations related to the SLP's performance. Further, a Parliamentary Oversight

Committee oversees the SLP's activities and has the power to question its operations (Charley 2008: 115).

In addition, the Family Support Unit (FSU) was also established in 2001 to respond to cases relating to sexual and gender-based violence. The FSU grew out of the Domestic Violence Unit started at Kissy Police Station (in the East End of Freetown) headed by a female police officer, into which women, including "bush wives" (girls and women who had been abducted during the conflict) started coming in to report rape and other abuses. Piloted in Freetown, the idea caught like wildfire and was rapidly scaled up across the country with the support of international agencies such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the International Rescue Committee (IRC); external consultants; and donors such as DFID, who trained police officers and social workers to staff the units.[12]

Biddle left in 2003 and was replaced, on his recommendation, by Brima Acha Kamara. Kabbah's approval of the recommendation spoke volumes about new attitudes to police appointments, as Kamara was seen as aligned to the main opposition party of the time, the APC. It indicated that Biddle had left a legacy that gave preference to competence rather than seniority or political affiliation. Kamara maintained and continued many of Biddle's reforms, successfully steering the country through the 2007 elections. The election of Biddle's protégés to the highest office of the SLP continued with the appointment of Francis Munu (who had served as Biddle's operations officer) to the position of IG in 2010.

During the reform, Biddle also sourced a number of senior officers from the Cadet Officer Program described above, along with more recent university graduates. The reform process presented the senior officers with the opportunity to realize the vision of the police they had joined years before.[13] Indeed, during the reform period, the cadet officer squad made and continues to make up the majority of the senior ranks of the SLP, including AIGs Chris Charley and Kadi Fakondo. The current IG, Munu, is also a graduate of the program.

It should be noted that police reform was part of a wider security sector reform process that also incorporated the army. After the British intervention, the army was retrained initially by the British Military Assistance Training Team and later by the International Military Assistance Training Team. All training was facilitated and led by the DFID.

SSR also introduced the Office of National Security with a Coordinator that ensured that security was brought to the doorsteps of the people in their communities. A Central Intelligence and Security Unit was created to gather information and process it before forwarding it to the ONS via its Coordinator, who then takes it to the National Security Council (NSC), which meets at least once a month.

Provincial Security Committees (PROSECs) and District Security Committees (DISECs) were set up and coordinators appointed to man the offices in the provinces. The DISECs met weekly and passed on information to the PROSECs who met biweekly and the PROSECs then sent these pieces of information to the National Security Coordinator for the information of the NSC. The paramount chiefs were key members of these committees as they brought in information from their people at the lowest level of governance. Other research demonstrated the reach of these initiatives:

> Approximately 40% of the population in each district were aware of the existence of the DISECs and PROSECs and their role in collecting security information. This is [an] impressive statistic given the complete failure of the intelligence structure before and during the war. There is no doubt that not only have significant improvements taken place within the Security System transformation process, but also that they have been noticed and appreciated by local population across a range of districts. Whilst problems still remain, the . . . greater visibility of the ONS at local level contributed to the general population feeling more secure.
>
> (Albrecht and Jackson 2009: 194–197)

The next section discusses in more detail the relationship between formal and informal (i.e., community security mechanisms), focusing on the police.

Policing with and for the Community

Early on it was recognized that the police would not be able to maintain law and order by themselves and would require the assistance of the wider community. However, there was a conscious effort made to ensure that Sierra Leone's experience—an approach strongly influencing the Commonwealth Task Force and particularly espoused by its British members—was not subject to preconceived notions of community policing (Albrecht and Jackson 2009).[14]

Sierra Leone's experience was not only different from what the task force members had experienced before, it was also clear that different parts of the country were going to require different types of community engagement. In some areas, people were only familiar with traditional forms of authority. Further, some areas had been under RUF control for years, while in other communities CDF and Kamajor fighters had taken responsibility for security and maintaining law and order.

Therefore, a system was needed that was flexible enough to engage with these different needs in different communities. For instance, where the Kamajors had taken control, they were widely respected and considered

themselves to have a legitimate claim to managing security. After the war, they were trusted by communities, whereas the police were not. Recognizing the need to work with them in Bo, for instance, the SLP invited their representatives to shadow its investigation branch, which enabled the Kamajors to see the extent to which the SLP had been reformed in terms of accountability and professionalism. Working in cooperation with the Kamajors had the benefit of not only inducting them into police procedure but also of empowering them to register and process members of their group who had committed crimes. This alliance developed further into an arrangement whereby the Kamajors were allowed to access their members after formal processing and administer civil justice in cases the SLP deemed to be less serious, for example, domestic rather than criminal cases. Through this gradual process, the police were increasingly able to take control of administering law and order in Bo.[15]

In many situations, traditional authority (whether secret society or the chiefdom system) prevailed, and the relationship required delicate handling by the police. The following example details the SLP's collaborative efforts with traditional authority after a mother reported that her daughter had been abducted and initiated into the Bondo Society.[16] Although formal arms of the law rarely get involved in traditional practices, in this case, the mother was reporting an abduction, and the forced initiation of the girl represented human rights abuse. However, the issue was particularly sensitive because it involved complex traditional law. In this case, the police approached the Paramount Chief, who in many cases is the ultimate judge in all family disputes and the final authority in all traditional, ceremonial, and domestic matters, and who, in areas of limited police presence, is responsible for maintaining law and order. With the Chief's help, the police were able to ascertain that the initiation had been arranged outside of the traditional convention, and with the support of a female nurse, who was herself initiated, were able to rescue the abducted girl and others and ensure the provision of timely medical assistance.[17]

These examples demonstrate the fine balance that needs to be struck between Sierra Leone's formal state institutions, such as the police, and local, more informal structures that were entrenched during the period of conflict, as state structures became increasingly absent.

Given the need to ensure the effective operation of the police, it was clear that a system of policing with community engagement at the center was necessary. Local Needs Policing (LNP) was developed as a way of capturing the locale-specific nature of policing required, but one that could be delivered within a "national framework of standards and guidelines" (Albrecht and Jackson 2009: 32).

The main structure driving LNP is the Local Policing Partnership Board (LPPB), a partnership between the SLP and the community in each

of Sierra Leone's 32 police divisions. It is coordinated by the LUC but the board is populated by upstanding members of the community from different walks of life, including paramount chiefs, religious leaders, women's group leaders, and so on (a member of the police is normally involved in the capacity of secretary, to ensure that meetings are well documented; some capacity training is also provided). The LPPB comprises a chair (who also sits on the TCG) and members that coordinate joint patrols and get involved in neighborhood watch duties, intelligence gathering, and so on.

While LPPBs vary from division to division, some are extremely proactive and have been very helpful in supporting the police in their work. Their activities are varied: they help decide which issues the police should prioritize, they highlight areas of high crime and where more resources need to be applied, members inspect police cells, and they support their local police units by lobbying MPs on their behalf. The police believe LPPBs are one of the reasons that the public's confidence in them has grown.

While police officers are present in an estimated 80 percent of the country, few are deployed in remote areas. LPPBs, however, tend to be present in even the most remote areas and stand in for the police (although all perpetrators they apprehend are still handed over to the police as soon as possible). LPPBs coordinate the duties of community safety volunteers (CSVs)—able-bodied men and women in good standing with the community (recommended by the community and further vetted by the police). CSVs help the police by regularly patrolling their neighborhoods. They are easily identified by vests provided by the police and are empowered to arrest citizens. It is important to note that they are *not* vigilantes. In fact, one indication that there is increased trust in and collaboration between communities and the police is that CSVs are increasingly bringing such arrested persons to the police, rather than having the community dealing with these persons themselves (e.g., through mob justice).

Community Perceptions of Policing

Prior to the war, there was little interaction between the formal policing system and local communities:

> Before the war, we then had both the SLP and Native Administration Police (aka NA Gbadda) in our midst. The NA Police were more active and present as the PCs were very active and determined to defend their chiefdoms because they had the authority with very little political interference. All conflicts were resolved in the NA and very few serious cases went to the SLP as their presence was not really felt and the people had more trust in their chiefs than the police. We only took conflicts like arson, wounding with

> aggravation and very serious crimes like murder to the SLP, as they would intimidate the complainant and the victim.
>
> (Mixed group interview with chiefs and youths in Hangha, Kenema District, 2011)

The war further challenged rule of law and policing authority, of not just the formal structures but traditional ones as well. At the traditional level, the social contract between the chiefdom administration and their subjects was somehow broken, and local structures were destroyed, and sacred society bushes and shrines sometimes desecrated. At local and national levels too, the situation worsened, as barracks were vandalized or completely destroyed, and government forces were observed forcibly recruiting school-aged children, raping women, and engaging in wide-scale looting. This left a big gap between the forces and the people they were supposed to protect as it destroyed confidence, trust, and hope in their capacity to protect citizens from external aggressors.

Whenever some semblance of sanity returned to communities, however, NA (Native Administration) police were key in reestablishing law and order (despite lack of pay or even uniforms), and as such were greatly appreciated; as the above discussion shows, the SLP had to work especially hard to reestablish (or in some cases establish anew) its authority. Through the measures discussed above, however, public perception surveys (see Vincent 2008, 2012) demonstrate that people have now accepted the SLP and are working amicably with them. Through reform, the SLP has learnt how to relate well to civilians while maintaining security in their communities.

Challenges

Despite the sweeping changes outlined above, many questions remain: in the face of dwindling international support and interest, how sustainable will the reforms be? How immune is the SLP from corruption in the long term? In a context in which citizens are increasingly dissatisfied with the levels of public service, how engaged will they continue to be with LNP?

General Challenges

Changing the rank and file's attitude toward the discharging of their duties probably remains one of the greatest challenges to the reform process. This is exacerbated by the fact that despite efforts to improve conditions of service, their pay and benefits remain relatively low. With decreasing

international support, the concern is that invariably, old practices will start creeping in. Despite being broadly positive, public perception surveys demonstrate that police discipline and honesty remain a huge issue (Vincent 2008). According to senior officers, however, it is more perception than reality, as police statistics show that the police contribute significant amounts of money to the national coffers from fines. Further, while corruption remains a reality, there are severe repercussions for police caught taking bribes and structures for redress are in place (such as the complaints division).

Maintaining a commitment to the range of reforms discussed above and continuing their spread across the country, while ensuring adequate logistics and infrastructure, has colossal financial implications. There is a big question as to what happens when donor funding runs out, which apart from funding for particular activities—such as providing support for policing elections—is in fact, more or less dwindling. At the start of the reform process, the force was inundated with international resources that allowed the police to be professional in both its outlook and its service delivery. The period since has coincided with donor fatigue, or donor diversion to other areas, both in Sierra Leone and other postconflict countries. The government has been grappling with its own lack of revenue, meaning its assistance to the police has not been very robust or timely, which impairs the force's well-laid out strategic plans. There will definitely be a need to juggle budgetary allocations and prioritize some areas (e.g., training) over others (e.g., vehicle purchases). Alternative means of raising revenue, such as the private hire of police services by businesses such as banks are in place,[18] but these are potentially problematic (e.g., if conflicts of interest arise).

Other challenges arise from the force's lack of capacity to actually fight crime, particularly the more sophisticated forms of criminality it is increasingly faced with, as well as its capacity to address issues stemming from the recent history of conflict. This includes the challenge of the large number of disaffected, war-hardened youth concentrated in the main cities and towns, who often resort to illicit activities to fund their existence. Such a situation exists in a context where the police needs to grow from its current capacity of 9,500 to a 12,000-strong force to ensure effectiveness. Another problem regarding recruitment is the difficulty in attracting female graduates from universities and other tertiary institutions. Efforts to overcome this include outreach programs at universities and the accelerated female graduate scheme, in operation since 2007.[19]

With the change of government (from the SLPP to APC), there was some worry that the police's newly acquired independence would be eroded, but this was somewhat allayed by the Government's establishment

of an independent complaints authority. The IG continues to be appointed by the President (although there is now wide consultation during this process) and supervised by the Minister of Internal Affairs, the Police Council is chaired by the vice president, and the government controls the purse strings. The situation continues to provide the facility for a corrupt political party or individuals with oversight responsibilities to impose undue influence over the keeper of the SLP's highest office.

One problematic aspect of the way the reform in Sierra Leone took place is that it focused on the police, largely in isolation—so it was only recently, for instance, that prison reform was undertaken. The JSDP has gone a long way in redressing this, but the time lag has been problematic for the successful performance of the police.

Community-Level Challenges

Referring to the community policing strategy, Kamara (2005) noted that it "is yet to gain full acceptance by a good number of . . . police personnel who are merely paying lip service to it" (15). As with many reforms, it is not easy to change things overnight. "Attempting to switch from a highly centralized authoritarian structure to a decentralized democratic approach in a relatively short period of time is a difficult undertaking" (ibid.).

During the research, youth gave a succinct view of their current relationship with the police:

> Presently we are cautiously working with the SLP as they have been retrained and given some logistics. [However] there are quite a number that have terrible tricks up till now. They are still chasing money and given [sic] unfair judgment in the police stations.
>
> (Youths in Rokupr Magbema chiefdom and Kawula–Masungbala chiefdom, Kambia District, 2011) (Vincent 2012: 26)

The problem is not just one of police practice but also of presence. The Sierra Leone government has made efforts to reconstruct police barracks and build new ones in strategic locations (such as volatile areas in some district headquarter towns). Some funding for this has been raised from loans and grants from the international community (mainly via DFID as lead donor). But some villages still lack proper police stations and other facilities, such as cells to detain suspects. This has slowed down the government's effort to redeploy the various forces and it continues to slow the pace at which justice can be accessed by all in the country.

The SLP was still absent or barely present in many areas (Vincent 2008; 2012). During assessments undertaken by Vincent in 2008 and 2010, it was most present in the East and very weak in its presence in over half of the

North. Even where the SLP is present in the rural areas its numbers are weak. Given these realities one would think that it would be important for the SLP to be supported in its local work by the NA police. But there is no national provision for their pay and the chief's source of revenue is now being shared with the district councils. In 13 percent of the communities studied, the SLP was absent and in another 16 percent it was barely present. Thus in only 29 percent of the areas visited were the NA police functioning in a way that was meaningful (Vincent 2012: 27).

The point here is that SLP reform has been incompletely conceived and executed, and most of the changes that were introduced are gradually being neglected, with some policies even being reversed. Not only have insufficient numbers of incompetent and corrupt police been replaced in the SLP to create the kind of thorough reform that was accomplished with the SLA, but the NA police's rural base for policing was ignored, is starved for support, and now rarely functions properly. SSR cannot be accomplished from the capital alone; community institutions have to be supported or changed as well.

In summary,

> The various reforms that have come in the wake of the civil war, though welcome, are incomplete and the institutional boundaries of the newly reconstructed multi-layered governance system are unclear. Reform of the SLP is insecure and needs to be reinforced. The result is that most of the component parts—chiefs, district councils, NA and magistrates' courts, SL and NA police, are not functioning as well as they might. Not enough attention has been paid to how governance and policing at the 'periphery' is to be conducted.
>
> (Vincent 2012: 35–26)

Conclusion

Perception surveys (e.g., Vincent 2008) have shown that while the public thinks the police force has improved, it is still widely considered a corrupt institution. As much as the restructuring has been embraced, there are still officers who have refused to change. At the same time, some members of the public are still on the fence—not everybody appreciates the police (sometimes, the police feel, no matter what they do). As with any war, there is always the aftermath to contend with; high rates of unemployment, particularly among young people, mean there are high crime rates, community conflicts, and so on, to deal with.

Senior police officers assert that they are working hard to ensure that they provide the necessary services, and will continue to do so, as long as essential funding is forthcoming. The government's role is therefore vital. Public security needs to be a priority of the government. While it

is understandable that the government is constrained, security provision must not be compromised. To an extent, the government's commitment to the reform process has been maintained. Despite the change in the governing party there is official commitment to maintaining the police's operational independence (although there is evidence that this is eroding). The 2010 elections, which passed off relatively peacefully, were a litmus test of the independence of the SLP. Vincent (2012) concluded that "social contracts between society and the state, communities and their chiefs, and chiefs with the centre, have been reestablished in Sierra Leone—especially in the rural areas" (34). This is largely due to the lesson of what the alternative represents: as Hobbes (1996 (1651)) noted, and as Sierra Leoneans came to find during the civil conflict, life without the state is always "nasty, brutish and short." However, the far-reaching set of reforms to the key institutions of order in the country—the SLP, the NA, the SLA, the magistrates' courts, and the district councils—have played a part.

The Sierra Leone experience confirms, therefore, that police reform needs to be a society-wide endeavor. One practical reason for this is with regard to one of the police's most persistent problems: corruption. Corruption is considered a society-wide concern—one could almost label it a cultural problem, pervading homes, families, churches, schools and so on, and tackling it requires a holistic approach. In 2008, the government adopted an official national policy of "Attitudinal Change," which includes the notion that the public must accept and address the role it plays in facilitating corruption, including that with the police.

Notes

1. Assistant Inspector Generals (AIGs) Chris Charley, Kadi Fakondo, and Elizabeth Turay and head of the SLP's Corporate Services Lance Phoday were interviewed over a period of five weeks between December 2010 and January 2011 in Sierra Leone. The information provided in the interviews was verified by/referenced using previous research on police reform in Sierra Leone.
2. Charley, interview, December 20, 2010.
3. The Sierra Leone civil war began in 1991, when a rebel group, the RUF, invaded the country from neighboring Liberia. Although the RUF claimed they were fighting to free Sierra Leoneans from the ills of the Sierra Leone government, the atrocities they committed belied their claims. In the face of the army's inability to defend the country, other parties, including community defense groups and regional peacekeepers, were drawn into the war. After numerous failed peace agreements, two military coups, a palace coup, and a transition to democratic governance, the war finally ended in 2002.
4. The head of the Commonwealth Police Taskforce, Keith Biddle, was from the United Kingdom, as was his deputy, Adrian Horn, and Chief Inspector David

Tingle, but the other members came from Zimbabwe, Canada, and Sri Lanka. The members of UNOMSIL's police team hailed from Namibia, Kenya, Norway, India, and Malaysia.

5. Within 48 hours of the invasion the number of police vehicles was reduced from some 60 to 5.
6. An area in Freetown.
7. Reform would have been impossible without the sustained provision of funds by international donors, mainly through the Sierra Leone Security Sector Reform Programme (SILSEP, 1999–2008) and the Justice Sector Development Programme (JSDP, 2004–2009). Most of this funding has been from DFID, channeled through the CPDTF, but support has also been received from other bilateral donors, such as the UN ECOWAS. In addition to the police, under SILSEP, support was also provided to the Office of National Security, the Central Intelligence and Security Unit, the Ministries of Defence and Internal Affairs, and a range of institutions with an interest in accountability and enhanced service delivery across the security sector (Parliament, civil society, the media, and academia) (Biesheuvel et al. 2007). The JSDP additionally provided support to the justice sector.
8. Kabbah similarly appointed Nigerian ECOMOG Commander Maxwell Kobe as his chief of defence staff. After Kobe died under mysterious circumstances, a street in the nation's third city, Kenema (where ECOMOG helped prevent the RUF from taking over), was named after him and his memory kept alive through popular songs and remembered gratitude.
9. In May 2000, RUF soldiers captured 500 UN peacekeepers, who were part of the provisions of the 1999 Lomé Peace Agreement. The situation that followed threatened to reignite the conflict and British troops promptly arrived to evacuate their own and other foreign nationals, but also engaged and subdued rebel elements. An 800-strong contingent remained to support the UN peacekeepers and also support the reconstitution of the SLA.
10. This included Kandeh Bangura, the deputy IG who had bravely safeguarded police interests during the AFRC regime: Although reform-minded and highly regarded by SLP officers, he still belonged to the old school and fearing retirement by Biddle, became more concerned with personal survival than spearheading reforms.
11. Charley, interview, December 20, 2010.
12. Training and support was sponsored by the UNOMSIL Civilian Police; DFID; United Nations High Commission for Refugees; UNICEF; IRC; the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs; and other agencies.
13. Charley, interview, January 6, 2011; Fakondo, interview, January 10, 2011.
14. The main elements of community policing include policing directed by community engagement, devolution of responsibilities to officers on the ground, partnership with other agencies and local authorities in securing the public's interest and resolving problems, a proactive (rather than reactive) approach to problem solving, and an orientation toward maintaining peace rather than enforcing the law (Mackenzie and Henry 2009).
15. Compiled from information provided by Charley during interview, January 6, 2011.

16. The Bondo Society in Sierra Leone is widely revered. A girl is initiated into the Bondo Society through seclusion in the Bondo "Bush," by way of a female circumcision and other rites of passage into womanhood. It is a common practice throughout Sierra Leone. It is also a highly political issue, demonstrated by the fact that despite international campaigns and pressure from rights activists, politicians have been reluctant to oppose and in fact have continued to endorse the practice, for fear of losing the support of its powerful champions (Afrol 2002).
17. Compiled from information provided by Charley during interview, January 6, 2011.
18. Lance Phoday, interview, January 8, 2011.
19. Elizabeth Turay, interview, January 8, 2011.

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4

Diasporic States[1]

Mariane C. Ferme

Introduction

"The State is sovereignty," wrote Deleuze and Guattari. "But sovereignty only reigns over what it is capable of internalizing, of appropriating locally" (1987: 360). This chapter examines how the Sierra Leonean state exercises its (partial) sovereignty through its interactions with diasporic populations. The parenthetical qualifier about sovereignty underscores the notion that states always have an uneven interest in, and control over, territory and populations. However, since the 1990s scholars of African politics have pointed to the global, local, and historical dynamics that made for especially "weak" states in parts of the continent. Weak, or dependent, states in modern African history had a productive role, partly because through strategies of extraversion deployed in them, elites could remain in power through the mobilization of "resources derived from their (possibly unequal) relationship with the external environment" (Bayart 2000: 218), particularly through commercial alliances with external actors (Reno 1997), rather than having to be accountable for their legitimacy to their fellow citizens and risk internal challenges from competing factions. In other words, strategies of extraversion could provide "extraterritorial," nonbureaucratic political power to particular regimes (see Reno 2001: 198). Increasingly, diasporic populations are one of the many resources that play into strategies of extraversion in African politics. In the case of Sierra Leone, a combination of the spike in emigration during the 1991–2002 civil war and the relatively small size of the country and population makes this a valuable case study of state integration and internalization through diasporic politics in strategies.

But the way in which this chapter reflects on the state that Deleuze and Guattari conceive with a capital S—a political entity with a certain history, spatial and imaginary location, set of institutions, and so on—is through the ordinary noun, as a moment of stasis within dynamic practices of becoming. In other words, the focus here is on diasporic states as a set of conditions, ways of being, and practices that situate individuals and communities in interstitial spaces between home and host countries. In this sense, diasporic states are not intended as static or conceived in spatial terms, but meant as a range of imaginary practices and aspirations that govern concrete political, economic, and communicative actions; they also go beyond these realms to shape particular forms of subjectivity. Crucial to the practices of the imaginary in the 1990s—the period under consideration—are new media and forms of communication technologies, which have contributed to multiply the ways in which citizenship is experienced and performed, especially in the diaspora.

Among the diasporic practices that focus on the state's tendency to territorialize it in unlikely places are those pertaining to the condition of refugees. The following section focuses on refugees, whose practices and forms of mobility can range from the transnational to the diasporic, depending on whether they remain in tension between different states or settle permanently abroad, and who often maintain aspects of both ends of the continuum. Two aspects of the refugee condition are examined—life in camps and political exile. Both these moments highlight different aspects of state reterritorialization through the anomalous status of camps as enclaves within sovereign states that partly escape their control and partly accentuate the marginal status of particular groups of citizens within host countries. By contrast, the vicissitudes of members of Sierra Leonean governments and their oppositions in neighboring countries in West Africa, or in organizational life farther afield, such as through militancy in student associations, underscore not only the circumstances under which political mobilization at home needs the perspective of distance, but also the fact that spatial location matters.

The ways in which geographic proximity and political projects intersect with temporal distance from the homeland is underscored in the following sections, devoted to analyzing cyberdiasporas—diasporas joined virtually through Internet chat groups and online publications in the 1990s, before the advent of social media. Despite the celebratory discourse about the democratic potential of socially mediated and online communities in the wake of the Iranian "Green Revolution" of 2009–2010, and of the Arab "Spring" of 2011, the cases analyzed here show that the political outcomes of these mobilizations depend on a number of factors that vary with particular cases. Though in some cases these virtual communities do act as

extensions of critical public spheres, bridging class differences and spatial distance to shape opinions around shared interests and in critical engagement with state political agents and institutions, in others they seem to operate in a spatiotemporal lag with respect to the very political causes they purport to champion, and in yet others, they operate as little more than extended gossip circuits.

Refugees as Agents of Territorialization

According to Deleuze and Guattari, the production of a kind of locality is key to the ways in which states work as apparatuses of capture and integration. This localization happens at the level of discourse and of the imagination as well, for instance, in the ways in which urban citizens or rural villagers might frame their understanding of the state and its agents through daily discussions about corruption (Gupta 1995; Smith 2008). States also engage in legal, administrative, and governing practices that localize them, some of which have as their objects citizens who live beyond their territorial borders. Among the ways in which states shape the daily lives of citizens, even those in the diaspora, are practices of documentation and administration that can shift the legal status of citizens, preventing or facilitating their ability to obtain passports, visas, permission to work and study, and so on (e.g., Ferme 2004: 89–106). These are some of the ways in which the state works as a force for reterritorialization well beyond its borders. By contrast, deterritorialization—the unmooring of culture from place—its freeing from particular territorial locations and redeployment elsewhere in novel ways—is a common feature of modern life, not even especially associated with diasporic experiences, and not always practiced at the level of the state.

Refugees are one population through which processes of de- and reterritorialization are highlighted in relation to not only their country of origin, but the host country as well. They are a particular kind of diaspora—a population in exile from its homeland, forced to disperse by war or natural calamity. During the civil war of 1991–2002, the dramatic increase in the number of Sierra Leoneans who became international refugees opened up new avenues for mobility and, therefore, diasporic existence. Hundreds of thousands sought shelter over the border in Guinea or in nearby West African countries, and for many—though not all—of these displaced Sierra Leoneans new forms of political subjectivity and citizenship were shaped by the experience of a specific kind of territorial enclave, the refugee camp. Additionally, a little-studied aspect of the impact of wars involves the ways in which even diasporic populations residing at a

distance from conflict can be turned into refugees, and thus once again set in motion. Thus Sierra Leoneans in Cairo in 1993, some of whom had been residing there in precarious conditions since well before the outbreak of the civil war then unfolding in their home country, saw new opportunities for moving to wealthier countries like the United States and the United Kingdom in their classification as "refugees" and the easing of immigration restrictions that this reclassification entailed (Ferme 2004).

By contrast, for refugees immediately impacted by war, residence in camps subject to the ministrations of humanitarian aid organizations is an increasingly common experience. Refugee camps, usually established as spaces under the sovereignty of international humanitarian bodies such as the United Nations, but within the territory of host states that temporarily cede certain forms of administration and service provision to these entities, have become spaces of "dislocating localization,"[2] where the very condition of dwelling is that of being dislocated from one's homeland. And they are, too, an increasingly normalized site to deal with "undesirables" of all kinds, whose management is the purview of specialized sectors of the humanitarian apparatus (Agier 2011).

Working with Burundian Hutu refugees in Tanzania, Liisa Malkki has analyzed the complex ripple effects on forms of belonging and citizenship—among citizens and refugees alike—of the fact that refugee camps often are located in places of marginal interest to the host state. So while the Tanzanian government sought to use Burundian refugees in the Mishamo camp to settle in an inhospitable and isolated frontier region, the camp's success in becoming self-sufficient through the agricultural ventures of its residents, who even generated surpluses for sale, made them paradoxically models to be held up to citizens for emulation (Malkki 1995). In an interesting way, then, refugees can serve as agents of reterritorialization not only for their countries of origin—which they literally internalize through their imaginings of and longing for the homeland—but also for the host state and its citizens. In this case, Burundian refugees settled in an "out-of-the-way place," making it a productive frontier and therefore a place for localizing the Tanzanian state in new ways (Agier 2011: 45).

In a similar manner, Guékuédu—a "poor and rundown" border town in Guinea—became a boomtown in the second half of the 1990s with the influx of up to 400,000 refugees from the Liberian and Sierra Leonean conflicts in UNHCR camps, only to experience an economic collapse after they and the humanitarian infrastructure that accompanied them left the country at the end of the war (Moorhead 2005).[3] The alternation between the neglect of this region by the Guinean state, the intensification of settlement and the presence of humanitarian entities during the refugee crisis, and then the area's recession into the backwater it had been before the war

exemplifies the spatiotemporal elasticity of processes of territorialization. As mentioned earlier, it also highlights the unevenness with which territorial sovereignty is exercised in practice.

Refugee camps are sites where certain aspects of host state sovereignty are held in abeyance and are temporarily and conditionally ceded to supranational bodies such as the United Nations. But other kinds of places see similar withdrawals of the state's presence and of its services, or, to the contrary, their intensification. For example, state-like powers are sometimes ceded to private businesses in resource-rich territorial enclaves, where they might provide security, improvement of infrastructure, health and educational services, levy taxes, and even leverage to renegotiate the terms of loans from international donors. In 1995, during the Sierra Leone civil war when rebel attacks had resulted in the closure of mining operations responsible for 57 percent of the country's export earnings, the South African private security firm "Executive Outcomes," which was hired by the government to aid in the war effort, secured the diamond-rich Kono region so that a mining firm in which it owned a controlling share could generate the revenues required to pay arrears to the government's international creditors, and thus aid in negotiations with them (Reno 1997: 180–181; Reno 2001: 210–211). The treatment of Kono as a special enclave within the Sierra Leonean state had a longer history, dating back to colonial times. In 1954, for instance, the British colonial administration drafted an agreement whereby the Sierra Leone Selection Trust would pay an annual fee to the state for local development in exchange for diamond mining rights in the Kono region. But the company "began making unauthorized direct payments to chiefs as private citizens . . . [and] also provided electricity to chiefdom compounds and extended 'loans' for the purchase of cars or building materials" (Reno 1995: 65). Thus even before Sierra Leone gained independence, and before the wave of neoliberal privatizations in Africa and elsewhere, services normally controlled by the state, such as the provision of electricity or of development support, were privatized, under certain circumstances, in this resource-rich area. Indeed, since the 1950s the Kono region has seen an alternation between, on the one hand, efforts by the central government to tighten controls—for instance, instituting special passes to monitor the movements of the male population employed in the mining sector—and, on the other hand, efforts to cede them to businesses involved in diamond production, thus facilitating the privatization of state functions.

The cases of camps in Tanzania and Guinea discussed above highlight the paradox that though refugees are among the poorest human beings, they often bring relative wealth in their wake—ranging from improved health care and educational and vocational training opportunities to

development of infrastructure and employment in NGOs. In these cases, refugees in camps run by international institutions like the United Nations' High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) may end up living in better conditions than the host population in their immediate surroundings. This relative care for refugees and protection of their rights in countries whose citizens live at the limit of subsistence and with few protections from the abuses of the powerful complicates the relationship between citizenship and belonging at multiple levels, for both refugee and host populations. This form of diasporic experience, in other words, shapes not only the political subjectivity of refugees, but also of the host populations among whom they are located.

The refugee experience can transform the scale of political belonging and action, as these "citizens of humanity" envision themselves to be members of a global community of nations whose humanitarian governance is more tangible than that of their own states, which have ceded to them the provision of social welfare that had once been their purview (Malkki 1994). An additional incentive to seeking one's community of belonging on a global scale may be the inability of the nation to peacefully accommodate the diversity within, as was the case with the Burundian refugees discussed in Malkki's work. However, the Burundian case also highlights the fact that the imaginings of exiles can turn back on national communities of belonging in ways that fix identities and alliances that in the give-and-take of ordinary interactions would be fluid. In situations of conflict, the stakes become even higher, and identities and differences are reproduced even in diasporic settings well away from actual violence. Malkki analyzes this phenomenon by contrasting the ways in which Burundian refugees reterritorialize their sense of belonging to their homeland through nationalist imaginings in the isolation of the Mishamo camp, while Burundians integrated with local Tanzanians in the border town of Kigoma "dissolved national categories in the course of everyday life and produced more cosmopolitan forms of identity instead" (Malkki 1995: 4).

Diasporic communities can be reinvested with a kind of ethnic sentiment that fetishizes the territorial homeland regardless of their distance in time from an original dispersal. In a study of the global mobilization of ethnic Chinese in the wake of the 1998 anti-Chinese riots in Indonesia, Aihwa Ong pointed out that too often "diaspora becomes the framing device for contemporary forms of mass customization of global ethnic identities" (2003: 88). A Huaren (global Chinese) website was set up to mobilize the millions-strong global Chinese diaspora in support of Indonesian Chinese, to inform the media and public opinion about the violence perpetrated against them, to host discussion fora, and to organize protests in front of Indonesian embassies around the world. The intervention

was motivated by a shared identity with the victims of violence in Indonesia, but Ong shows that this assumption obscured the fact that the subjects of these representations in fact saw themselves first and foremost as Indonesians, who over generations of living in Southeast Asia had become assimilated linguistically and culturally, so that for them "diaspora sentiments . . . implie[d] disloyalty and lack of patriotism to the country of settlement" (Ong 2003: 92). Ong showed how a relatively rigid conception of shared ethnicity by the diaspora Chinese who had set up this activist cybercommunity in some instances worked against the practical interests of the Indonesian-Chinese on whose behalf they were acting. For instance, as they were mobilizing global public opinion against the Indonesian state, Huaren organizers overlooked the fact that already there had been significant action: the Indonesian state responded to the 1998 violence with policy measures aimed at safeguarding against the future marginalization and scapegoating of all ethnic minorities in the country, including the Chinese.

As the case discussed by Ong suggests, online fora and social media expand the reach of the territorializing state, as well as of other, nonstate communities of belonging. They also can expand communities of "primordial" identification based on birth, such as ethnic ones, at the expense of elective affinities based on shared aspirations and political projects—as Malkki observed for Burundian refugees in the Mishamo camp in Tanzania. As such, they do not necessarily deliver the promise of a deliberative public sphere that critically engages with state institutions in order to achieve democratic political ideals (Tettey 2001).[4] Among the factors that must make one cautious about subscribing to virtual diasporas as sites for expanding the critical potential of the public sphere is the spatiotemporal distortion that can shape their debates. When these unfold mostly among different diasporic locations, they can become unmoored from the concerns of those who continue to reside in the homeland. Nonetheless, as I point out in later sections, even citizens in the diaspora who are not engaged politically in their Internet networkings figure prominently in the economic calculus of the state, for within the logic of extraversion, the resources they can offer have political uses.

The Sierra Leone Cyberdiaspora: Public Sphere or Neighborhood Gossips?

If the production of locality is key to the ways in which state sovereignty is integrated, it also leads to the emergence of other, alternative forms of political sociality. Indeed, Arjun Appadurai has argued that

"neighborhoods" as "situated communities characterized by their actuality, whether spatial or virtual, and their potential for social reproduction" are key to the emergence of geographically dispersed, but intensely local, forms of public sphere, in the age of globalization. However, the neighborhood thus conceived is a "relational and contextual" entity made possible by new communication and information technologies, rather than a "scalar or spatial" one of physical contiguity (Appadurai 1996: 178–179). In examining the diasporic communities that emerged during the 1991–2002 decade of the civil war in Sierra Leone, a more parochial kind of neighborhood was sometimes in evidence, one that highlights the inadequacy of the notion of neighborhood as a metaphor for the political mobilization of diasporas or as one of the sites of manifestation of a public sphere.

The Sierra Leonean civil war saw an escalation of emigration from the country as refugees sought asylum abroad. The decade in which it unfolded—the 1990s—coincided with the global technological revolution that brought personal computers into private ownership and in homes; reduced their size, weight, and cost; made faxes affordable and ubiquitous; and saw air travel costs slashed by the proliferation of low-cost carriers. Toward the end of the civil war, cellular phones and infrastructure were also beginning to take hold. All these changes shaped the forms of political participation globally, and in Africa as well, but not always in straightforward and predictable ways. Internet access in Africa—and Sierra Leone in particular—remains an elite and predominantly male phenomenon. It is estimated that in 2010 there were 14,900 Internet users in a population of just over 5 million in Sierra Leone, up from only 5,000 or so in the year 2000.[5] For a comparative perspective, consider that Nigeria, which with an overall population of about 152 million is the most populous African nation, had 200,000 Internet users in 2000 and an estimated 44 million by 2010.[6] But in the diaspora, access to the Internet increases in proportion to usage by the overall population in the host country. The refugee crisis brought about by the civil war increased Sierra Leonean emigration, and this in turn created more opportunities for enlarging the virtual, technologically linked diaspora abroad.

World Bank and UN figures suggest that during the first half of the Sierra Leone civil war the country saw a net emigration of 450,000, or about 10 percent of the country's population overall, with about 380,000 seeking asylum as refugees in 1995 (World Bank 2011: 386).[7] By contrast, between 2005 and 2010 and after the end of the war, the country saw a net immigration of 60,000 people. The regional nature of the conflict, which saw its origins in Liberia, but at various points was linked to violence in Guinea and even Côte d'Ivoire, meant that the same country could be sending and receiving refugees, depending on where hostilities flared up.

And while many Sierra Leoneans fled to the United States and the United Kingdom (the country's former colonial occupier) which were the destinations of respectively about 23 percent and 18 percent of the emigrating population, sizable numbers moved to neighboring countries as well. To put the country in a regional perspective within West Africa, between 1995 and 2000, Sierra Leone had one of the highest rates of emigration, at a −7.8 percent net rate of migration (Ammassari 2006).[8]

At the time of this writing, the 2010 United States census data did not provide information about country of origin, but statistics for the year 2000 list 20,830 people of Sierra Leonean descent in the country, of whom 14,535 were not citizens. Of these noncitizens, over two-thirds had entered the country during the 1990s, in contrast to only about 3,000 immigrants from Sierra Leone during the whole preceding decade (US Census Bureau Statistics 2000: Table FBP-1). The increase in the influx of refugees during the civil war of 1991–2002 was also tied to the fact that destination countries set in place various measures to lift normal limitations on immigration. In 1997, the United States Department of Justice (since then reorganized under the Department of Homeland Security) granted Sierra Leoneans Temporary Protected Status (TPS), an emergency provision explicitly targeting people who are in the United States "in nonimmigrant and unlawful status," and offering them the right to regularize their position and work legally until it is deemed safe to return to their countries of origin (Department of Justice 1997). During the seven years in which Sierra Leone was included in the TPS program, annual reviews of the program changed the quotas to anywhere from 4,000 slots during the first year of its operation down to about 2,209 eligible individuals in 2002 (National Immigration Law Center 2002). This program supplemented normal immigration procedures, allowing for a greater influx of immigrants from Sierra Leone than had been possible in earlier times.

Similar programs were instituted in European countries, although during this period legislative and immigration reforms made it increasingly difficult for asylum seekers to meet the criteria for being granted refuge. Thus between 1990 and 1997, only 124 Sierra Leoneans were granted asylum in Germany, France, the United Kingdom, and the Netherlands, while about 10,700 applicants were turned down. In the same period, about 500 Sierra Leoneans were allowed to reside in these European countries under the less stringent conditions for "humanitarian protection," and many more arrived under family reunification or other programs (United Nations High Commission for Refugees 1998). During the decade, ebbs and flows of refugee seekers in various countries were shaped in part by national policies (among European countries, for instance, Germany

received and approved the largest proportion of Sierra Leonean asylum requests), but also reflected events on the war front. Thus the number of Sierra Leoneans seeking asylum in the United Kingdom went from 395 in 1996, when multiparty elections in Sierra Leone held with the support of the international community ushered in a civilian government committed to peace talks with the Revolutionary United Council (RUF), to 815 the following year, when an alliance between the RUF and rogue military organized in the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) took power by force, plunging the country into some of the worst violence experienced during the entire conflict. Every year from 1999 to the end of the civil war in 2002, between 1,125 and 1,330 Sierra Leoneans (excluding their dependents) sought asylum in the United Kingdom, while only 380 did so in 2003 (Heath and Jeffries 2005). But the porous borders with neighboring countries and the fact that there were fewer logistical and economic barriers for poor rural Sierra Leoneans without the documentation and means to board a flight to Europe or America meant that these were often the first resort of those fleeing violence.

Among the Sierra Leoneans fleeing to neighboring West African countries, many were temporary refugees, who in escaping violence took to the well-trodden paths that before the war had enabled regular patterns of mobility, as farmers seasonally or periodically crossed into Liberia or Guinea to trade, log, and mine. But a proportion of these did not return to Sierra Leone after the end of the civil war, which had led to a "culture of mobility" on a different scale (see Machonachie et al. 2006: 237). After Charles Taylor went from being the main warlord in the Liberian conflict to the country's elected president in 1997, for example, the lull in the conflict there and the increased insecurity in Sierra Leone under the RUF-AFRC junta brought many Sierra Leoneans to Liberia, with which they have longstanding historical, cultural, and linguistic ties (18 percent of emigrants to West African countries went there), while Ghana, which was the site of a key UN refugee camp for people displaced from this regional conflict, received the next largest group, about 5 percent (Barajas et al. 2010). By contrast, during the first few years of the conflict in Liberia, which was sparked by insecurity, beginning as early as 1989, Sierra Leone had an influx of refugees from Liberia.

The circumstances under which Sierra Leoneans moved to neighboring West African countries during the war shed light on the variable political profiles of diasporic communities, on the diaspora as a site of political mobilization not possible in home countries, and on the concept of new forms of technologically mediated "neighborhoods" as advanced by Appadurai. In 1984, several key leaders of student protests that had shut down the Fourah Bay College campus of the University of Sierra Leone were expelled and went into exile in Ghana, initially enrolling in the

University of Ghana at Legon to complete their studies. Some of these young political activists had first come together in Sierra Leone in university study groups, and among their readings was *The Green Book*, Libya's Colonel Muammar Ghaddafi's 1975 tract expounding his revolutionary agenda and political philosophy. From their exile in Ghana, several traveled to camps in Libya where they were trained in revolutionary ideology and combat.[9] It was from this core opposition group in the diaspora that the original leadership of the RUF emerged, setting off the civil war with material support from Ghaddafi and Charles Taylor, who was leading his own attack on the ruling regime in neighboring Liberia. These dynamics illustrate the ways in which diasporic populations are key to political mobilizations in situations where opposition is banned, as was the case at the time in Sierra Leone under the single party rule of the All People's Congress (APC).[10]

The potential role of students as organic intellectuals trained in leadership roles abroad, only to return home to enact radical programs for change, has a long history in Africa. Student groups in the diaspora were key to the anticolonial and nationalist struggles of many African countries, through organizations such as the West African Student Union for expatriates originating from British colonies residing in the United Kingdom. Kwame Nkrumah, Herbert Bankole-Bright, J. E. Casely Hayford, and others who went on to lead nationalist and anti-imperialist struggles in their home countries honed their skills as political leaders in the diaspora.

But diasporas do not only harbor exiled opposition figures or intellectual elites-in-training. They also may harbor, in unstable times, entire governments. When a military coup put an end to APC's single party rule in 1992, the ousted J. S. Momoh sought refuge in neighboring Guinea with other key members of his regime. Five years later, another ousted Sierra Leonean president, Ahmed Tejan Kabbah, took refuge in Guinea with his entire cabinet and top military brass. The presence of a critical mass of Sierra Leonean exiles in Guinea allowed Kabbah to plan his return to power and seek from that base political, military, and logistical support from other governments and international institutions. After some nine months in exile in Guinea, Kabbah was able to return to Sierra Leone following the military defeat of the rebel–military junta that in 1997 had overturned his democratically elected government.

Appadurai suggests that "the production of neighborhoods increasingly occurs under conditions where the system of nation-states is the normative hinge for the production of both local and translocal activities," and that the latter, in particular, are key to the power relations that produce locality (Appadurai 1996: 188). In other words, the nation-state enables—and, we might add, is in part produced by—activities that link particular "local" places, even when these apparently bypass the centralizing

tendency of state institutions. Consider, for instance, the ways in which the road bandits, smugglers, currency speculators, and rogue customs officers who crisscross the Cameroonian border region near Nigeria and Chad, as described in a study by Janet Roitman. Their translocal activities are predicated on the existence of those borders—how, otherwise, could one speculate on the prices of commodities in different currencies and markets? And these forms of mobility among places generate the wealth that enables those who engage in them to support families in particular localities, even if they do not reside there for extensive stretches of time (Roitman 2005).

The stagings of overturned Sierra Leonean regimes in Guinea, with the border crossing this engendered, were another form of "translocal" activity, one with political, as well as wealth-producing, goals. During the 1997–1998 exile of the Kabbah government, for instance, loyalist factions—particularly of the Civil Defence Force—remained in Sierra Leone to fight against the AFRC-RUF junta, while receiving orders and supplies from a leadership that was in part across the border. Thus the geographic location of particular diasporic populations matters in relation to actual political, let alone military, projects. Spatial distance is usually minimized in the scholarship on diasporas, however, especially since widespread access to communication technologies have produced "cyber" diasporic communities that use a variety of fora, from Internet chat groups to social media, to form networks whose virtual connections reduce the importance of geographic location and distance. But the regrouping of Sierra Leonean governments in exile in neighboring Guinea and the case of prewar student oppositional politics in Ghana point to the fact that spatial proximity does matter to the degree of political investment in the homeland. Politically engaged individuals in diasporic settings nearby are more likely to return within their home country's territorial borders and take up active politics than émigrés residing farther afield.

From the mid-1990s, the main forum linking Sierra Leoneans in the diaspora—particularly those based in the United States and Europe—has been the Leonenet listserv, which after being hosted at MIT in its inception moved to the University of Maryland in Baltimore County (UMBC), where it has been hosted since. A study of Leonenet conducted in 2007 mentioned a membership of between 350 and 400 members, of whom, however, only 40 or 50 were active at any given point in time (Tynes 2007: 503). However, in 2004, a group of members split off in disagreement with what they perceived as the heavy-handed intervention of the UMBC webmaster and started a competing Leonenet list hosted at Texas A&M University (TAMU), where one of the dissidents was a faculty member. This list was said to have about 810 members,[11] but monitoring postings in the summer of 2011 showed about 60 unique email addresses,

with only about 20 contributing to debates on a regular basis. Additionally, a member of the original subgroup of the Sierra Leonean cybercommunity calling itself "the Sulima group" created a web archive of "select email exchanges on Leonenet during wartime" at http://www.sulima.com/leonenet/lindex.html, of which he appeared to be the sole manager.

Apart from this last, mostly archival site, the UMBC and TAMU Leonenet lists present their members with a high volume of postings. During the month beginning in mid-July 2011, 3,574 messages were posted to the TAMU Leonenet list, or an average of 126 messages per day. During the July 29–August 1 national convention of the opposition Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) in Sierra Leone, when a field of some nineteen candidates to the position of party "flag bearer" for the national elections of November 2012 was pared down to one, 259 messages were posted on Leonenet (TAMU). About 100 more, or 357 messages, were posted in an equal number of days immediately following the selection of Julius Maada Bio as the SLPP candidate to challenge the ruling party (and the country's presidency) in the 2012 elections, mostly discussing the controversial choice of this candidate. Maada Bio had been second in command to Captain Valentine Strasser in the National Provisional Ruling Council (or NPRC) military junta that ruled the country during 1992–1996, the period of the first half of the civil war, and postings that criticized his selection referred to this regime's failed promises to clean up the corrupt politics of the APC's single party rule that it had overthrown. Nonetheless, even this high volume of postings did not reach the daily average of the month, and this perhaps because these messages were longer and more thoughtful than the many short, superficial messages that seemed to prevail at other times.

Doing research for substantial amounts of time on this cybercommunity is made challenging by the large volume of messages one receives as a subscriber—as the numbers above suggest—but also by their topical range from broad collective concerns and the public good to personal, even intimate matters. My sporadic monitoring of the list since I first joined it in 1994 suggests that often the bulk of the messages were about social gossip, rather than the critical rational discourse Habermas (1991) envisioned when theorizing the public sphere as a space—the institutions and organizations, which historically ranged from literary societies to newspapers, but in more recent times expanded to include civic associational life, for instance, in unions, religious communities, or school alumni chapters—where private individuals joined to deliberate matters of common interest and to intervene in political matters. In his own reflections on the "virtual neighborhoods" formed by Internet communities, Appadurai saw them as sites where a "transnational intelligentsia" could form a critical

public sphere (1996: 195), but the volley of 38 messages that followed one Leonenet member's posting of an image of a woman dressed in form-fitting clothes one day in July 2011 evoked a different image of neighborhood, one of licentious, mostly male locker room gossip, and certainly not one of rational exchanges among cosmopolitan citizens. Indeed, a 2007 published study found that 37.5 percent of Leonenet postings fell in this "personal" category of exchange, another 35.5 percent had to do with information and news, while only about 24.6 percent touched on politics (Tynes 2007: 506–507).

However, a focus on the nature of active participation in this virtual associational life should not occlude the variable importance of passive monitoring of its activities. Thus active participants in Leonenet discussions point out that members of the Sierra Leone government, or of the opposition, or prominent sympathizers regularly "lurk" on their lists—they read, but do not post messages—to keep in touch with concerns in the diaspora. [12] Perspectives that focus on communicative participation in the public sphere have not fully accounted for the variety of ways in which silent presence in certain domains may translate into more active forms of engagement in others.

Other forms of online and paper publications by diaspora groups were more politically focused, so much so that their authors became recognized parties in transactions at the national or international level—for instance, as formally organized expatriate branches of political parties or as parties to peace talks during the 1991–2002 civil war. These were often extensions of welfare groups focused on development projects at home which, though often organized according to relatively narrow subnational criteria, such as geography (e.g., the Sewa River Descendants' Association or the Pujehun District Development Association), or education (the alumni associations of the country's prestigious educational institutions), also displayed the features of associational life typical of a vibrant civil society. These diasporic groups became not so much vehicles for reterritorialization of the state writ large, but in their local iterations at the chiefdom, district, and regional levels, or of interest groups only partially overlapping with political entities of any scale. However, the focus of these groups on development projects at home (and fundraising for these projects) underscores at a different level how they may be "captured" in the sense of having them provide welfare services that in the past were offered by the state. Indeed, these local NGOs are often a neglected component of global humanitarian governance, an aspect that is key to understanding the granular ways in which diasporic practices and imaginaries are deployed in home countries.

War, Civil Society, and the Sierra Leone Media

At the end of 1994, after vicious rebel attacks on his hometown of Serabu, and an attack on Bo at Christmas time, in which rebels masquerading as soldiers made their way into town, London-based attorney Ambrose Ganda, the brother of the Catholic Archbishop of Sierra Leone, Joseph Ganda, launched *Focus on Sierra Leone*. This was a desktop-published (and later online) subscription-based newsletter that offered frank political criticism, thoughts on avenues to peace, and often alternative or suppressed news items about the ongoing civil war. Through the newsletter and other avenues, Ganda became actively involved in peace-making efforts, eventually traveling to Abidjan with another UK-based Sierra Leonean expatriate, Omrie Gollie, in the months leading up to the 1996 accords signed there.[13] In *Focus on Sierra Leone*, Ganda had been critical of the NPRC military regime then in power in Freetown, and at the same time he sought dialogue with all parties to the war. This sparked a smear campaign against him on the Internet—and Leonenet in particular—by regime sympathizers, in which he was accused of being a mouthpiece for the RUF rebels (Ganda 1996). Though Ganda distanced himself from the RUF after the collapse of the 1996 peace accords and the beginning of rebel mutilation campaigns, Gollie went the opposite way—he became the RUF's official spokesman. By the beginning of 2006, Gollie was imprisoned for treason for purportedly plotting an attempt on the life of former vice president Solomon Berewa.[14] As for *Focus on Sierra Leone*, it was discontinued around 2001, once peace was on the horizon—its main impetus having been to put an end to the civil war—and Ambrose Ganda died from an illness in April 2003.

Another attempt to expand public dialogue and political engagement in Sierra Leone—partly from the diaspora or with support and outlets there—was carried out by the NINJAS, the National Independent Neutral Journalist's Association (of Sierra Leone). The underground but ubiquitous group was founded by a handful of Sierra Leonean journalists in response to curtailment of press freedoms by President Kabbah's government in 1998 and 1999. These journalists refused to accept the notion that freedom of the press in wartime could be treasonable, put forth in public pronouncements by Minister of Information Julius Spencer and others, and began posting their news and opinion pieces anonymously on the Internet. They sought interviews with leaders of all fighting factions—including RUF rebels—and often reported evidence that countered government propaganda on the unfolding conflict. The government went to some length to identify, detain, and prosecute the NINJAS and in

June 1999 arrested two journalists for allegedly passing on to them information "prejudicial to the state of Sierra Leone."

Like the community of readers and writers of *Focus on Sierra Leone*, the NINJAS sought to maintain an impartial stance and access to all parties in the civil war, including enemies of the state, because, as Ambrose Ganda wrote in one of his editorials, "you don't have to make peace with your friends"—in other words, the real challenge is to engage in compromise with one's enemies, not with one's allies. Their best interventions fulfilled precisely the call for a persuasive, rational, and critical debate that Habermas saw as a crucial element of the liberal public sphere. The content of their communications, even when these involved personal attacks on public figures, never veered toward the gossip that regularly emerged on Leonenet, even at the height of the civil war. Nonetheless, it is difficult to gauge their impact and the scale of the phenomena they represented and whether they were critical to bringing opposing parties together in efforts to bring about peace.

The different trajectories of Ganda and Gollie also underscore the potentials and pitfalls of political engagements with, and in, the homeland by diasporic citizens, often animated by idealism. During the negotiations leading to the November 1996 Abidjan peace accords, both men traveled there several times, sometimes at their own expense, as members of diasporic Sierra Leonean organizations. In an effort to cleanse Sierra Leonean politics from the taint of the APC single party regime that dominated the decades preceding civil war, and which was blamed for the squandering of the country's human and material resources, many called on successful members of the diaspora to run in the 1996, and successive, elections. Thus James Jonah, a career UN civil servant from Sierra Leone who rose to the rank of under-secretary general for political affairs, left in 1994 to serve as interim chair of the National Electoral Commission, and later became a minister in president Kabbah's elected government. President Kabbah himself had retired from a career of some 20 years as a UN civil servant (in the United Nations Development Programme) when he stood for election in 1996. Indeed, the 1996 elections saw a marked shift in the scope of Sierra Leonean electoral politics beyond state boundaries, with candidates canvassing for votes and fundraising among diasporic communities, especially in Europe and the United States, both through personal visits and through Internet websites. The pattern was repeated and expanded for the elections of 2002 and 2007, and by the 2012 elections, several candidates had set up websites to fundraise and campaign among Sierra Leoneans in Europe and the United States, as well as scheduled multicity tours in those regions. This trend informed the creation of an "Office of Diaspora Affairs" in Sierra Leone's government, with its own link on the official website.

The expansion of the canvassing territory for Sierra Leone elections beyond national boundaries among members of the diaspora is in itself

not a new phenomenon. Historically, the best and brightest among colonial subjects traveled abroad for their education, and these periods of residency in the diaspora—usually in the metropolitan centers of the colonial powers that ruled their homelands—were often formative to the political careers of many African leaders, as mentioned above. Several postindependence leaders were recruited in the diaspora for their political careers at home. However, these diasporic experiences in pursuit of education were understood, usually, to be temporary, whereas today study abroad is often undertaken as a springboard to permanent relocation. With a larger citizenry abroad, where even the less educated and working class have high incomes in comparison to Sierra Leoneans at home, the scale and character of the state's effort to reterritorialize its diaspora has changed as well.

In a study of the Eritrean diaspora, Victoria Bernal wrote, "Despite their lack of wealth, the diaspora has contributed millions of dollars to Eritrea, not only in the form of remittances to family members, but also through taxes paid to the Eritrean state, donations contributed for various projects and, most significantly, to fund the 1998–2000 border conflict with Ethiopia" (Bernal 2006: 165). The Eritrean case is perhaps an extreme instance of a state that was already in existence as a fiscal and regulatory entity (e.g., levying taxes), before having a sovereign territory—one whose legitimacy as a separate entity from Ethiopia was in part predicated on its ability to reterritorialize its diaspora. As we have seen above, the Sierra Leonean diaspora, too, played a role in supporting the 1991–2002 war, as well as the peace efforts that periodically sought to put an end to the conflict.

The Political Economy of Diasporic Networks

Diasporas and their extraterritorial locations are increasingly factored into the domestic politics of states, particularly those in the Global South with large and engaged populations abroad such as the Eritrean diaspora mentioned above. In some cases, like the island nations of Cape Verde in Africa, or Tonga in the Pacific, the diasporic population outnumbers residents in the homeland, so demographic factors amplify the economic and political weight of émigrés.[15] For Sierra Leonean and other African governments this is in part because of the rising importance of remittances as factors in their economies, which saw a dramatic increase when the conflicts of the 1990s produced waves of refugees that joined established diasporas abroad.[16] Emmanuel Akyeampong analyzed the case of Ghana, which had a large and very successful diaspora not only in Europe and North America but also in Nigeria, after the 1970s oil boom made this an attractive destination nearby, at a time when Ghana itself was going through a slump due in part to the fall in value of its export commodities on the global

markets. Akyeampong noted that every year between 1983 and 1990, private individual remittances from Ghanaians abroad outstripped foreign business investments in the country, and the government began to send representatives on regular missions to the United States to discuss investments and the economy with the diaspora (2000). Broader comparative studies show that even when foreign direct investments in a developing country exceed remittances, which is usually the case, those investments are themselves often due to the influence of members of the diaspora (Newland and Patrick 2004). For Sierra Leone, remittances coming into the country were estimated in 1995 to be $24 million, almost doubling to $47 million by 2009 (World Bank 2011: 386).

The perception that the diaspora has a "value added" effect on the political and public sphere at home is evident in Sierra Leonean electoral politics. Prominent members of the US and UK diasporas were approached and asked to run for national political office, or to attend and support fundraisers—as mentioned above.[17] At the end of the 1991–2002 civil war, several of the 40 percent paramount chieftaincies that were vacant were filled with candidates from the diaspora. In some cases, candidates returned to Sierra Leone for the purpose of canvassing for electoral office, after having spent most of their lives abroad,[18] and their "foreignness" was seen as an asset in harnessing development and economic opportunities for their chiefdoms.

Additionally, some of their supporters felt that bringing back diasporic Sierra Leoneans whose livelihoods did not depend on their political office made them less corruptible. Better choose paramount chiefs who could count on savings and secure pensions built over lifetimes of employment abroad—the argument went—as this would make them less prone to extract excessive fines and tributes from their subjects. In this regard, it is worth noting that strategies of extraversion can be deployed toward democratic outcomes as well, for the dependence on foreign pensions, businesses, and investments were seen as minimizing inducements to using the chieftaincy to accumulate personal wealth. Finally, the exposure of these diasporic chiefs to the wider world beyond Sierra Leone was thought to provide some protection from becoming too embroiled in shortsighted and local factionalism.

Thus the increasing participation of diasporic Sierra Leoneans in the electoral politics of their home country, by financing campaigns through fundraisers, by returning to stand for office, and through vigorous debates in the media, through Internet lists, and so on, has reshaped national politics over the past several decades. But, as the political debates surrounding chieftaincy elections suggest, the impact of these changes is especially

notable in local politics, where the election of diasporic candidates who lack familiarity with the intricacies of chiefdom micropolitics is potentially more momentous. Political factions at the chiefdom level often form over time, and are based on historical land disputes, on enmities that shape or break marriage alliances, kinship loyalties, intergenerational bonds of dependency, and so on. In this scenario, a "foreign" chief is at a distinct disadvantage and often becomes a figurehead with little influence in a chiefdom's realpolitik, which instead is in the hands of established and longtime resident power brokers, though as the latter may be chiefly relatives, their interests are not necessarily in conflict with those of the titular office holder.

Many of the new chiefs elected in the aftermath of the 1991–2002 civil war, including some who had returned from the diaspora to stand for office, were *de facto* absentee chiefs. Indeed, some were elected precisely so they could be in the capital city or large towns where aid agencies, NGOs, and government offices were based, in order that they might better advocate on behalf of their constituencies and harness the resources such entities could channel their way. In other words, a chief's ability to tap into networks that offered opportunities for extraversion was in the calculus of his or her election from the beginning, and from this perspective, provenance from the diaspora could be a distinct advantage.

Conclusions

If sovereignty is in part shaped by the ways in which states reterritorialize themselves, including ways well beyond their physical boundaries, what roles do diasporas play in this process? This chapter's broader point is that in the first instance, one must identify empirically where and how states are integrated at particular moments in time in order to understand the nature of their relation to the physical, imaginary, and moral landscape of those among their subjects who are involved in transnational migrations or live in established diasporas abroad. States are integrated well beyond their territorial borders, for instance, through practices of documentation, such as the provision or withdrawal of passports and other identification documents, or in the rhetorical and economic practices that link governments to diasporic populations through discourse, flows of remittances, and so on. These forms and levels of extraterritorial state integration are increasingly important for considering the relationship between democracy and security in Africa—a point that is missed in the focus on state institutions and services that has prevailed in the scholarship on weak or

failed African states since the 1990s. This is especially true for relatively small countries, like Sierra Leone or Ghana, whose diasporic populations are disproportionately influential in the political economy of the homeland. The increasing importance of diasporic communities in state politics also suggests that scholars and policy-makers must rethink normative notions of sovereignty that are tied to territory and focus instead on state practices through which sovereignty is instantiated, as well as on the many forms of political practice that mark the limits of such instantiations.

One of the key contributions of this chapter to the scholarship on the political role of diasporas in home countries, particularly in the context of war displacements, is to demonstrate that though new technologies of communication and forms of mobility unmoor these communities from particular territories in some ways, in other ways their spatial location is crucial to understanding their impact, and the imaginary practices defining them. More generally, their emplacement in space often shapes the temporal dimensions of their political practices. During the upheavals and coups of the 1991–2002 civil war in their country, key Sierra Leonean political leaders remained in Guinea or elsewhere in West Africa in order to engage actively in the war effort or governance in exile, as they anticipated—and worked toward—their return to the home country. This anticipation was muted or entirely absent in diasporic Sierra Leonean populations that were more broadly dispersed and had resided abroad for longer, among whom gatherings and discussions—via the Internet or other media—were as likely to be centered around social events like weddings, funerals, naming ceremonies, and development fundraising, as on political matters (D'Alisera 2004).

In the aftermath of a violent civil war like the one that unfolded in Sierra Leone as well as other African countries during the 1990s, several factors led to the increasing importance of diasporic engagements in homeland politics: (a) the size of diasporic populations increased as refugees from the wars of that decade permanently settled abroad, in part thanks to developments in the protections offered by the global traction of humanitarian interventions and institutions; (b) economies of scale and competition made long-distance travel more accessible to increasing numbers of people; and, (c) advances in communication technologies placed within reach of ordinary consumers computers, cheap faxes, mobile phones, and Internet access. But claiming that the diaspora has greater weight in a country's internal politics says nothing of future prospects for forms of democratic participation that lead to security and social justice. Indeed, linking democratic futures to practices such as the holding of "free and fair elections," which often lead to the opposite outcome in places like Sierra Leone, makes us miss more substantive emancipatory prospects.

Citizens in the diaspora are increasingly included in political and economic matters of concern to the state, both internally, as partners in development and business projects, health care initiatives, and so on, and externally, for instance, as participants in internationally brokered peace talks, as was the case for the publisher of *Focus on Sierra Leone* and others. But the nature of these political engagements needs to be examined empirically in different settings—they are not always democratic in outcome.

The figure of the refugee changes the contours of diasporic populations and reactivates transnational flows of a people in sometimes unexpected ways. Thus, as discussed above, programs set in place by international aid groups and host countries to address the humanitarian needs of Sierra Leonean and other war-affected populations residing abroad also enabled migrants who had left their homelands in earlier times, before the outbreak of conflict, to move on to more attractive destinations in Europe and the United States—in other words, to swap a diasporic for a refugee identity. But with the end of the civil war and of those programs, many began to turn to human traffickers and to more circuitous routes to move to new, nontraditional destinations for Sierra Leoneans, such as Turkey (as a gateway to Europe) and Australia. At the same time, the war refugee crisis as both a demographic and a moral phenomenon pushed political participation of the diaspora in national politics to a sort of "tipping point," with both sides of that relationship—diasporic communities and national governments—increasing the pace of exchanges.

Another related point has to do with the kinds of publics produced by new communication technologies, especially cell phones and the Internet. While sometimes online fora might seem to extend the reach of neighborhood or private gossip circuits, at other times, for instance, in the cases of the community of contributors and readers of *Focus on Sierra Leone* and of the NINJAS Internet postings, these have been used by the diaspora to engage critically with political actors and institutions in Sierra Leone and neighboring countries, with appreciable results. Diasporic Sierra Leoneans also became credible interlocutors with international and global institutions intervening in the civil war and beyond, perhaps because their very distance from the heat of conflict made their backing for any particular peace plan appear more secure.

Finally, over time, diasporic populations change, and so, too, does their relationship with the homeland—a relationship partly informed by conditions in the host country. The children of Sierra Leoneans in the United States, for instance, are American citizens, and though many parents want their offspring to visit the homeland and family there, there are generational differences in the quality and strength of their attachments to

Sierra Leone, suggesting a more cosmopolitan future in which national belongings will be more muted, at least for this population. By contrast, during the 1990s, many second-generation Sierra Leoneans born and residing in Egypt, even those of mixed Egyptian parentage, lived in a world of imaginary longing for a "home" country most of them did not even know, because of racist attitudes in their host country and due to the lack of access to citizenship and economic opportunities. Phenomena such as *Focus on Sierra Leone* and the many social fora that have proliferated through the efforts of Sierra Leoneans abroad suggest that regardless of their location or of the nature of their attachments, they will continue to participate in the political life of their country of origin, and on a global scale, through the latest available technologies. But as elsewhere, we cannot forecast whether such efforts will have a democratizing effect—they may be co-opted for conservative, even authoritarian purposes, or remain mired in anachronistic, parochial nostalgia.

Notes

1. I am grateful to Prof. Jacqueline Knörr and Cristoph Kohl of the Max Planck Institute in Halle, Germany, for organizing and inviting me to the 2010 workshop in which I circulated an earlier version of this chapter. I benefited from their comments and those of other workshop participants, and from the research assistance of Rebecca Small.
2. The expression was used by Giorgio Agamben to describe the concentration camp, and also other liminal spaces subject to the suspension of normal rights and legal protections, such as transit centers at airports where improperly documented immigrants are detained while decisions concerning their status are pending (see Agamben 1998: 174–175).
3. Note that the size of this camp would make it larger than most towns in Guinea. In a similar manner, the refugee camp of Gondama in Sierra Leone was at one point characterized as "the third largest city" in Sierra Leone (Kaplan 2001: 8).
4. More generally, for classic work on the place of the media in fostering a sense of belonging to national communities and the emergence of a critical public sphere, see respectively Anderson (1991) and Habermas (1991).
5. The dates of online community interactions and internet usage analyzed in this chapter reflect the fact that research for it was conducted in 2010–2011, when it was first drafted and submitted for publication.
6. These figures are from http://www.internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm. See, too, M'Bayo and Mogkewu (2000). However, Tynes (2007: 500) cites a figure of 2,000 Internet users in Sierra Leone in 2001. For Nigeria, see Smith (2006: 498), and for Ghana, see Burrell (2012).
7. The World Bank Development Indicators document defines net migration as the difference between emigrants and immigrants.

8. Ammassari defines the net migration rate as the difference between the population growth rate and the natural population growth rate in one year per 1,000 inhabitants, but as mentioned in an earlier note, other sources define it as the difference between immigrants and emigrants in a given period of time. Furthermore, Ammassari's statistics for Sierra Leonean rates of migration to the United States and the United Kingdom depart from the more conservative World Bank estimates quoted earlier. During the five-year period between 1995 and 2000, she writes that about 40 percent of Sierra Leonean migrants headed for Europe (the United Kingdom in particular), with the remaining 60 percent going to the United States.
9. This information was drawn from Alie Kabba's Leonenet posting on December 23, 1996, available on the "Sulima group" archives at http://www.leonenet.info/, and was confirmed in a 2011 phone conversation with Patrick Muana on July 21, 2011. On the critical role of Green Book study group leaders in the rise of the RUF, see Richards (2005).
10. There is a rich scholarly literature on the ways in which diasporic experiences radicalized political leaders who then went on to join emancipatory struggles—from anticolonial to nationalist and other conflicts. See, for instance, literature on Gandhi and his experience in England and South Africa in relation to his political life in India, Peter Van der Veer (1995: 5).
11. Telephone interview with Patrick Muana, July 21, 2011.
12. In a study of the Internet's role in shaping a public sphere in diaspora communities, Parham suggests that the "Corbett List," one of several Internet lists focused on Haitian interests, became a "vertical" public sphere, organized hierarchically to transmit the concerns of the diaspora to the government at home. It also was the site most heavily monitored by members of the Haitian government under President Aristide, who sometimes "lurked," but at other times intervened directly to explain government policies debated by the list (Parham 2005: 360).
13. The newsletter archives are available at http://www.focus-on-sierra-leone.co.uk/. See, on the role of Ganda and Gollie in peace talks, Ganda (1996) and Lord (2000: 45).
14. Spreading rumors about disloyalty, even collusion in attempted coups, was a common tactic for eliminating political enemies in times of shifting alliances. In 1994, the NPRC junta executed 29 Sierra Leoneans for supposedly plotting a coup against Valentine Strasser, its leader.
15. For Cape Verde, see Bourdet and Falck (2006), for Tonga, Besnier (2012).
16. For a study of remittances from African refugee diasporas, with a special focus on London-based Somali refugees from the 1990s' civil wars, see Lindley (2009).
17. For an example of the myriad fundraisers among diasporic communities, this one in Texas, see Christian and Sesay 2012.
18. A case in point was Reverend Dr. Jeremiah Joe Sinnah-Yovonie Kangova II, who after decades spent in the United States as a student and then a scholar and religious leader, returned to Sierra Leone in 2004 to contest for the chieftaincy. The following year he was elected paramount chief of Kamajei Chiefdom, Moyamba District.

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5

The 2012 General Elections in Sierra Leone: Democratic Consolidation or Semi-authoritarian Regime[1]

Marda Mustapha

Introduction

In 2012, following the conclusion of the third elections since the end of the war in January 2002, international organizations proclaimed the elections free, fair, and peaceful[2] despite numerous reports of vote buying and other irregularities during the polls. As a result of the proclaimed free and fair verdict, the United Nations and some analysts concluded that the country is on the road to consolidating democracy, especially since the United Nations holds up Sierra Leone as a success story—its progress toward democracy a product of the international community's postwar intervention and democratization efforts. This chapter argues that such conclusions are untenable in the face of evidence presented. It focuses on the 2012 elections, calling into question both the "free and fair verdict" and the claims that Sierra Leone is on the path to consolidating democracy. It critically considers whether there is a regime committed to democracy in place, or rather a hybrid semi-authoritarian regime. To explore these questions, this chapter outlines the conceptual differences between democratic consolidation and hybrid regimes and poses the following questions: How is democratic consolidation measured? What are the characteristics and/or typologies of a hybrid regime? Is Sierra Leone consolidating democracy or

is the country increasingly becoming a semi-authoritarian state? Using Linz and Stepan's (1996) behavioral foundation of democratic consolidation and Ottaway's (2003) conception of a hybrid regime as semi-authoritarian, this chapter concludes that Sierra Leone is more of a semi-authoritarian state than one consolidating democracy.

This conclusion by no means suggests that other foundations conceptualizing democratic consolidation are not useful to the analysis, but as Schedler (2001) observed, the behavioral foundation "overshadows both attitudinal and structural factors" (85) of democratic consolidation.

The chapter is thus divided into four sections: The first and second sections discuss the debates on democratic consolidation and hybrid regimes respectively. The third and the fourth sections deal with the application of the conceptualizations of democratic consolidation and hybrid regimes to what obtains in Sierra Leone, particularly as it pertains to democratic institutions created to consolidate democracy (elections and regime type). The chapter concludes with an overall assessment of whether the evidence suggests Sierra Leone is consolidating democracy or emerging as a semi-authoritarian state.

Democratic Consolidation

While there is broad consensus that the transition to democracy ends with the successful conduct of free and fair elections, there is disagreement about how democracy can be sustained and preserved, or rather what constitutes democratic consolidation? The question then becomes one of what the characteristics of a consolidated democracy are. The debate on democratic consolidation has been divided into minimalist and maximalist categories. The minimalists' arguments are based on Robert Dahl's conception of democracy, which focuses almost entirely on elections or electoral democracy (Dahl 1972). The exclusive focus on elections has been criticized by Terry Karl (1990) as a fallacy of electoralism which Larry Diamond (1996) describes as the mistake of:

> Privileging electoral contestation over other dimensions of democracy and ignoring the degree to which multiparty elections, even if genuinely competitive, may effectively deny significant sections of the population the opportunity to contest for power or advance and defend their interests, or may leave significant arenas of decision-making power beyond the reach or control of elected officials. (22)

In essence, while elections are the most visible measurement of the existence of democracy, they are by no means sufficient in determining whether such democracy is consolidated, especially if other important aspects

needed for democratic consolidation are ignored. Furthermore, privileging elections implies that democracy functions effectively only during election cycles. To fill in the lacuna created by the minimalist definition of democracy, Dahl (1989) further identified seven characteristics of democratic regimes: (a) elected officials, (b) free and fair elections, (c) inclusive suffrage, (d) the right to run for office, (e) freedom of expression, (f) availability of alternative information, and (g) associational autonomy. These characteristics do not add much to Dahl's previous work that focused on elections as a central characteristic of democracy making; they are also insufficient to define democracy.

The maximalist conception of democratic consolidation includes civil liberties, political rights, and the fostering of democratic values in society through education and culture. Maximalists like Diamond (1997) define democratic consolidation as going beyond the minimalist conception to include organizational and informational pluralism; extensive civil liberties; effective power for elected officials; and functional autonomy for legislative, executive and judicial organs of government. Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan (1996) on the other hand suggest consolidated democracy encapsulates:

> a political situation in which a strong majority of public opinion holds the belief that democratic procedures and institutions are the most appropriate way to govern the collective life [where]. . . governmental and nongovernmental forces. . . are subjected to, and habituated to, the resolution of conflict within the specific laws, procedures, and institutions sanctioned by the democratic process. (6)

For Linz and Stepan (1996) democracy can be considered consolidated when the citizens accept that democracy lies at the core of the state and its functions, which in itself is a demonstration of the characteristics of democracy deeply rooted in the society. O'Donnell (1996), on the other hand, added a futuristic longevity component to the debate, arguing that democratic consolidation happens when it is the only recognized rule in governance, likely to endure and last well into the future.

In order to operationalize the futuristic conception of democratic consolidation, Linz and Stepan (1996) employ three major foundational assumptions, namely, behavioral, attitudinal, and socioeconomic. Behaviorally, democratic institutions are sustained by political actors. Schedler (2001) reaffirmed this assessment of democratic consolidation by arguing that democracy is not a "side effect of societal factors [it is rather] . . . the work of political actors" (69). The attitudinal assumption suggests that until political actors inculcate "normative motive, strategic

rationality and cognitive perceptions," democracy will almost always be under risk of erosion (Schedler 2001: 68). Socioeconomically, democracy is consolidated when the institutional settings suggest a favorable social and economic outlook in the country (Linz and Stepan 1996). Added to the three major foundations, Linz and Stepan (1996) postulated five interrelated conditions that must be present for democracy to be consolidated: necessary freedom for civil society activities; autonomous political society including political parties, credible elections, and effective legislature; rule of law guarantee for all citizens including the leaders of the state; usable state bureaucracy/state capacity; and an institutionalized economic society.

Hybrid Regimes

The term "hybrid regime," like that of "democratic consolidation," is contested in the democratization discourse that was ignited during the third wave of democratization. Irrespective of the contestation, a definitional thread that runs through the discourse is that a hybrid regime combines democratic institutions (multiparty system, competitive elections, and an elected legislature, to name a few) on the one hand and authoritarian practices on the other in such a way as to almost negate the importance of the existence of the democratic institutions (Ottaway 2003). Ottaway (2003) went a step further to describe these regimes as political systems that are "deliberately and carefully constructed and maintained. . . ." (7). In short there is broad agreement on the common characteristics of hybrid regimes. However the contestation lies with the typology or nomenclature of these regimes. In other words, what specific types of regimes are hybrid regimes?

The contested description of hybrid regimes has two diametrically opposed roots with one root using democracy as a point of departure, while the other uses authoritarianism as another point. Scholars using either root have conceptualized hybrid regimes as a diminished type of democracy or diminished authoritarianism, on the one hand, or procedural authoritarianism (electoral authoritarianism), on the other. Diamond et al. (1989) have described hybrid regimes as semi-democracy, while O'Donnell (1994) prefers to describe it as "delegative democracy." Fareed Zakaria (1997), in contrast, prefers "illiberal democracy." These nomenclatures of democracy, or the lack thereof, were encapsulated later in what Merkel (2004) described as "defective democracy." A defective democracy is one that is "damaged in such a way that it changes the entire logic of a constitutional democracy" (Merkel 2004: 40) and does not meet

the expectations of democracy as defined. On the other end of the hybrid regime description spectrum are scholars like Schedler (2002) who prefer nomenclature like "electoral authoritarianism," Levitsky and Way (2002) use "competitive authoritarianism," and semi-authoritarianism is what Ottaway (2003) prefers. For Ottaway (2003), semi-authoritarian regimes:

> are ambiguous systems that combine rhetorical acceptance of liberal democracy, the existence of some formal democratic institutions, and respect for a limited sphere of civil and political liberties with essentially liberal and authoritarian traits. [. . .] Semi-authoritarian systems are not imperfect democracies struggling toward improvement and consolidation but regimes determined to maintain the appearance of democracy without exposing themselves to the political risks that free competition entails. (3)

Such regimes are a consequence of pressures from the international community on nondemocratic nations, especially in Africa, to democratize particularly after the fall of communism in several countries across the globe and the triumph of global capitalist and free market economics. In other words, semi-authoritarian regimes are democracies only in form and not in substance, focusing largely on regime survival, albeit through nondemocratic channels rather than democratic consolidation. Such regimes have four interrelated characteristics which include opposition co-optation through patronage, thereby reducing the chances of transfer of power; the deliberate weakening of institutions set up to satisfy international observers so that the leadership of few political elites becomes the source of regime stability; the aversion of these elites to free, open, and equal competition; and the perception that civil society groups are threats to regime survival. In addition, political elites in semi-authoritarian regimes pay lip service to democracy and depend most times on populist rhetoric; they have no distinct ideology nor do they have a coherent political program (Ottaway 2003).

Regimes with the above characteristics are deliberately designed to subvert the tenets of democracy as they have no intention of allowing complete political liberalization; thus, the regimes carefully construct and maintain an alternative system that is anything but democratic (Ottaway 2003). Elections are manipulated, votes are bought, and competitive elections are delegitimized as state treasury resources are used to swell campaign coffers; intimidation and violence against opposition is not uncommon; and unfair voter registration strategies and vote suppression activities, such as decreased number of polling stations forcing voters to travel long distances, are broadly employed in opposition strongholds (Ottaway 2003).

With such structure, opposition parties have no real chance of winning elections because while the ruling party elites allow competition from the opposition, they are confident that the semi-authoritarian structure in place will almost always guarantee that power is not alternated. Opposition parties are repressed, manipulated, or co-opted in a system that ensures that they are always in disarray (Joseph 2003). Furthermore, semi-authoritarian regime leaders become the rallying point through patronage and corrupt self-enrichment schemes. With systemic corruption, the regime successfully consolidates power. Thus, according to Ottaway (2003), using titles of shallow democracy, defective democracy, delegative democracy, or electoral authoritarianism for hybrid regimes are misleading as these regimes are neither in transition, to nor are they failed democracies.

The 2012 Elections

Given the discussion in the above section, can Sierra Leone be correctly described as a consolidated (or a consolidating) democracy based on the 2012 elections? As previously stated, the behavioral assumptions of Linz and Stepan (1996) will serve as a foundation for answering this question, particularly against the backdrop of published reports of "credible" international organizations that monitored or observed the election.

The final report on the 2012 elections by the Commonwealth Observer Group concluded that "the 2012 National and Local Council Elections were to consolidate the democratic gains made since the end of the civil war in 2002" (Commonwealth Secretariat "Sierra Leone National and Local Elections", Report of Commonwealth Observer Group, 2012: 29). In addition, the interim statement by the Chairman of the Commonwealth Observer Group Olara Otunnu concluded that "these elections have met international standards and benchmarks for free and transparent multi-party elections" regardless of the shortcomings which they observed (2012: 41). The Executive Representative of the United Nations' Secretary General to Sierra Leone Jens Anders Toyberg-Frandzen reported to the United Nations Security Council that "holding presidential, parliamentary and local council elections on the same date, in November, . . . demonstrate[s] the maturity of the country's political leadership and institutions, as well as the consolidation of its democratic process" (United Nations Meetings, Coverage and Press Releases 2013). The Commonwealth Elections Observer Final Report (2012), on the other hand, suggested that democratic consolidation in the country will depend on the respect for electoral outcomes. The report went further to vouch for the independence and impartiality of the National Electoral Commission (NEC). The 2013 Freedom of the World Report issued by

Freedom House improved the free status of Sierra Leone from 3 (partly free) to 2.5 (free) because of "free and fair presidential and parliamentary elections" (Freedom House 2013). Of all the reports, only Freedom House categorically declared the 2012 elections in Sierra Leone as free and fair. The Commonwealth and United Nations limited their evaluation of the elections to free and transparent. The European Union seems to indirectly suggest fairness as the report claimed the NEC to be "impartial."

The fairness of an election is important in the larger scheme of things when determining whether the election itself is a sign of consolidating democracy. The evidence suggests that the election in Sierra Leone was anything but fair and NEC was anything but impartial and that the 2012 election was essentially manipulated, which further suggests that such an election cannot be used as a yardstick for democratic consolidation.

Concerns about the fairness of the NEC and by extension the conduct of the 2012 elections were first raised in 2010 by the opposition SLPP when Christiana Thorpe was nominated by President Koroma for a second term as Chief Electoral Commissioner. The then Chairman of the SLPP John Benjamin opposed the reappointment of Thorpe because the SLPP had previously sued the nominee for nullifying the results of 477 polling stations during the 2007 general elections in contravention of Section 78 of the Electoral Laws Act of 2002 (*Awoko Newspaper* 2010), which states that "the decision of the Counting Officer as to any question arising in respect of any ballot paper shall be final and subject to review only on an election petition questioning the election" (The Electoral Laws Act 2002). As such, the opposition argued that chief electoral commissioner acted ultra vires when in 2007 she canceled election results from the opposition's stronghold. The matter between the chief electoral commissioner and the opposition was being adjudicated in the Supreme Court when President Koroma made his intentions to reappoint Thorpe known to the opposition. Despite the concerns and opposition raised by the SLPP, President Koroma sought approval of her nomination from Parliament.

SLPP parliamentarians also raised objections to Thorpe's nomination and argued that discussing her nomination was a violation of Parliamentary Standing Order 32, Subsection 6, which states: "Reference shall not be made to any matter on which a judicial decision is pending". The order was invariably invoked by opposition parliamentarians because the matter between the nominee and SLPP was sub judice. That notwithstanding, the APC Majority leader and Chairman of the Appointment Committee in Parliament S. B. B. Dumbuya overruled the opposition and decided to move forward with the approval process. This action caused the main opposition SLPP to stage a walk out of Parliament and Thorpe's nomination was subsequently approved notwithstanding the opposition's protests and absence.

During the run-up to the elections, Thorpe had sent a letter to all political parties informing them that she was going to make the voters' register available to them and that they could use the register to verify voters' identities before they voted. On November 14, at a meeting attended by international observers, civil society groups, and representatives of all the political parties, she reaffirmed that letter. On the day of the election, the opposition provided the voters' register to all of their polling agents to aid them in verifying the identities of voters. However, Thorpe made an announcement, condemning the opposition for using the very voter register she had provided them for verification. During the same broadcast, she gave instructions that polling agents found using the voters' register be arrested. This announcement led to the subsequent arrest of opposition polling agents using the voters' register all over the country, effectively paralyzing the opposition's mechanism to verify whether a voter was eligible to vote. Incidentally, only the main opposition, the SLPP, had armed their polling agents with the voters' register (SLPP Press Statement 2012).

At the same (November 14) meeting, the opposition raised objection about the number of Election Day passes that the Electoral Commissioner of Western Area Miata French had given to the Open Government Initiative (OGI) housed in the Office of the President. The opposition questioned the rationale for giving 300 Election Day passes to an office with only 17 workers. Miata French responded that she did not know how many passes she had issued to the OGI. The opposition argued later that since the OGI was staffed with only APC operatives, the issuance of that many passes to OGI for the Western Area gave undue advantage to APC party operatives to move freely while opposition movement was restricted because of the ban on vehicular traffic on Election Day.[3]

Furthermore, opposition party polling agents reported that NEC workers prevented some of them from entering the rooms in the polling stations where the ballots were being counted. Some later expressed dismay that the polling stations they manned actually recorded zero votes for the main opposition candidates after the counting. Vandi, an opposition polling agent at the Saint Edwards Secondary School polling center at Kingtom, had this to say:

> I was a polling agent and most of the people in our compound were very strong SLPP supporters and I saw up to twenty of them in line and they voted. I am therefore very much surprised that only five votes were recorded for Maada Bio at our polling station. I was not even allowed to enter where the votes were being counted so I had no way of challenging it on the spot.
>
> (Interview: June 2013)

Stories like Vandi's, of the contravention of Section 73, Subsection 1 of the Electoral Laws Act 2002 which states, "For the purpose of the counting of the votes under section 75, . . . each political party contesting the election shall appoint one person, hereinafter referred to as a 'counting agent', for each polling station to attend at the counting of the votes," were common particularly in Kono District, Western Area, and the Northern Province of Sierra Leone (*Awoko* 2012). Charles Margai, the presidential candidate of the People's Movement for Democratic Change, made a similar lamentation when he was interviewed on radio about the credibility of the election results. Margai expressed dismay that even the polling station where he and his family voted recorded zero votes for him. Margai told the Independent Radio Network, "Even if my family did not vote for me, I'm shocked to hear that I got zero vote at a station I voted for myself" (Bah 2012a).

Three observer missions, namely the European Union, Carter Center, and Commonwealth, reported that the incumbent APC party openly bought votes (Commonwealth Election Observer Mission Final Report 2012; *Awoko* 2012), while frequently using state resources at its disposal. Between October 17 and November 16, the country's television station, the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation Television (SLBCTV), allocated 40 percent airtime to the APC party and 21 percent to the government as against about 18 percent for the main opposition, SLPP (Commonwealth Election Observer Mission Final Report 2012: 25). In the same vein, the incumbent president Koroma enjoyed 46 percent airtime on SLBCTV compared to 12 percent for his closest challenger, Maada Bio. Radio time allocation bias was not much different from the television airtime bias, with Koroma getting 49 percent coverage as against Maada Bio's 30 percent (Commonwealth Election Observer Mission Final Report 2012: 26). This disparity in access to media was in contravention of Section 120, Subsection 1 of the National Electoral Commission Act 2002, which states: "The Electoral Commission shall, during an election campaign period, ensure that equal air time is given to each candidate and each political party on the national radio and television" (National Electoral Commission Act 2002). There is no evidence that the NEC made any effort to rectify the unfair access the APC party and their presidential candidate had to government-controlled media during the elections.

There were also incidents of violence against the main opposition SLPP purportedly by the APC government both at the run-up to and during the elections. After winning the SLPP's flag bearer contest, Julius Maada Bio decided to embark on a nationwide "thank you" tour. His convoy was attacked in Bo on September 9, 2011, by supporters of the incumbent APC party (*African Young Voices Newspaper* 2011). Bio sustained

head injuries and was flown out of country for medical treatment (Independent Investigation Panel Report 2011). Further, on the day of the elections, the wife of former president Tejan-Kabbah, Isata Jabbie-Kabba, who was also the Women's Leader of the main opposition, SLPP, was assaulted at the Services Secondary School Polling Center in constituency 112 by the presidential bodyguard, Idrissa Kamara, commonly known as "Leatherboots" (SLPP Press Statement 2012). Later that same evening, in the same constituency (112) but at the Malama Comprehensive Academy Polling Center, Kamara and other armed personnel accompanying him forced NEC workers to keep polling stations open long after they were supposed to have closed. Kamara and his group blocked the entrance of the polling station preventing polling officials from leaving. The standoff lasted for about two hours.[4]

Added to the above, evidence also suggests voter suppression in the opposition stronghold of Kailahun District and also in Kono District where the opposition won seven of the eight parliamentary seats and more presidential votes in the 2007 elections. To minimize the effect of the ban on vehicular traffic on voter participation, the NEC provided buses for voters in all districts except Kailahun and Kono Districts (Kamara 2012). The average distance between polling stations in these two districts was about seven miles. It should be noted that while some authorized vehicular traffic was allowed, motorcycles, the major mode of transportation in the two districts, were completely banned on Election Day, forcing voters to travel long distances on foot to get to polling stations, essentially disenfranchising the old and infirm in the two districts. It turned out that the two districts had one of the lowest voter turnouts on Election Day. While no report indicated that the low turnout was due to the lack of transportation, Table 5.1 is very instructive in elucidating the voter turnout as regards the districts that were provided with buses as against those without buses.

The Eastern Province that is home to two of the districts that were not provided transportation on Election Day had a voter turnout of 82.5 percent, which is the lowest turnout outside Western Urban. It should be noted that Western Urban, even though they were provided buses, had the second lowest voter turnout. Kono District recorded about 51 percent voter turnout, which was the lowest in the country.

The judiciary seems to have also been used as an instrument of manipulation to reduce the number of seats the opposition has in the legislature. The candidacies of two opposition politicians in constituency 05 in the Kailahun District and constituency 15 in Kenema District were challenged in the High Court on the grounds that they had received salaries from the

Table 5.1 2012 Presidential Election Voter Turnout by District

Region	*District*	*Number of registered voters*	*Valid votes cast for president*	*Invalid votes*	*Turnout (%)*	*Voters absent from the polls (%)*
Eastern	**Kailahun**	146,055	116,728	5,316	83.5	16.4
	Kono	249,065	115,529	9,247	50.09	49.9
	Kenema	207,514	209,535	6,237	82.5	17.5
Total		**560,103**	**439,771**	**20,800**	**82.2**	**17.8**
Southern	**Bo**	249,763	219,582	6,956	90.7	10.3
	Bonthe	73,991	65,477	3,434	93.2	6.8
	Moyamba	131,865	109,545	6,848	89.3	11.7
	Pujehun	82,126	67,993	2,901	86.4	13.6
Total		**537,745**	**462,597**	**20,139**	**89.7**	**10.3**
Northern	**Kambia**	139,355	107,624	8,560	83.4	16.6
	Koinadugu	140,013	103,305	7,140	92.2	7.8
	Port Loko	239,068	202,532	10,719	89.3	10.7
	Bombali	222,703	188,873	7,637	88	11.8
	Tonkolili	187,804	157,054	7,780	87.7	12.3
Total		**928,943**	**759,388**	**41,836**	**86.3**	**13.7**
Western	**Rural**	164,891	136,395	8,483	87.8	12.2
	Urban	509,617	320,495	18,660	66.5	33.5
Total		**674,508**	**456,890**	**27,143**	**71.7**	**28.3**

Source: Figures were compiled from the NEC website, http://www.nec-sierraleone.org/Presidential.html

government within one year of the elections, contrary to the Constitution, which states:

> No person shall be qualified for election as a Member of Parliament if he is a member of any Commission established under this Constitution, or a member of the Armed Forces of the Republic, or a public officer, or an employee of a Public Corporation established by an Act of Parliament, or has been such a member, officer or employee within twelve months prior to the date on which he seeks to be elected to Parliament.
>
> (Sierra Leone Constitution 1991, Section 76 (1) (b))

The aggrieved parties who lost the nomination contest for the opposition, Sam Macarthy and Brima Kamanda of Constituencies 05 and 15 respectively, petitioned the High Court for an interlocutory injunction to prevent Ansu Lansana and Afiju Kanja from being nominated as SLPP candidates for Constituencies 05 and 15 respectively. However, the High Court granted the injunction after the political parties had already nominated their respective candidates and the NEC had printed ballot papers. The injunction precluded Lansana and Kanja from presenting themselves as candidates until the matter was heard. The cases were filed on October 22, 2012, and the injunction granted about one week before the election on November 6 and 7, pending hearing. The NEC could not delete the names of the candidates from the ballot papers and voters in the two constituencies voted overwhelmingly for the two candidates but the NEC refused to announce the results for the two constituencies. The High Court, however, made a ruling on the case one year after the 2012 elections and declared the ruling party candidates who lost by a wide margin the winners of the election. The High Court argued that the opposition candidates had presented themselves for elections and so therefore they should forfeit the results. The courts directed the NEC to nullify all votes won by the two opposition candidates (they had the majority of the votes) and declare the losing ruling APC party candidates as winners. In essence, the High Court disenfranchised thousands of voters because, first, they could not hold the hearing for the petition in a timely manner and, second, the NEC could not remove the names of the opposition candidates. This action by the High Court unsurprisingly increased the APC's majority to 82 seats, which is 1 seat short of a two-thirds majority needed to change certain clauses in the Constitution (*Politico Newspaper* 2013; *Oxford Analytica Daily Brief* 2015).

The foregoing narratives are consistent with an election that would happen in a semi-authoritarian regime. It can therefore be argued that the 2012 elections in Sierra Leone were, as Andreas Schedler (2006) describes,

> broadly inclusive . . . minimally competitive (opposition parties, while denied victory, are allowed to win votes and seats), and minimally open (opposition parties are not subject to massive repression, although they may experience repressive treatment in selective and intermittent ways) . . . subject to state manipulation so severe, widespread, and systematic that they do not qualify as democratic . . .[as] discriminatory electoral rules . . . restrict . . . [Opposition] access to mass media and campaign finance . . . coerce or coopt them into deserting the opposition camp.
>
> (p. 3)

To illustrate the last line of the above quote, the leader and presidential candidate of the National Democratic Alliance and at least four aspirants for the presidential nomination of the SLPP switched to the APC party during the run-up to the election.[5] Added to that, former members of parliament and at least one member of the local council of the opposition SLPP also switched parties.[6] Thus, while the various elections reports concluded that the election was free, fair, and transparent and the United Nations specifically claimed that it highlighted a consolidation of democracy, the evidence presented above suggests a manipulated process structured to produce an incumbent victory.

Regime Type: Semi-authoritarianism in Sierra Leone

This section elucidates the argument that Sierra Leone is governed by a semi-authoritarian regime. The behavior of the governing elite is used as evidence of a regime that subverts, weakens, and therefore renders democratic institutions functionally ineffective. The importance of using governing elite behavior cannot be underestimated as it, more than any other characteristic espoused by Ottaway (2003), clearly shows how power has been centralized in the Office of the President (an important indicator of authoritarianism) and how other institutions for democracy like the police and judiciary have been used to erode democracy.

Institutions like the judiciary, police force (see M'Cormack, Vincent and Charley chapter 3, this volume), the legislature, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), and the media are integral to consolidating democracy, and they are ironically very much integral to consolidating an authoritarian or semi-authoritarian regime in power. In a democracy, these institutions check executive power and uphold democratic rule of law (Levitsky and Way 2010). However, in the case of Sierra Leone, these institutions have on various occasions provided effective mechanisms to the government to oppress the opposition, maintain political hegemony, and subvert democracy. They have invariably furnished the Sierra Leone

government with the tools to co-opt, intimidate, and repress citizens, both in civil society and the government, whom they deem critical of the regime.

There is evidence of the government using low-intensity coercion in an attempt to entrench itself in power and possibly erode democracy in Sierra Leone. Low-intensity coercion is less visible but yet more systematic in its efforts to suppress the opposition (Levitsky and Way 2010). It includes police surveillance, "legal" harassment, selective investigation by the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC), and use of libel and defamation suits against journalists. Such low-intensity coercion was used to co-opt a former opposition parliamentarian, Robin Fallay, who was accused of voter registration fraud. The bail sureties required by the courts were extremely high and when the Chairman of the Opposition John Benjamin posted bail, it was subsequently rejected. However, no sooner had Fallay declared his support for the incumbent APC party than all charges against him were dropped (Bah 2012b).

In another instance, an opposition parliamentarian, Foday "Rado" Yokie, was accused of arson, arrested, and detained during the run-up to the 2012 elections (*Standard Times Newspaper* 2012). Even though Yokie won his seat handily, he still has a case to answer in the courts more than two years after he was charged. The delay in trying the case, according to opposition leaders, has affected Yokie's effectiveness in Parliament as he does not feel free to be critical of the government's policies for fear of the judiciary punishing him. While there is no evidence that the government is influencing the delay in adjudicating the matter, opposition leaders strongly believe the government is using the courts as an instrument of coercion against them. Another opposition leader Abass Bundu, who is Regional Chairman of the Northern Province of the SLPP, was accused, arrested, and charged for allegedly selling Sierra Leonean passports between 1994 and 1995. This case was reopened during the run-up to the 2012 elections. Bundu's passport was confiscated by the government and more than 20 months after his arraignment and several adjournments without the prosecution presenting any case, the accused had this to say:

> I want this matter to be tried because I did not sell the passports illegally; it was a government decision . . . I want a ruling on this matter because I want Sierra Leoneans to actually understand the actual story because the stigma is already there about my involvement in the passport saga. I want human rights groups, civil society and the media to know that this matter has been in court for one year, eight months.
>
> (Quoted in mysierraleoneonline.com 2013)

The case was previously tried in 1996, at which time Bundu settled with the then SLPP government and agreed to pay a fine. The SLPP government later exonerated Bundu in 2005 of any wrongdoing in the passport case. According to a letter written on October 7, 2005, to Bundu, with copies sent to the vice president and secretary to the President of Sierra Leone, the then Attorney General and Minister of Justice Frederick Carew (2005) wrote that:

> government has carefully considered the allegations made against you and accepts the new evidence produced relating to 'the sale of the Sierra Leone Passports under the Immigration Investment Programme', and has now come to the conclusion that the whole matter should now be closed.

In an interview published online by the newspaper, *New People Online*, Bundu had this to say about the case in relation to the letter of closure he received from the Office of the Attorney General and Minister of Justice:

> In 2005, President Kabbah saw the new evidence and realized that his Government had made a mistake in prosecuting me in 1996, and following a review by his Attorney-General of the fresh evidence, he did not hesitate to instruct him to write and exonerate me of any wrongdoing and put closure to the matter. Attorney-General Fred Carew's letter of 7 October 2005, already in the public domain, confirms this. That executive closure is now being ignored by the present Government . . . one thing that would eventually come out of this trial is that it will put judicial closure on this passport saga . . . no future government can again threaten me with this case or use it as a pretext to intimidate any other person.
>
> (Interview by Totangi, *New People Online* 2012)

Bundu and other opposition leaders considered the renewed prosecution of a case already settled by the preceding government as a pretext to intimidate the opposition through the courts. As such, in the view of the opposition, the judiciary became a tool of "legal" harassment and coercion.

There is also evidence that the media was also affected by the behavior of the government of Sierra Leone. The Independent Media Commission Act of 2000 set up an Independent Media Commission (IMC) to regulate the mass media, including the power to issue, suspend, and/or cancel licenses for both print and broadcast media. In 2009, the vice president Alhaji Sam Sumana summarily suspended the radio stations of both the governing APC and opposition SLPP for what he called incitement. This was in direct contravention of Independent Media Commission Act of 2000, which gives the authority of such action to the IMC and not the vice president. Even where

the IMC Act authorizes the IMC to suspend or ban a radio station, the Act specifically stipulates in Section 21 (2):

> No suspension or cancellation shall be made under sub section (1) unless the Commission has given written notice to the media institution concerned specifying the conditions of the license which have not been complied with [,] given directives for the rectification of the breach and the action proposed to be taken by the Commission in the event of non-compliance with the notice.
>
> (Independent Medium Commission Act 2000)

Furthermore, Section 21 (3) states that "subject to subsection (2) the Commission shall not suspend or cancel a license unless that media institution has been given an opportunity to comply with the directions of the Commission and to rectify the breach." According to the opposition, they were never given the opportunity to rectify the breach and they also claimed not to have received any written warning. The opposition subsequently challenged the ban in court but the High Court dismissed the case.

The Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ) and human rights groups condemned the action, while many observers saw the move as politically motivated. However, the IMC later went further to uphold the ban on both radio stations. The President of SLAJ Umaru Fofana resigned his position on the IMC's Policy Committee in protest as he viewed the move as inimical to free press (Fofana 2009). SLAJ was split on this issue as a famous radio personality David Tam-Baryoh supported the ban of the two stations. Tam-Baryoh argued that the stations were broadcasting inflammatory messages and their existence could plunge the country into anarchy (Fofana 2009). The opposition on the other hand argued that "IMC is only independent in name. It is acting on the orders of the ruling APC and is helping the ruling regime to stifle free speech and pluralism of the media." However, while on the surface the action would seem even handed, the opposition no longer had the ability to communicate with their members through their radio but the ruling government had unlimited access to the government's broadcasting corporation, the Sierra Leone Broadcasting Corporation. This is the same radio station that was observed in the Commonwealth Election Observer Mission Final Report (2012) as having biased coverage in favor of the incumbent President and APC party.

Journalists have not escaped the low-intensity coercion from government. Cabinet ministers have on various occasions either ordered the arrest of journalists or ordered radio programs off the air. In 2010, the Minister of Agriculture, Forestry and Food Security Sam Sesay and the Minister of

Lands Allieu Pat Sowe on two separate occasions ordered the arrest of journalists (Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor 2012). In 2014, the cabinet directed the IMC to suspend a radio program—Monolog—produced by David Tam-Baryoh (who previously supported banning radio stations)[7] on the Citizens Radio Station, for broadcasting "unsubstantiated" information on the air. The IMC later denied suspending the radio program as the IMC Act gives them direction on how radio stations and/or programs can be suspended. The IMC argued that since the directions had not been followed, they could not suspend the Monolog program (IMC Press Release 2014). While the IMC distanced itself from the suspension, the program was off air for the duration of the suspension as directed by the cabinet of President Koroma. Few months after the program was back on air, President Koroma using emergency powers granted to fight Ebola virus disease, ordered the arrest of the same journalist—Baryoh—accusing him of broadcasting messages that could lead to the "break down of public order and good governance of the nation" (Mackay 2014).

The behavior of the executive branch further demonstrates that the regime is more semi-authoritarian than one in the process of consolidating democracy. The behavioral traits of semi-authoritarianism are manifested in the way the executive branch violates the Constitution and other statutory instruments, sometimes with the aid of the legislature and judiciary, when it comes to dealing with issues of public finance. Part V, Chapter 110, Section 1 of the Sierra Leone Constitution states that "no taxation shall be imposed or altered otherwise than by or under the authority of an Act of Parliament." Section 2, Subsection 1 further states that "where an Act enacted pursuant to subsection (1) confers a power on any person or authority to waive or vary a tax (otherwise than by reduction) imposed by that Act, the exercise of the power of waiver or variation in favor of any person or authority shall be subject to the prior approval of Parliament by resolution passed in that behalf." These constitutional rules notwithstanding, in 2012, the government of Sierra Leone granted over US$220 million in tax waivers to mining companies without going through the parliamentary process as stipulated in the Constitution (Christianaid 2014). By 2014, tax waivers from the government of Sierra Leone without parliamentary approval had ballooned to US$338 million (Institute for Governance Reform 2014).

In addition, during the run-up to the 2012 elections, the country's shares in the Sierra Rutile Company were sold without parliamentary approval resulting in US$20 million in lost revenue; further, the check was handed directly to the President in fanfare at State House (Institute for Governance Reform 2014). Similarly, during the same period, six oil

blocks were granted to foreign companies with little or no background checks (Institute for Governance Reform 2014). These waivers, sale of shares, and granting of oil blocks were all authorized by the Office of the President, characteristic of the classic patronage befitting an authoritarian regime. In addition, it is a manifestation of personalizing and consolidating powers in the Office of the President. During President Koroma's 2012 campaign, one of the mining companies that benefited from duty waivers, African Minerals Company, allowed the President to use its helicopter on his campaign trips without extending that facility to the other candidates.

Added to constitutional violations on financial actions taken by the executive, President Koroma created a constitutional crisis when he dismissed his elected Vice President Sam Sumana in March 2015. Vice President Sumana had previously been expelled from the ruling APC party for allegedly forming another party and fomenting violence in his home district. The vice president allegedly later sought asylum from the American embassy claiming that his life was in danger; he denied both allegations. That notwithstanding, President Koroma relieved the vice president of his position for not being a member of any political party and showing "a willingness to abandon his duties and office of vice president" by seeking asylum from a foreign embassy. In short, the basis for the firing of the vice president was that he was no longer a member of a political party and he showed willingness to abandon his office (Office of the President, State House Press Release 2015). President Koroma subsequently appointed Victor Foh as vice president.

President Ernest Koroma claimed that the Constitution gives him the authority to relieve the vice president of his duties. He argued that Section 40 (3) confers upon him the guardianship of the Constitution. However, many like Abdulai Conteh (Sierra Leone Telegraph Newspaper 2015), Charles Margai (Expotimes Newspaper 2015), and Mberatu-Tsegaye (Open Society Foundations 2015) have argued that President Koroma's action is illegal notwithstanding Section 40 (3) of the Sierra Leone Constitution. In an open letter addressed to the President, Conteh said "the removal from office of the Vice President, as stated in the Release from your office, is nothing short of an exercise of power that can find no validation in the text of our national constitution" (quoted in *Sierra Leone Telegraph Newspaper* 2015). Abdulai Conteh further argued that irrespective of what the vice president may have done, the president has no legal authority to dismiss him from office as "it is a matter for Parliament to put in train the impeachment process contemplated and provided for in the national Constitution" (quoted in *Sierra Leone Telegraph* 2015). The impeachment process that Conteh alluded to is provided for by Section 51 of the Sierra

Leone Constitution and ignoring that Section is clearly a constitutional violation (see also Mberatu-Tsegaye 2015). Charles Margai (2015) further argued that the appointment of Foh as vice president was also illegal as it breaches the constitutional stipulations of "Section 41(d) of Act No. 6 of 1991 in that, he is not qualified to be elected a Member of Parliament in view of Section 76(1) (b) of Act No. 6 of 1991," which disqualifies holders of public office from becoming members of parliament unless, among other things, they relinquish their office one year before running for a parliamentary seat. Foh was Ambassador to China when he was appointed as Vice President. Eligibility for the office of the vice president is predicated on the eligibility to run for Parliament.

The decision to bypass the constitutional procedure for the removal of the vice president (Sumana) is a curious yet informative phenomenon especially when dealt with in the context of the president using seemingly democratic institutions to subvert democracy. It is also curious that the supporters of the president urged their opponents to use the courts to settle the matter. It should be noted that the impeachment of the vice president would require a two-thirds majority in Parliament, and by all counts, the President's party is one vote short of that two-thirds majority. There are 124 members in Sierra Leone's legislature, including 12 paramount chiefs, 42 SLPP members, and 70 APC members. Assuming that all the paramount chiefs and all APC members of parliament from the vice president's home district voted with the other APC members, the ruling party would garner 82 votes, which would have amounted to 66.1 percent. SLPP, on the other hand, would have had 42 votes giving the opposition 33.87 percent. In rounding up to the nearest number, SLPP would have had 34 percent while the president's party would have had 66 percent. The ruling party would have needed 83 members of parliament or 67 percent to impeach the vice president.[8] Given the calculations, it is understandable that the president decided to ignore Section 51 of the Constitution and rely on the Supreme Court, an institution that has come under criticism for its lack of impartiality and penchant for conniving with the government (*Oxford Analytica Daily Brief* 2015).

Sumana's lawyers sued the Attorney General and Minister of Justice for unconstitutional removal from office. The lawsuit was followed by an application to the Supreme Court for an interlocutory injunction to prevent the newly appointed vice president from occupying the office and performing any duties until the matter was heard. The Supreme Court subsequently rejected Sumana's application for interlocutory injunction on the basis that:

1. counsel for the plaintiff did not plead in his affidavit the irreparable damage that will be caused if injunction were not granted,

2. the damage to the nation will be grave if the seat of vice president was to be left temporarily vacant or if the injunction was granted than if it was not, and
3. a better/more effective remedy will be to expedite hearing of the substantive matter so as to make a final determination on application before the Supreme Court.

The reasons listed above though seemingly self-explanatory raise more questions than answers about the constitutionality of the removal of the vice president. The court invariably allowed an individual whose eligibility is contested, to be the substantive occupant of the vice president's office. According to the dismissed vice president's lawyer, the mere appointment of Foh is a constitutional violation (*Awoko Newspaper* 2015). The second reason given for denying Sumana's application for interlocutory injunction is the most spurious because the court could have easily recommended the holder of the office to be acting until the matter was settled. This point suggests that the "grave danger" to the nation invoked by the Supreme Court judges would have been moot.

Conclusion

This chapter has delineated the debates around the concepts of democratic consolidation, hybrid regimes, and more specifically semi-authoritarianism as the foundation for ascertaining whether the 2012 elections in Sierra Leone were a manifestation of democratic consolidation in the country. The evidence presented in this chapter suggests that the use of the 2012 elections as a sign of democratic consolidation was hasty and misleading. The evidence presented also suggests that the 2013 Random House designation of Sierra Leone as free was also misleading. While the elections may have appeared to the uncritical observer as free and fair, an in-depth analysis of the run-up to the elections and the process of voting and vote counting suggest a systematic manipulation that virtually guaranteed the incumbent APC party victory in the polls. While Sierra Leone has all the institutions required for democratic consolidation, the evidence further shows that the behavior of the governing elite undermines their effectiveness.

Furthermore, this chapter has shown that the executive has on occasions violated the Constitution and rights of citizens (especially the press) with impunity when it comes to duty waivers, disposing of state property, relieving the vice president of his office, and arresting and detaining journalists. To all intents and purposes, the 2012 elections were by no means free and fair and Sierra Leone is by no means consolidating democracy.

Rather, based on the undemocratic behavior of the ruling political elite as delineated by Linz and Stepan (1996), on the one hand, and Schedler (2002), on the other, very little, if any, doubt remains that Sierra Leone is indeed governed by a semi-authoritarian regime and is far from consolidating democracy.

Notes

1. This chapter is based partly on participant observer fieldwork conducted in Sierra Leone during the 2012 general elections. I wish to thank The College of Saint Rose for granting me sabbatical leave to do fieldwork and the opposition the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) for allowing me to be a participant observer in their Elections Management Office. Many thanks to the following for reviewing this chapter: Prof. Arthur Hollist, Prof. Fredline McCormack-Hale, Prof. Jenise DePinto, Prof. Patrick Bernard, Prof. Earl Conteh-Morgan, and Dr. Lansana Gberie. All mistakes are mine.
2. See European Union and Commonwealth reports on the 2002, 2007, and 2012 elections in Sierra Leone.
3. I attended the meeting where the exchange occurred.
4. I observed this incident while it was taking place and actually called the Open Society Initiative West Africa representative to report the matter. It was only after the incident was announced on radio that the presidential bodyguard left the area. The chief electoral commissioner in her end-of-day release discussed the disruption at Malamah Comprehensive Academy (*Awoko* 2012).
5. Aspirants for the SLPP's presidential nomination who switched parties later include Dr. Richard Mbayo, Usu Boie Kamara, Rtd Major Ishmael Sengu-Koroma, and Dr S. B. Saccoh.
6. Included in this group are Sam Macarthy, John Tucker, Fatmata Hassan, Magnus J. Lavalie, Robin Fallay, and M. A. Jalloh.
7. This journalist was largely considered to be a supporter of the government.
8. Sourie Turay, a member of the Leonenet (a Sierra Leone listserv discussion group), brought this scenario to my attention during a telephone conversation.

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Section II

Civil Society and Human Security

6

The NGOization of Civil Society in Sierra Leone[1]—A Thin Dividing Line between Empowerment and Disempowerment

Diana Szántó[2]

Introduction

In the contemporary literature on "civil society", the concept is usually used in a nonproblematized way, making it equivalent with thenongovernmental organization (NGO) sector and taking for granted the implicit assumption that NGOs by definition stand for the public good. This chapter intends to challenge this position, by examining the workings of the NGO sector in postwar Sierra Leone under the conditions of Project Society, looking at civil society as a broader field of social practices capable of producing and preserving social capital. The argument is developed in two symmetrical sections. The first one describes how NGOization has been realized in Sierra Leone and how it brought about Project Society. It describes Project Society as the dysfunctional outcome of NGOization—a process of formalization and bureaucratization of organizations as a means of their control, rather than a simple form of redistribution based on a particular structure connecting social actors in a special way. The second section shows an array of more or less structured social practices, as well as types of informal and formal voluntary organizations embedded

in local social history, demonstrating a remarkable democratic potential, thus filling the role of civil society. The comparison does not intend to suggest that "traditional" institutions are necessarily more democratic or more "civil" than "modern" ones. Rather, it points to the hybrid and syncretic character of contemporary Sierra Leonean civil society—including civil society organizations (CSOs) and local NGOs—calling attention to its double nature, oscillating between the possibilities of sclerosis and of emancipation.

Compared to the mass of NGO literature, relatively few attempts have been made so far (Hann and Dunn 1996; Comaroff and Comaroff 1999) to demonstrate the ethnocentric bias rooted in Western political philosophy assuming that civil society embodies universal values crosscutting geographical regions and continents. In the mainstream model, the strength of civil society is measured by the presence and by the activity of NGO-type organizations. These organizations are in theory independent of the state while they are formally recognized as contributing to the commonweal the state represents. Due to their supposed independence, moral superiority over state politics, and their grassroots origin, they are believed to incarnate an effective counterpower, guaranteeing real—as opposed to formal—democracy. In this sense, the technical terms of NGOs and CSOs can be—and are indeed—often used interchangeably.

NGOization happens when civil society becomes primarily represented by NGOs and these are invested with a preponderant role in organizing economic redistribution, setting political objectives, and determining the moral economy of a given country. Because local NGOs are necessarily linked to international organizations and depend on the latter for their survival and legitimacy, NGOization is also necessarily a form of "governing from afar" (Ferguson 2006: 87). The excessive role given to NGOs and international organizations creates a society under the rule of short-term projects that come to substitute coherent and long-term policies. This is what Sampson calls "Project Society" (Sampson 1996). NGOization is not specific to Sierra Leone, but because of the all-encompassing reconstruction process following the end of the civil war—in which NGOs have played a dominant role—its workings and effects are probably more directly observable here than elsewhere on the planet.

The following Sierra Leonean example demonstrates that (a) NGOs are more a by-product of the state than truly independent entities, exposed to power games in which they play sometimes a progressive, sometimes a retrograde role; (b) NGOs and/or CSOs in a given country are a coproduction of international NGOization and local historical traditions of political, social, and religious institutions, hardly fitting into any universal classification; and (c) in many respects, local informal or semiformal

organizations might be more effective in fulfilling the social and political roles that are generally attributed to CSOs.

Recognizing noninstitutionalized forms of civil society might liberate the concept from its ideological burden, making it possible to measure the strength of civil society by its power to create collective solidarity, redistribute power and wealth, and ensure effective means for defending the interests of the powerless, rather than on the number of projects being implemented.

The NGOization of Sierra Leonean Civil Society

The NGO Boom

Postwar Sierra Leone has a remarkably extended and active NGO sector, comprising international NGOs (INGOs) and local CSOs. The expansion of the NGO sector happened in coherence with Sierra Leone's catching up with international development trends. One outcome of this process was the production of highly dysfunctional practices and an increased, although concealed state control, neutralizing the transformative potential of civil society.

By the 1980s and 1990s, NGOs have become worldwide one of the most important agencies responsible for "trickling down" resources from the economy to socially disadvantaged groups despite the fact that no empirical data exist proving their inherent efficiency as redistributive actors[3] Even donors realize that the disparate, sparse, and incomparable pieces of information (see for example, World Bank 2006: 9) do not allow them to conclude that NGOs by definition are more efficient, more accountable, and less corrupt than state agencies. A 2007 World Bank report explicitly admits: "The reliance on CSOs in fragile countries is not matched with a good understanding of who CSOs are, how they work, how they interact with each other and their beneficiaries and most importantly, who are they accountable to" (World Bank 2007: 5).

The dominant role attributed to NGOs can be explained more readily on an ideological rather than on a rational premise. The New Policy Agenda[4] emerging at the beginning of the 1990s was based on the "idea that private sector initiatives are intrinsically more efficient than public initiatives" (Baccaro 2001: 16). NGOs, as part of the private sector, promised more than pure efficiency though, as they seemed to offer an alternative to the technocratic, modernist version of development. This is how they could become the embodiment of civil society, acquiring a legitimacy which the practice of international development was losing at a time when

the failure of the strict structural adjustment regime became obvious. In the face of this crisis,[5] the principle of participatory democracy emerged as the savior of Western interventionism promising to "put beneficiaries in the driving seat" (Thomas 2004: 186). In accordance with this transformation, the priorities of development have also changed. Soft immaterial values, like "good governance," "rule of law," "democratization," and "human rights," took the place of "hard" modernization goals prevailing earlier, focusing on "growth," "production," "infrastructural development," and "budgetary balance". By the beginning of the 1990s, the NGOization of international civil society was complete: development took on a "human face" and NGOs became indispensable in the delivery of development as well as in the popularization of the new "immaterialized" development agenda. This is how the "strength of civil society," measured by the number of recognized NGOs and by the visibility of their activities, became one of the most important criteria of democratic transformation.

Although Sierra Leone is still one of the world's poorest countries, with an astounding difference between the poor and the rich,[6] it is also one of Africa's model states as far as democratic transformation is concerned. Democratization is reflected not only by free elections and by the strengthening of democratic institutions but also by the size of its civil sector. In 2009, there were about 3,000 (international or national) NGOs recorded by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MOFED).[7] In the Sierra Leonean context, NGOs are usually differentiated from CSOs on the basis that NGOs have a more formalized structure than CSOs and—unlike the latter—they work for a community of beneficiaries not necessarily represented by the composition of the organization. CSOs, to the contrary, are self-representing bodies, speaking and acting for a larger constituency with which members of the organization share identity traits. Thus, CSOs are by definition always local, while NGOs can be both local and international. Local CSOs, comprising other forms of voluntary associations and self-help groups, are logically much more numerous than NGOs but they are not always visible as they do not necessarily keep their registrations updated.

The registration of voluntary organizations goes back to the nineteenth century[8] but the new NGO law, according to which both national and international NGOs are supposed to be registered several times at different instances, is only a few years old.[9] NGOs have to register at MoFED and also with an umbrella organization, SLANGO (Sierra Leone Association of Nongovernmental Organizations), a body created and financed by the government. National NGOs also have to register at the City Council.

CSOs including CBOs, DPOs,[10] and other "Os"[11] face somewhat lighter administrative regulations. CBOs register at the local council and with

the Ministry of Social Welfare. The complicated registration system (and the costs it represents) creates a secondary hierarchy separating those organizations (both NGOs and other CSOs) which can afford to meet all the official requirements from those which are not able to do so and which, as a consequence, are condemned to some kind of quasi-illegality. Paradoxically, in this way, the stringent formal criteria and the state control it represents contribute to maintaining informality. What the system does not provide is transparency, as neither SLANGO nor the ministry keeps track of all the organizations. They have only an estimation of their number—not necessarily the same, let alone a clear picture of what these organizations are doing.

In the postwar era, development aid administered by NGOs has constituted Sierra Leone's most important economic sector. The bulk of the money destined for NGOs has been absorbed by international organizations. These usually need local counterparts to channel the aid to end users, and in the chain linking donors to beneficiaries not only financial resources circulate, but also ideas, ideals, prestige, and position. In other words, economic, symbolic, and social capital are formed, accumulated, and exchanged at the same time within the system, contributing to a cultural recolonization and to the building of an Europeanized local NGO elite necessarily influenced by donor expectations, these more often than not reflecting "the global hegemony of the Western worldview." (Rottenburg 2009: xii). The government is also linked to the same chain, sometimes in the role of donor, sometimes as a beneficiary, competing with NGOs. The local civil sector is thus trapped in an asymmetric triangular relationship between the government and the donors, under pressure from both sides.

This is not a comfortable relationship, with each party to this triangle regarding each other with considerable suspicion. The government sees donor interference as a potential threat to its sovereignty. Civil society regards the ostensibly prodemocratic, good governance, and determined anticorruption discourses with skepticism, understanding that the participatory philosophy emphasized by both the state and international donors does not necessarily give them power to influence major political choices. Conversely, international donors regard both the government and civil society with some amount of ill-concealed disdain, convinced of their shared weakness—a perception which becomes a self-fulfilling prophecy, as it promotes and effects a rigid external/foreign control of operations.

However, dysfunctional practices do not necessarily differ so much at different points of the triangle as donors would like to believe. In sharp contrast with the self-image of the international community as the defender of high principles, international donors struggle to put these principles into practice within their own organizations. Countless anecdotes circulate

about low- and middle-ranking officials implicated in corruption scandals and asking for "kickbacks" (i.e., a certain amount of the allocated fund paid back to the official who facilitated it). The neopatrimonial logic which is commonly blamed for state corruption is indeed present at almost all the levels of the NGO world. Umbrella organizations and CSO federations and coalitions profiting from direct contact with international donors redistribute their benefits quite selectively to their members, in complete disregard for transparency.

While open corruption, understood as illicit monetary redistribution, is only one (and probably not the most widespread) means of creating bias and inefficiencies in civil society, there exists a far more common, much less conspicuous, and totally legal means to influence it from the exterior. It consists of making funds available for certain purposes. These purposes may be anything from water sanitation to small arms control, depending on the funding priority of the day. This immediately leads to a mushrooming of CSOs in the field where the support is made available—some counting no more than one or two members.

The interference of international donors can go even further. Donor support can be used to create client organizations or to artificially strengthen existing ones. Donors then finance the operational costs of these entities, organize their meetings, fix their agenda, and then monitor and criticize them, until they abandon them observing their natural disintegration, which finally confirms their original negative preconceptions. However, it would be a mistake to consider CSOs as passive victims of this dynamic. The dependency is mutual, as in any patron–client relationship. Donors also compete for local partners since they too have a need to work with and distribute resources through these channels to reach the ultimate beneficiaries. As a result, overlapping networks of local client organizations are formed around different competing donors. The rise and fall of the organizations tend to leave behind an ever increasing group of disoriented men and women used and abandoned by the NGOization of participatory democracy.

One of them is Samuel, the project coordinator of a local organization with an indeterminate mission, which has not paid the necessary registration fee for years. Today, he is the sole member of the organization. This is his fifth organization, as all of the previous ones he has run so far have collapsed. Since the war, he has been trained in using appropriate technology in building materials, small arms control, human rights, housing rights, rights of refugees, deforestation, water sanitation, gender-based violence, good governance—I might forget some. He carries all of his certificates in a plastic folder as a vestige of a time when he still believed that these papers would assure him an honorable place within civil society.

At the other end of the range, there is David, the chairman of a vast human rights network. He started as the second-in-command in a health-related organization and then broke with his boss and built a new organization, offering his services to INGOs and making himself indispensable as a cultural broker between UNDP and local civil society. Finally, he struggled his way up to a leading position in a government-run pseudo-NGO.

The traditional opposition between civil society and political society becomes blurred here, as a regular civil society career involves more and more connections within circles of power, both national and international. High positions in civil society often go together with good political connections and lucrative jobs. On the local level, in the countryside there is a new generation of chiefs who have understood the political importance of civil society and derive political power from actively supporting or even participating in CSOs.

The public is awake to this process and most people understand the threat that this blurring of the line between civil society and political power represents to civil society itself. A recent article published in *Sierra Express Media* reflects the bitter disappointment shared by many provoked by this new type of civil society of "bread and butter":

> In those dark days (during the war), it was the combative spirit of civil society activism backed by the resilience of the civil populace that put the madness of the rebels under control. It was the kind of civil society that could mobilize bare-handed civilians to confront bloodthirsty rebels to demand an end to their senseless carnage. That was when men and women, old and young, marched on to rebel leader . . . to tell him enough was enough. . . . Scarcely had the war ended when we began to witness another brand of civil society activism—the bread and butter type that anchors on personal and or partisan interest, the kind of activism that now reduces many activists to the level of bootlickers, thereby betraying the cause of the people.[12]

The fusion between the financial and political power with civil society elites evokes Bayart's idea of the "reciprocal assimilation of the elites" (Bayart 1993: 155) with all its expected consequences. Bayart considers the blending of the business elite with the political class, on the one hand, and the merger between the national and international bourgeoisie, on the other, responsible for the inertia of African political systems in general, and for the failure of most of the pro-poor development policies in particular. The mutual assimilation of the elites is logically linked to their "extraversion", that is, their voluntary submission to influences located outside of the nation-state. Bayart shows how this double phenomenon having started during the colonial times became exacerbated in the postcolony,

undermining the possibility of the formation of a national elite capable of making an alliance with the oppressed classes.

There is also a danger that the civil society elite becomes trapped in this dynamic and turns itself into a tool for maintaining a certain form of oppression. What Scheper-Hughes establishes—with reference to Gramsci—in relation to another poor society in the north of Brazil—appears equally valid here: "Gramsci realized that the dominant classes exercise their power both directly through the state and indirectly through a merging with civil society and identification of interest with broad cultural ideas and aims . . . It is through this blend of instrumental force and the expressive, contradictory (but also consensual) common sense of every day culture that hegemony operates as a hybrid of coercion and consensus" (Scheper-Hughes 1992: 171). This is how civil society under subtle but strict state control might be brought under the hegemonic order, being used to maintain it, rather than challenging it.

The True Meaning of "Attitudinal Change"

Project Society creates a double world in which reality becomes severed from its verbal representation. The NGO language does not serve to describe reality, rather to define it in a special way, in accordance with a value system that pretends to be universal, but in reality is located in the West. NGOization, therefore, becomes synonymous with cultural neocolonization.

Nothing illustrates better the logic of hegemony blending coercion and consensus than the emphatic presidential slogan, calling for "attitudinal change," a national program supervised by the "Secretariat of Attitudinal Change," a bureau within the State House. This is a popular slogan, not despite but precisely because of its ambiguity. It provides a conveniently versatile theory attributing cultural reasons to the disaster which made a country with huge economic and human potential the ideal type of failed (or "fake") states (Reno 1998).

For ordinary Sierra Leoneans, the call confirms what they have always thought: "Yes, something is going wrong and the solution should come from inside" (an analysis not much different from the one offered by the ideologists of the war). For the international community it sounds like an open invitation for intervention, as if people said: "Yes, the problem lies within, so please come and teach us how to change our culture for the better." And teaching the international community does, calling it sensitization, awareness raising, and democratization, in general. Consequently, the present wave of democratization looks like a colossal experiment aimed

at reeducating a whole nation. If democratization as cultural change is palpable, democracy itself is much more elusive. Its essence is difficult to grasp for the great majority of citizens who observe not only the collective deterioration of their living conditions but also the steady loss of an individual's chances for upward social mobility. This is democracy as a "small idea," as a "minimalist conception of participatory government sold to the South by the North" (Comaroff and Comaroff 2012: 29), the right to choose, to possess, and to consume—if one can afford it.

The new ideals are formulated not only in political discourses and in social debates, but are also systematically presented visually for immediate consumption on posters and signboards. Their messages develop and explain the domains where attitudinal change is necessary, translating political ideas and complicated theoretical concepts into simple practical advice or one-sentence project descriptions. The signboards stand like monuments of Project Society. By now, they have been usually consumed by rust and decay. As a result, the countryside resembles more a vast cemetery of defunct projects than a bustling worksite.

Sampson (2005: 121) defines "Project Society" as a system combining certain types of activities, a specific structure, and nexus between different social roles, organized for a particular mode of redistribution. But Project Society is not simply a society producing projects; it results in the creation and maintenance of the duplication of reality—on paper. This is a system of opposing and contradicting parallel realities. One dusty billboard set up at the entrance of a village, for example, boasts of the following list of projects: "Access to Justice," "Conflict Transformation and Prevention," "Human Rights Monitoring," "Youth and Women's Empowerment," "Adult Literacy," "Skills Training Income Generation," and "Community Management and Power Relation Process." The particularity of this list is of course its language which makes it impossible to understand what exactly happened here. The words reveal much less about their own significance than about the context in which they are to be interpreted.

Project Society paints a fictional picture of itself, which is as attractive as it is deceptive. Ordinary citizens are aware of this of course but they do not really care: the fictional reality is a projection, a promise of a better future, which is almost the present, except for the fact that it remains unreachable. This double reality's most glaring paradox is that while social inequalities have never been greater, subordinate groups have never been more central—at least nominally. Women and youth, the two "emblematic subordinate groups of previous systems" (Bayart 1993: 110) have been raised to a pedestal; they stand as a symbol of the quasi-supernatural integrity of the "little man," celebrated by the post-Washington development

paradigm, for which grassroots participation assures credibility by some kind of sympathetic magic.

However, the youth are also the street boys, the street vendors, the unemployed, the undereducated urban poor, the illegal, exploited miners, and the landless rural farmers, harassed by the representatives of the state, as well as by traditional leaders, having very little chance to raise their voice. Women—the other minority group elevated by the new identity politics promoted by the state—are more effectively represented—or so it seems. Today, women occupy high positions in the government, they are in the Parliament, in business, and women organizations are among the strongest among the CSOs. Any NGO or CSO must have a women's wing, or at least a "chair-lady" if it wants to stay credible. A leader of a local association explained to me: "Originally we were only men; we thought that if we let women come inside, they will bring trouble and weaken the organization. Then somebody said, 'OK, if we do not have women, how are we going to talk to the Ministry? How are we going to talk to NGOs?' That was true, so we created the women's group."[13]

The "change your attitude campaign" also has several women-oriented goals: government and NGOs campaigning hand in hand, for example, to persuade families to send their daughters to school.[14] The goal is of course noble but the premise is questionable. Families are in this way made directly responsible for the high level of illiteracy of girls without addressing the question of the economic availability of education, let alone of the quality of education. As a microcosm of the whole society, schools are contaminated by corruption and do not necessarily provide the free education promised. Poorly paid or nonpaid teachers are tempted to ask for financial contributions from students on different pretexts. As a result, families with limited resources often have to make rational choices, prioritizing the education of their sons over that of their daughters.

The health system is another domain where women are supposed to enjoy special treatment. Free health care was introduced in 2010 for lactating mothers and children under five years in response to one of the world's worst rates of maternal and infant mortality. This was probably one of the government's most praiseworthy initiatives. Still, mothers and children routinely die at home and in hospitals, because they cannot get the proper treatment. Some are refused at the gate, or are given a pill or two, told there is no more provision, and sent to private pharmacies to buy the rest—if they can afford it. In a country bitterly lacking the means to provide safe health care for all, the fact that positive discrimination is naturalized through gender produces the actual discrimination of poor women and children because reinforcing collective identities on a biological basis exempts institutions from the responsibility to take income level into

consideration. Inequality then becomes a question of traditions (usually epitomized in NGO literature as "backward" by definition) lingering on from the past rather than the product of the present social structure. The attitudinal change campaign presupposes that it is not the system but the people who have to change, effectively rendering radical claims impossible to articulate within the civil sector.

As protected groups, like youth and women, represent a horizontal rather than a vertical stratification, their official recognition is politically not costly. Their own elites are benefiting greatly by the special consideration assured to them while it is almost impossible for their lay constituencies to unite across groups in order to defy the state for the basic rights of all concerned. Civil society, then, is logically incapable of fulfilling its role, which is to defend citizens from the symbolic and physical violence of power of either the state or the market.

The contradiction between "Project Society's" language and its reality is rarely pointed out by those who are most affected by it. Instead, young people, women, and the poor in general enthusiastically participate in the rituals of participation. Bayart's (1993) warning is helpful here: "youth and women can easily integrate themselves into power blocks, but the real extent of dependence is not affected . . . One needs indeed to ask whether the state is not in the process of installing an 'absolute seniority' to the detriment of the 'small men', the 'voiceless', the 'lowest of the low', as the system of social stratification closes in on itself" (115).

That question, written a decade ago, is still unanswered; while youth and women's organizations are proliferating, one still wonders if these groups are not falling victims to Project Society, for in order to participate "in the game," women have to continuously present themselves as constitutionally weak and vulnerable and youth as victims of traditional elders and natural allies of modernizers. Neither of these propositions is necessarily true on an ongoing basis, but still they become the theoretical justifications for almost any action.

It is symptomatic that in their interactions with these groups, NGO-type organizations are able to frame their positions in only two distinct ways and neither of these positions implies a reciprocal relationship. Socially disadvantaged groups occupy a meaningful place in the system first, as "beneficiaries," as the ascribed powerless recipients of aid or social policies; second, they constitute the "grassroots" or the "community," the popular basis which legitimizes the top-down measures. Out of the context of the NGO world, however, not only are these identities unimportant, they actually melt away, ceding the place to the representation of the "dangerous classes"—to be controlled and kept afar, sometimes with violent means.

Project Society and Capitalism

The contradictory nature of "Project Society's" practices is best reflected in its propensity to be taken over by capitalism itself. Ironically, the corporate sector has adopted NGO and government-approved messages to enhance their own brands. Signboards, giant posters, "workshopping," and grassroots consultations also belong to the toolbox of corporate power.

Even the style of commercial advertisements evokes the NGO world: the messages that the financial and commercial institutions send out shape the image of the desirable and ethically approvable way of life in the same way as NGO posters do. All these messages rely on the individual's responsiveness, skillfully mixing moral pressure, conviction, and seduction, by projecting an idealized image presented as normalcy. For example, a bank advertisement responds directly to the call for "attitudinal change," with impressive simplicity: "Be you, be free, be brilliant!" The circle is complete: a cultural revolution that was launched for the betterment of the country demanding personal work from each citizen and hoping to produce a new type of person, conscious of his/her personal uniqueness, has in fact produced an ideal, individualistic, and modernized Western-style consumer, now freed from the chains of "tradition" and from the suffocating pressure of the "community." This is how the idealized world of externally dictated and state-designed social reform—the NGO world and the capitalist world—meet and live in harmony within Project Society.

In order to fully appreciate the similarities between the strategies of the nonprofit and for-profit sectors in Sierra Leone, it is enough to study how big international companies communicate. In one short video available on YouTube,[15] Addax Bioenergy, for example, showcases the consultation with "community people" about the Environmental, Social and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA), which is supposed to give the company the green light to put in place the country's greatest (and most controversial) bioenergy project.

Addax Bioenergy is a division of the Swiss-based energy corporation Addax & Oryx Group. In Sierra Leone, the Addax Bioenergy project will produce sugarcane on 20,000 hectares for production of ethanol, which would be exported to the European Union, with a fraction to be sold back to Sierra Leone. The contract between the state, local communities, and the company assures maximum protection to the company, including a long tax holiday and the guarantee that the terms of the contract will not change for 50 years! By contrast, local community farmers have little opportunity to effectively represent their interests. Oakland Institute, an INGO specialized in cases of land grabbing, conducted a survey in 2012

and found numerous abuses and irregularities in Addax Bioenergy's dealings (Oakland Institute 2012).

The short clip in question shows a representative of Addax delivering a speech in front of a disciplined audience comprising mainly women and children—the usual public of "community sensitization." The representative begins the speech with an obligatory tribute to the guarantors of grassroots participation: the women and the youth—whom he addresses as "the real leaders and the future leaders" of the country. He then introduces the goal of the gathering: "The purpose of this meeting is to *discuss* (emphasis added) the environmental, social assessment," only to subvert it in the following sentence: "We are going to *inform* you of the social and environmental risks." There is no scope nor is there any sense in calling him to question on any of the issues in "discussion." The audience knows as well as the speaker that all the plans have been made and no real consultation is to take place. Nevertheless, finally the engineer proposes an ingenious way to resolve the tension between the too conspicuous coercion and the requirement to maintain democratic appearances. The company will put in place a grievance mechanism. Community members will have the opportunity to put their questions and comments into mailboxes placed for this purpose. Visibility of inclusiveness is achieved, while on the ground, with literacy levels of 60 percent in rural areas, the effectiveness of the solution is to be doubted.[16]

This is a typical manifestation of NGOization. In this context the term is not used with the intention of devaluing NGOs and CSOs, many of them courageously fighting for idealistic aims. It describes a general process threatening to draw civil society into the fallacious double reality of Project Society, promising democracy but delivering only formal rather than substantive democratization. By letting itself be NGOized, civil society is committing a supreme betrayal, reversing its own historical role, offering its alliance to those in power rather than to subaltern classes, in the sense of Gramsci (Gramsci and Buttigieg 1992). Consequently, civil society today, taken hostage by a complicated web of local and global interests, might easily be confined to a function of containing potential social unrest—thus entrenching inequalities—instead of reducing it.

Civil Society beyond Project Society

Civil society has been an instrument of the introduction of a value system that is self-proclaiming to be "civilized" as opposed to the backwardness it comes to fight. NGOization thus becomes part of the civilization process in continuation with colonization. The technicality of the NGO language

and is false universalism reduces civil society to a procedural dimension. Changing the formalist frame for a functionalist approach, looking at civil society not as a field composed of special types of organizations established according to some formal criteria but rather as a domain fulfilling certain functions, allows us to discover civil society in forms that break the narrow borders of the NGO world.

From Civil Society to Civilized Society—and Back

In its original meaning civil society is an ensemble of social formations assuring the production of social capital, allowing the existence of an effective counter power against state power, putting citizens in a position that allows them to defend their interests against the powerful and work collectively against social anomie on the basis of solidarity and mutual aid. In all societies there are a number of social institutions and institutionalized groups fulfilling these functions. In the Sierra Leonean case the repertoire of these formations is particularly rich. On the one hand, they are incarnated in practices within the major social institutions: family, political leadership and religion; on the other, they are represented by more or less formalized groups that can be inventoried as voluntary associations. Among these organizations, recognized CSOs and the NGOs represent only a minority. Their formation is also a relatively recent phenomenon and is directly connected to a global context in a specific historical moment: "The late-twentieth-century linking of civil society with nongovernment organizations in a context of deregulated and increasingly globalized economies is but one highly specific instance of history" (Hann and Dunn 1996: 21).

It is this historical momentum that has invested Western-type voluntary organizations (i.e., organizations with a formal structure, intending to work for the betterment of their constituency or for the whole society, fitting exactly in the implicit theoretical frame of the European Enlightenment) with the exclusivity of representing the official, recognized part of civil society, the one that the 2007 World Bank report (World Bank 2007) qualifies as "formal" as opposed to the "traditional" and "neotraditional" forms of civil society. This categorization implicitly maintains an equation between civil society and "civilized society,"[17] excluding organizations with primordial references, those performing magical rituals on the basis of spiritual beliefs, as well as those that are suspected to be inclined toward illicit activities like gangs and loose networks specialized in informal commercial activities not excluding petty crime.[18] However, it is enough to have a glimpse of the associative landscape of Sierra Leone to

observe that not only is it overpopulated with such kinds of groups, but often these organizations have a more solid membership and a more visible social impact than officially recognized CSOs.

The conceptual shift that allows the broadening of the usual conceptual frames of civil society reveals a large field where "social capital" is created and preserved, where culturally acceptable forms of togetherness are regulated and feelings of belonging, mutual trust, and solidarity are created, where "the very fabric of the social" is woven (Comaroff 1999: 15), where the "legitimation and the limits of power" are negotiated (ibid: 17), where "ideals of participatory governance" are put into practice (ibid 19), and "through which people are made accountable and responsible to other members of society" (Hann 1996: 20).

In this light, if we let nonconventional forms of "civil society" action enter into our field of vision, the Sierra Leonean society begins looking far less sunk into a desperate anomie than the bulk corpus of NGO literature would indicate, in accordance with the implicit premises of the attitudinal change campaign. While the destructive effects of the war are hardly questionable, some observers admit their bewilderment before the surprisingly intact social tissue, noting the "remarkable resilience of ordinary Sierra Leoneans" (Bellows and Edward 2009: 1145) in the face of violent political and economic turmoil.

The Production of Social Capital within Traditional Institutions

It seems useful to start our exploration of social capital and social integration by examining the relation ordinary Sierra Leoneans maintain with power and with the existing structures of governance in place. The government, Parliament, and local councils account for only half of the picture. In the provinces, the chiefs complement these modern institutions and their rule arguably has more immediate effect in their communities than that of the councilors. In the villages, the chief is not only the highest authority, he is also responsible for maintenance of order. Ideally (and legally), he not only enforces the law but also, and more importantly, distributes justice. In the settlement of conflicts his role is one between a judge and a mediator, and again ideally,[19] a conflict is settled after ample consultation with the interested parties and the community elders. It is no use to try to romanticize chieftaincy. In its present form it is neither purely traditional—under colonialism the British did turn it into a tool of their indirect rule—nor is it particularly respectful of its purportedly traditional values—it often represents individual rather than collective interests. However, to some extent, it proposes more efficient answers to the problem of accountability

than the democratic system relying on distant officials with a limited time frame in office, facing more pressure from externalized political and economic forces than from their local constituencies.

Accountability in this case is not guaranteed by democratic principles; it is rather a side effect of the physical proximity and a result of historical ties of mutual patron–client interdependency. Democracy is not exactly the best word to characterize chieftaincy as an institution. At the elections of chiefs, not everybody can vote and not everyone can stand as a candidate.[20] Paramount chiefs, in principle, should come from ruling families. The customary rule is based on a gerontocracy and it legitimizes a potentially corruptible local elite. However, in cases when the chief is actually located in the village or the town section he (or she) is responsible for, it is easier to hold him (or her) accountable than councilors representing the community in a Parliament, far away.

The obligatory tribute to be paid to a chief is *kol wata*. The expression describes the obligation to give the chief a symbolic amount of money when visiting him. By this gesture the stranger asks for his protection, affirming to be willing to "sit on his leg." This phrase translates quite expressively the fact of accepting somebody's authority as a "bigger person" rendering oneself a child in the relation. The expectations that this conception reveals show an ambiguous relation to power in which authority is supposed to be personal but is collectively legitimized. This is not democracy in Western terms, but a good chief has to be accountable to the network of his clients. Thus, democracy and accountability are not linked in the minds of Sierra Leoneans in the same way as they are in theories of good governance.

In the provinces, constituting the vast majority of Sierra Leone, real local governance is shared between the institutions of chieftaincy and secret societies. A secret society is an ethnically bound association, divided into local congregations and held together by secret knowledge, as well as by a set of rules and norms regulating social behavior, gender, and intergenerational relations, preferred communication, and conflict resolution styles.[21] It is a Maussian "total social fact" as it penetrates into both the mundane and sacred domains of life; it is—at the same time—a legal, a moral, an economic, and a religious institution. "Neither entirely sacred, nor exclusively secular . . . , both 'law' and 'earth', structuring a person's conduct both in life and within society" (Magaziner 2006: 24). The transmission of the secret knowledge is associated with "the deep traumatic experience of initiation" (Cohen 1981: 97) Instruction "about sex and the procreation of children, duties to one's tribe and obedience to its elders, and about the meaning of life and death" (ibid) takes place in the "bush-school," a spatially circumscribed and magically protected zone where neophytes retire before initiation. Initiation opens the door toward fully assumed adulthood by the inscription of the gender onto the body.[22]

Although secret societies are separated from the secular political organization, their grip on local political life is strong. During the seclusion of the initiation period,[23] society elders decide about land disputes, mediate in family conflicts, and if necessary, settle matters of war and peace. It is not that society rules[24] override chieftaincy rules; rather, the two domains are intertwined, paramount chiefs being responsible for maintaining order and tradition. The influence of the societies exceeds the limits of the locality. It is largely admitted that nothing can be arranged and negotiated in politics, even at the national level, without consulting the elders of the secret societies. Poro's[25] perceived importance and its capacity to interfere with national politics is well illustrated by the fact that before the presidential election of 2012, the National Council of Paramount Chiefs esteemed it good to temporarily suspend Poro activities in the whole country.[26]

Secret societies also play a role in the power balance between men and women. Female secret societies constitute powerful zones of protection and solidarity groups for women and give them a chance to participate in decision making. Knörr (2000) demonstrated how the transethnic solidarity of female secret societies during the war ensured independence and mobility for market women, who were able to travel through war-torn zones and cross borders of ethnic territories protected and assisted everywhere as society members. Female society elders have the same standing as their male counterparts; they are consulted in political matters and are feared even by chiefs. Although it would be misleading to suggest that female societies constitute a counterpower against the local elite, as they participate in the same gerontocracy, still they provide an important means to reaffirm a female position in an otherwise profoundly patriarchal society.

Knörr's example of market women traversing different tribal territories under the protection of the respective societies also shows how, despite the ethnic character of the societies, society membership constitutes a sort of meta-congregation, for which the fact of being initiated might be more important than tribal affiliation. Magaziner (2006) also underlines how intersociety communication and consultation between society elders of different ethnic groups must have contributed to the remarkably coordinated nature of the military actions against the colonial regime during the anticolonial revolt, known as the Hut Tax War. Consultation and coordination between paramount chiefs and society elders as well as sentiments of intersociety fraternity must also have constituted a barrier against the spillover of tribal hostilities during the civil war.

What the society system did at the national level to maintain intertribal peace in the midst of a bloody war when anybody could easily turn into an enemy, the kinship system and marriage patterns did at the local level in order to stop the war from transforming into an ethnic cleansing. The institutions of secret societies and kinship are probably the two most

important factors of integration even today. Sierra Leoneans do not need any anthropological training to understand the importance of intermarrying. When asked why the civil war did not turn into a Rwandan-type ethnocide the answer is immediate: "How do you expect us to kill our wives and brothers-in-law?" It is not that ethnic groups[27] in Sierra Leone—like elsewhere—are not ideally endogamous; it is just that transgression is—if not encouraged—socially accepted. This liberal attitude toward exogamy has been doubtlessly encouraged by the frequent movements of populations of the "hinterland"; the integrative effect of domestic slavery, making it possible for descendants of slaves to be incorporated into local kin groups (Knörr and Trajano Filho 2010); and the urbanization process making Freetown an ethnic melting pot and turning it into the center of Creolization, producing a vernacular language linking distinct tribal areas.

The cognatic nature of the Krio kinship system, making it possible to trace descent alternatively on the mother's and on the father's side, facilitated this process, as well as the relatively libertine conception of the monogamous marriage, allowing the practice of sustaining "second wives" (known as "the 'second', 'third' and 'fourth' offices"—reminds Bayart with malice; Bayart 1993: 159). Multiethnic coexistence within the household correlates with broad religious tolerance, expressed daily by the custom of shared public prayers. On the political level, the peaceful religious coexistence is sealed by the highly respected institution of the "Inter-Religious Council"[28].

Chieftaincy, secret societies, family, and religion are the social institutions in which civil society is realized at a zero degree, in the sense of a society regulating human relations by widely acknowledged norms of civility. My intention is not to idealize these institutions. These fields, like any social field where power is concentrated, are potentially oppressive. It would also be very hard to qualify them as democratic in any meaningful way. These loci of power, however, are the very domains which make it possible that some (certainly not all) at the bottom are able to communicate with those at the top and participate effectively in the communal moral economy, even if this participation is carried out under specific circumstances and within the strict limits of the overall system. They also encourage the development of a sense of community, which is socially protective and symbolically valorising (on the basis of locality, ethnicity, kinship, religion, etc.), thereby circumventing the danger that particularistic identities might represent to a society's integrative forces.

Calling the institutions described above "traditional" is somewhat misleading. They are not the last traces of a sinking ancient culture. They have an amazing capacity of adaptation and they have full rights to be incorporated into modernity. Demonstrating that power-laden traditional

institutions are able to and do fully participate in modernity and are very likely to contribute to the preservation of the social capital is one possible strategy to demystify and dethrone NGOization and its exclusive appropriation of the notion of civil society. However, for some critics who might remain unconvinced preferring to search for civil society within voluntary organizations, the argument is probably not convincing. To the contrary, they might suggest that evoking archaic forms of the social is just a way of glossing over the inevitable truth: proving—more than disproving—the nonexistence of any indigenous form of civil society worthy of this denomination. This conclusion would certainly not do justice to the rich tradition and to the present abundance of voluntary organizations existing in Sierra Leone.

Voluntary Organizations Out of the Scope of Project Society

The first nontraditional voluntary organizations (different, although not completely separate, from native secret societies) appeared in the colony as soon as the first settlers arrived at the coasts of the Western Peninsula where Freetown was to be born sometime later. The settlers were themselves Africans, carrying their own traditions but lacking ethnic unity, influenced by a Westernized, Euro-American culture. From the beginning, voluntary organizations became a privileged mode for the colons to organize their social life, while the natives and migrants from the interior, used these associations for the dual purpose of affirming their ethnic identity and becoming integrated into the new city life. Urbanization and voluntary organizations became inseparable, the two sides of the same coin (Little 1967).

Descendants of the settlers formed descendant associations (celebrating ideas of descendants of different origins, like that of the Nova Scotians and the Maroons) (Cohen 1981: 20) Ethnic identification was also the basis on which migrants' tribal associations were organized, crystallized around tribal leaders, officially recognized as tribal heads. Other associations were created around social functions related to urban life. "As early as 1909, three ratepayers' associations were established in the city . . . formed for purposes of election, their three thousand members being the only residents who had the right to vote . . . Each association had a president, a vice-president, financial secretary, treasurer, general secretary and executive council" (Cohen 1981: 55).

Migrants from the provinces brought with them secret society traditions, including the practice of secret retreat and public demonstration of society devils[29] in the form of dancing and singing processions. These

practices were not completely strange to the settlers: many of them were influenced by Yoruba traditions (Nunley 1988). Krios incorporated these traditions into their own secret societies. Cohen (1981) underscores that society activities were not (and still are not) seen as alien to Christianity. Church congregations, for women and for men, were also very active and most of the society officers were also church officials (ibid).

The urban societies as well as their style and rituals made a deep impression on young boys of modest—especially migrant—origin. From the 1940s, they began to create their own groups, which were partly secret societies, partly gangs. These gang-like societies that Nunley categorizes as Ode-lay- or Alikali-type societies have often been associated with illicit activities and antisocial behavior (Nunley 1987). Masquerades are still an everyday spectacle in the streets of Freetown (King 2012). They inspire curiosity and awe. The fear they provoke is double: it is similar to the feeling that any gang of potentially drunk or stoned young males marching in the street would provoke anywhere any time. But this is true only with regard to what is behind the mask, because the masks themselves command respect and incite apprehension of a spiritual nature, which has nothing to do with a band of hooligans.

Freemasonry is another form of secret society. There was a time in the 1960s and 1970s when it was the most important organizing principle for Krio men's sociability, causing the congregations of the Hunting Society to appear obsolete (Cohen 1981: 102). It seemed that because of its "strict bureaucratic type of organization and discipline" it was more apt to be "introduced within the modern polity." However, during the past few decades the Hunting Society's popularity grew to the detriment of the masonic lodges. Hunting rallies and outings are publically announced, and their activities regularly discussed in Krio gatherings. Some of these activities are of a "secret" nature, linked to ritual and the sacred order of the society. Others are more mundane, the society assuming much of the roles of a secular CSO: offering mutual help to members; catering to the needs of those in difficulty; and collecting money for the education of talented young Krios, who are sent to study abroad.

In a cyclic movement, the community life of Freetown, which absorbed the cultural influence of the migrant population, has had an important impact on rural social life. Voluntary associations in the villages were originally organized around common work. Rural labor associations adopted rituals, music, and organizational rules from "dancing kumpins" of the Ambas Geda type—these were associations whose main function was entertainment, drawing from different musical styles, including jazz, but organized around ethnic solidarity (Little 1967) The practice of *ososu*, that is, the rotating redistribution of money within a loosely structured

self-help group is also of Yoruba origin and was introduced in the countryside from the city.

Ososu is more a practice than a form of organization; the groups practicing it merely have financial functions. However, in some cases ososu is exercised within benefit societies whose economic role exceeds the simple monetary redistribution and provides a rudimentary social security scheme—members' contributions constituting a safety net for individuals in times of hardship. Ososu is practiced today all over in Sierra Leone, both in rural and in urban settings, from very disadvantaged to relatively privileged groups.

It became possible to officially register friendly societies as early as in 1886. Although registration was not obligatory, it became popular because it was generally held that it meant official recognition for the associations (Banton 1957[1969]). From the 1920s to the 1950s the number of registered societies rapidly increased. Banton gives an estimation of around 200 registered organizations operating in 1953. This number, however, only covered a fraction of the entirety of active associations, the majority of which remained unregistered. Although Banton (1957) and Nunley (1987) agree that friendly societies, especially of the Alikali type, constituted an ethnic melting pot, helping the integration of newly arrived migrants, in Banton's 1950 statistics, the tribal affiliation was still the most important point of reference for the identification of societies. Those of nonethnic character (15 of them) were organized according to occupational criteria.

By the mid-twentieth century, the associative life flourished both in Freetown and in the provinces; friendly societies not only were organized on sociability and ethnic solidarity but also "assumed responsibility for social services in matters of health, sanitation and welfare and became active socially and culturally. More significantly, they played an active part in political events. In 1950 they became part of the alliance behind the National Council of Sierra Leone (NCSL)" (Cohen 1981: 100). Most observers mention the involvement of voluntary organizations in politics (Banton 1957[1969]; Nunley 1985). However, the political games in which they are engaged do not always make it easy to decide if it means they are given an opportunity to act as a check on power, or, to the contrary, it facilitates their co-optation.

Militancy and Political Opposition

Progressive political action within civil society can be traced back to three sources. The first source of collective action is to be found in spontaneous mass manifestations and riots. Manifestations of this type proved to

be spectacular and sometimes quite efficient in the past. In 1939, 20,000 people demonstrated spontaneously against what they considered to be a threat against the liberty of expression (Denzel 1982: 176). Riots in 1955–56 also mobilized huge numbers. During the mid-1970s, under the authoritarian rule of Siaka Stevens, university students were to provide the most vocal opposition to the regime (Luke 1985: 664). In 2000, it was the crowd marching to the house of the RUF (Revolutionary United Front) leader which finally achieved his arrest. These antecedents make it easier to appreciate the importance of the national consultations of 1995–1996, when civil society (with a high participation of women) opted clearly for the elections to be organized immediately, against the intentions of the RUF and the NPRC (National Provisional Ruling Council).[30]

The second source of openly politicized civil society is composed of the different professional unions formed from the beginning of the twentieth century, some of which, with time, developed into class-conscious trade unions (Luke 1985). By 1963, the Federation of Labour (Labour Congress) counted 19,441 affiliated members (Luke 1985: 628). Trade unionism began declining after a promising start with Siaka Steven's arrival in power, despite the fact that Stevens himself started his political career in the trade union (Luke 1985: 625). Once in power, he did practically little to prove his engagement with the working class or the poor. Trade union leaders who were offered positions in the government failed to criticize Steven's political line. With the introduction of the one party regime, trade union opposition became more and more invisible. It was not until the early 1980s, when awakened by the general deterioration of living standards, the Labour Congress found its lost impetus and called for a general strike, which led to the arrest of many of its leaders.

The third source is formed by radical left-wing political organizations. The prototypes of these organizations are Wallace-Johnson's West African Youth League (Denzel 1982) or Cumming-John's Women Movement. These organizations also had roots in trade unionism—as both Wallace-Johnson and Cumming-John were trade unionists—but they also made part of a wider pan-African anti-imperialist movement. This type of politicizing also lost impetus with the advent of the one party system, even more so since in theory Stevens was not Wallace-Johnson's political enemy but his potential ally.

These three sources converged toward and provided a resource for the Civil Society Movement, a federation of CSOs recognized by Western standards and definitions at a moment when unity still seemed possible, in the 1990s, before the big coalition fell apart into divergent groups. Despite its present segmentation and its submission to Project Society, the original impetus of the three sources of civil society has not entirely disappeared. Trade unions still exist, but trade unionism is not a viable option for mass

political mobilization in a society where the working class, if it exists at all, is forced into the fuzzy zone of informal work, which precludes any real form of mobilization. Big ideas such as communism and Marxism-Leninism are not the order of the day either. Consequently, collective action of informal and semiformal groups has proven to be most enduring.

In a way, it is precisely because squatter communities, gangs, and gang-like societies constitute unstable allies for political parties, disabled beggars are known to be notoriously "troublesome," and youth groups are feared for their occasional violence that state power needs to keep an interest in them. In the past, the potentially destructive energy of the youth was sometimes channeled into anticolonial rebellion, civil war, and also hunger riots, strikes, and political demonstrations. The overlapping information networks of urban and rural secret societies and various youth associations played an important role in the coordination of these actions from the Hut Tax War through the 1955–56 riots to the Civil Defence Force during the civil war. (Banton 1957[1969]: 186; Cohen 1981: 99; Magaziner 2006).

Masquerades and carnival-like lantern celebrations (Nunley 1985) are still occasions to mobilize a large number of members and supporters. Membership in associations provides young people with a sentiment of influence, "social prestige and leadership denied to them" (Little 1960: 99). In the past, young people's societies managed to successfully interfere with the elections of headmen and even paramount chiefs. But at the same time, high-ranking government officials often join some of these organizations in order to use their support for their own political ends.

It is difficult to judge who uses whom in this game but it is certain that the mutual interdependence makes the relationship between the political elite and subordinate groups remarkably intimate,[31] the latter constantly oscillating between collaboration and subversion. Paradoxically, it is the same ambiguity characterizing the relationship between local NGOs and different power groups that turn NGOs—at least potentially—into effective means of controlling state power—despite the neutralizing effect of Project Society. Their full NGOization does not deprive them totally of the potential of supporting social protest. In a way, on the contrary, the fact of talking the language of Project Society and mastering its tools of linking across borders prepares them better to fight for social change, and this potential cannot be completely overlooked by the state.

Conclusion

Historical evidence demonstrates that since the establishment of the colony (and in fact even earlier) civil society in Sierra Leone has been diverse, efficient, and dynamic. Consequently, the attempts to link the development

of the Sierra Leonean civil society exclusively to the influx of INGOs during the war is not accurate. Civil society of course existed before. What changed after 1991 (and in fact more from 1995) was the rhythm of the transformation from indigenous forms of civil society to formal organizations in response to Western expectations, a process accompanied by the relegation of anything that did not fit into this limited picture into the domain of tradition, with concerted attempts to discredit it. The appearance of new forms of organizations has not necessarily meant the extinction of erstwhile organizations. Concurrent and overlapping membership in different forms of associations is more the rule than the exception. As a result, the present civil society landscape is populated by all the strata, classes, and types here described, and which people traverse and transact across with surprising ease and flexibility, continuously making and unmaking alliances on the basis of a plethora of political, social, and pragmatic reasons.

NGOization is not linked exclusively to the formalization of the organizations. It is a process of drawing the organizations of civil society (NGOs, CSOs, and even traditional civil organizations) into Project Society. Consequently, the form alone does not provide any reliable information on the democratic potential of an organization. There are genuine grassroots organizations perfectly NGOized, as there are also remarkably resilient NGOs. Project Society is a threat to civil society in that it "vampirizes" the former's energy by incorporating its potentially subversive action and modes of expression into the dominant power structure, leeching it of the very meaning and energy of the concept of civil society ab initio.

Instead of genuine accountability, "Project Society" has created an NGO elite accountable to donors rather than to their "target groups." As a result, instead of "democracy," this process has undermined the opportunities for engagement and participation for those it has sought to benefit—the poor and the disadvantaged. Moreover, instead of delivering "social mobility" it has widened the gap between social classes, strengthening the boundaries between them and obstacles to entry. Given this fact, the ostensible empowerment of civil society by international actors has become tantamount to its fundamental disempowerment (Hann and Dunn 1996; Comaroff and Comaroff 1999; Hudock 1999; Davis 2006; Ferguson 2006).

In the face of this glaring failure, the only viable solution is to abolish the dysfunctional, West-centric definition of civil society, which traps it within the confines of unsustainable "Project Society," which is itself a latter-day, failing product of large-scale political transformations of the 1990s. Only a broad, substantive, and function-based definition, which includes and recognizes both NGOs and historical, traditional, and indigenous forms of social organizations, can have a chance to reinvigorate the concept of

civil society and with it, help recognize genuine forces of transformation in Sierra Leone across the socioeconomic landscape. It is only then that one can begin looking at achieving democracy, representation, and participation as meaningful and powerful realities rather than token concepts.

Notes

1. This chapter is based on field research undertaken between 2009 and 2011. Its statements, therefore, have to be regarded as observations documenting the recent past. In accordance with the partial conclusions of the text, Project Society is in full transformation in Sierra Leone. NGOs' importance in the national economy is decreasing and projects cede the place to a more aggressive neoliberal type of capitalist development, under increasing state control.
2. This research was supported by the Wenner-Gren Foundation, as well as by the European Union and the State of Hungary, co-financed by theEuropean Social Fund in the framework of TÁMOP-4.2.4.A/2-11/1-2012-0001 'National Excellence Program'.
3. See for example Lucio Baccaro: *Civil Society, NGOs, and Decent Work Policies: Sorting out the Issues. Decent Work Research Programme*. "In fact, there seems to be no systematic evidence that NGOs or other societal associations are more cost effective, innovative, or even participatory than governmental organizations. In more general terms, there seems to be little systematic evidence on NGO performance tout court" (2001: 2).
4. On the New Policy Agenda see Edwards and Hulme (1996): "In recent years, and especially since the end of the Cold War in 1989, bilateral and multilateral donor agencies have pursued a 'New Policy Agenda' which gives renewed prominence to the roles of nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and grassroots organizations (GROs) in poverty alleviation, social welfare, and the development of 'civil society.'" The authors conclude: "Emphasizing the role of NGOs/GROs rests on ideological grounds rather than empirical verification. In addition, though the evidence is inconclusive, there are signs that greater dependence on official funding may compromise NGO/GRO performance in key areas, distort accountability, and weaken legitimacy." (see Edwards and Hulme, 1996, accessed online on April 15, 2012, at http://www.tc.edu/cice/Issues/01.01/PDFs/11edwards_hulme.pdf.)
5. Reno (1996) for example gives a detailed account on how structural adjustment contributed to the production of the "shadow state," and thus indirectly to the civil war.
6. Sierra Leone is ranked as the 196th out of 214 countries concerning its GDP per capita, while it has the fourth position concerning its GINI index, describing the difference between the poorest and the richest Data available at: https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/rankorder/2172rank.html.
7. Interview with the officer responsible for the NGO sector in the Ministry of Finance and Economic Development (MOFED) in 2009.
8. The Savings Bank Ordinance made it possible for friendly organizations to open a bank account in 1886 (see Banton 1957[1969]: 20).
9. The Government of Sierra Leone enacted the Revised NGO Policy Regulations in 2009.

10. CBOs (community-based organizations); DPOs (disabled people's organizations).
11. For a full classification of types of CSOs see I. G. Shivji, *Silences in NGO Discourse: The Role and Future of NGOs in Africa* (Oxford: Fahamu, 2007).
12. "Where is Sierra Leone's civil society?" Adeyemi Paul, 11.05.2011. *Sierra Express Media*, accessed online on July15, 2012. at http://www.sierraexpress-media.com/archives/23667.
13. Interview with a CBO leader, September 2012.
14. Gender equality is one of the priority domains of the social transformation envisaged by the government. A big step forward was made by the enactment of the so-called "three gender Acts" in June 2007. The three Acts—the Domestic Violence Act, the Devolution of Estates Act, and the Registration of Customary Marriage and Divorce Act provide protection to women in some of the most important domains of life.
15. Addax Bioenergy ESHIA (Environmental Social and Health Impact Assessment)—YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LWgwQJO2hZw, accessed on Septemer 4, 2012. According to the Oakland Insitute, the ESHIA is not really a credible document: "There are many discrepancies among what Addax, the Environmental, Social and Health Impact Assessment (ESHIA), government officials and other proponents of the project claim, and what is actually happening on the ground" (see Oakland Institute, 2012).
16. Oakland Institute views the efficiency of the "grievance mechanism" as follows: "When the disenchanted farmers of Lungi Acre drafted a letter of complaint in October 2010 regarding the destruction of the bolilands (a word of Temne origin, meaning seasonal swamp, used for rice production), they sent it to the Addax community liaison officer and put it in the grievance box. No response had been received three months later" (Oakland Institute 2012).
17. Already under colonialism, the concept of civil society "applied to an emerging African bourgeoisie and not rural native subjects. Civil society was presumed to be civilized society resulting in a bifurcated system combining direct and indirect rule" (Ferme 1999: 163).
18. Neotraditional urban secret societies are often suspected of being involved in illicit activities, For a historic reference see also in Banton (1957: 186).
19. The ideal is the norm as reported both by chiefs and ordinary villagers; however, I know that practice does not always follow the norm. Notwithstanding that fact, in the few cases I witnessed, I could in fact observe the tact of chiefs in conflict resolution.
20. These principles still prevail in practice, despite of the new Chieftaincy Act enacted in 2009, showing a clear political will to "democratize" the institution. See The Chieftaincy Act, 2009. http://www.sierra-leone.org/Laws/2009-10.pdf, accessed on March 8, 2012.
21. I was often told that if initiated people (both men and women) enter a public place they immediately recognize their fellow initiates "by the way they speak," even if they do not belong to the same society.
22. This is particularly obvious for female initiation involving excision of the clitoris. In village communities only excised girls gain the right to marriage;

uninitiated women face considerable ostracism and exclusion. Male initiation is not linked to circumcision, which usually happens at a younger age; however, the boys' bodies are also marked in the "bush," usually by scarification or by enduring other hardship.

23. During initiation neophytes retire with society elders in a sacred and secluded place outside the village, the sacred bush. Here they receive education and this is also the place where the actual initiation takes place.
24. In the paragraphs that follow "society" refers to secret society.
25. Poro is the men's sodality among the Mende and by extrapolation, today it often refers generally to the traditional ethnic-bound civil societies.
26. *For fear of political intimidation . . . Paramount Chiefs suspend Poro activities. Africa Young Voices (AYV)*. http://africayoungvoices.com/2012/06/for-fear-of-political-intimidation%E2%80%A6-paramount-chiefs-suspend-poro-activities/, accessed on June 22, 2012.
27. Officially, 16 ethnic groups are recognized as constituting the nation, including the Krio and the Sierra Leonean Lebanese.
28. The Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone was formed in 1997 as a chapter of the World Conference on Religion and Peace. See World Bank (2007).
29. Masks worn by society members are supposed to incarnate spirits, known commonly as "devils."
30. Between 1995 and 1996, two national consultative conferences, popularly known as *Bintumani* 1 and 2 were held with the participation of civil society, which unanimously supported the elections.
31. An anecdotal incident might serve as useful illustration of the operation of this relation. One day, early in 2012, the President of the Republic, while driving his car, stopped to talk to a group of street beggars, as he usually does on his way home. The beggars live in a nearby squat with about 100 of their brothers and sisters. On learning about the death of one, whom the President knew personally, his immediate reaction was to offer two military trucks to transport the body with all the mourners, the beggars' group, to the homeland of the deceased, and to supply a few bags of rice and Le2 million to arrange for a decent burial. Even if one does not wish to question the sincerity of the gesture, it also reveals the political value of precisely that part of civil society, which is usually left out at election time or when formal determinations are made.

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7

Civil Society and Democratized Peace in Postwar Sierra Leone

Vandy Kanyako

Introduction

The chapter is divided into five main sections. The first deals with a general overview of the historical evolution of local civil society. The second outlines the literature review as well as the theoretical underpinnings that informs the chapter. The third section discusses the impact of the civil war on local civil society. The fourth deals with the contributions of civil society followed by a critical assessment of such contributions. The final section contains some policy recommendations and the conclusion, which weaves all of the core elements together.

Sierra Leone has a vibrant civil society sector with solid historical roots. Throughout the country's modern history, various forms of voluntary associations and civic organizations have played key roles in bringing people together to pursue the common good. Their efforts have led to the creation of a dynamic intercultural civic activism that was instrumental in shaping public opinion from the bottom up. Kenneth Little (1955 identified five different types of voluntary associations that catered to the needs of their constituencies: tribal unions, friendly societies, occupational/professional associations, entertainment groups, and recreational associations. These earlier attempts at creating a space outside of the political systems became the forerunner to the civil society organizations (CSOs) that emerged in postwar Sierra Leone.

There are various kinds of (CSOs) in Sierra Leone. Because they vary in size, scope, focus, and capability any attempt at a typology will run into problems. In a 2007 study, the World Bank identified three distinct civil society groups in Sierra Leone. These are traditional groups, neotraditional groups, and formal organizations. Traditional groups are, according to the study, governed by cultural norms and mores. They exist to "build the social capital and moral pacts necessary for influencing, countervailing or participating in the political, social and economic governance of local societies." Neotraditional or semiformal groups, in contrast, are organizations where eligibility for membership is based on ascriptive identities (mainly ethnic and locative). Social capital derived from ascriptive identities is utilized by these groups to organize and make political and other claims on behalf of an ethnic group or descendants of a particular area. "Formal" civil society groups are those which, more than the groups described above, approximate Western notions of civil society. Formal civil society groups in Sierra Leone could be categorized according to their major sectors of operations.[1] As useful as this categorization is, it fails to account for the various kinds of civil society networks and alliances.

In fact, the typology raises more questions than it answers. How does one "package" amorphous social organizations in a way that it captures the breadth and scope of their setup, composition, and operations? Does one categorize such groups according to the "public" they serve (women, children) or according to how they serve them (advocacy, service delivery)? Or should they be categorized according to their setup (formal, informal) or their geographical location (rural, urban)? The literature is divided on these sets of pertinent issues. Partly as a result of these conceptual challenges, I have identified five main categories of organizations that will form the basis of my analysis in this chapter. This typology seems more in line with Little's categorizations referenced earlier. These are professional membership organizations, nationally oriented faith-based organizations, professional nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), coalitions, and community-based organizations. This categorization, I believe, captures the breadth and scope of the different variations of contemporary civil society in postwar Sierra Leone.

The challenges with typology apart, there is the problem of defining civil society itself. There is no universally accepted definition of the term "civil society." In contemporary usage "civil society" is largely considered to be the voluntary participation of average citizens around shared interests, purposes, and values. According to Comaroff and Comaroff, two of the leading authors on African civil society, civil society groups are generally groups that "undertake initiatives designed to affect positively the political, cultural, and socio-economic dynamics" to advance people's common

interest.[2] They include formal and informal groups operating at various national and community layers of a society. They engage in activities as wide-ranging as promoting population control and health care, empowering women and youth, protecting the environment and human rights, managing conflict, and delivering basic social services.[3]

In spite of the difficulties in agreeing on a common definition, there are a few characteristics that analysts seem to agree on for what constitutes civil society:

- They should be autonomous, or free from the control of any institution or government.
- They should be financially independent, meaning that the majority of funding should come from voluntary, private sources.
- They should not be set up to make or maximize profit.
- They should exist for the public good and to foster social change.
- They should be nonpolitical.

On the basis of the above, the term "civil society" is used here in reference to those autonomous, voluntary, nonprofit, and nonpolitical organizations formed with the expressed aim of serving the public good. Such organizations deliver essential services, lobby and advocate on behalf of the marginalized, and monitor and report on corruption and human rights abuses. They come in all capabilities and persuasions and operate at every layer of society.

My focus is on two different but interrelated concepts: "local civil society" and "democratized peace." The former is a reference to those domestic or indigenous groups (both formal and informal) that were founded by locals and are staffed, managed, and operated locally. They are set up by indigenes or long-term residents of Sierra Leone with the aim of effecting change either nationally or in their localities at the district, chiefdom, or village levels. Examples of such organizations include the Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone (IRCSL), Sierra Leone Teachers Union, Pikin to Pikin, Freetong Players, Peacelinks, Sierra Leone Labour Congress, the National Forum for Human Rights, and Women's Forum. I will expand on some of these a little later. Often the contributions of such groups are eclipsed by their international counterparts and are thus depicted in the literature as reactive rather than proactive agents of change. But as will be illustrated here, evidence shows that these local organizations are organic and have taken on agency and characters of their own.

The second thrust of the chapter is on the notion of a "democratized peace." The concept is based on the premise that active citizen participation is a prerequisite for good governance, transparency, and sustainable

development. Democratized peace is about the exercise of power, rights, and the relations of people to institutions of governance. A Department for International Development (DFID) White Paper sets out three overlapping principles for good governance: "capability," "accountability," and "responsiveness." All three characteristics are needed to make states more legitimate, effective, and inclusive. They also reflect the need for state and citizens to work *together* to build effective states, to strengthen what is already in place, and to develop new institutions for the management and resolution of conflict.[4]

Significance of the Study

There is a great need to learn about indigenous groups and the factors that shape their growth and evolution. The high reliance on local CSOs in conflict-affected societies is not matched with a good understanding of what local CSOs are, how they work, and how they interact with each other and their beneficiaries. Understanding the nature and character of such groups, especially in fragile societies, will foster our understanding of the nature and patterns of local agency in postwar recovery. Also, better understanding can help address the challenges of capacity, specialization, sustainability, scale, and accountability issues that often plague postwar recovery. Specifically, more knowledge about the organizational and institutional context of CSOs could inform operations that rely on CSOs for direct project implementation. Finally, as the World Bank acknowledges, better understanding of local organizations is necessary to tap their full potential. Careful analysis of existing local structures and their composition can help identify the best approach to community outreach and to civil society capacity building.[5]

Conceptual Framework

Civil society has received considerable attention in the academic literature as well as in policy circles over the last three decades.[6] Part of the reasons for the renewed attention has been due to the exponential growth of global civil society over the last few decades. Several reasons have been proffered to explain the growing influence and visibility of civic groups around the world. The end of the Cold War saw the emergence of what the United Nations termed as "a more holistic view of development and conflict issues," which included environment, gender, and civil society.[7] Donor preference for the nonprofit sector is another factor that propelled the growth of the nongovernmental sector. Advances in technology,

especially telecommunications, have also contributed immensely to the exponential rise of global civil society. The Internet, Skype, Facebook, and Twitter have all helped to bridge the digital divide between groups around the world. A final key factor worth mentioning here could be attributed to the growing professionalism and expertise of civil society. An increase in global civil society would be meaningless if such rise was not accompanied by professionalism. Today, civil society activities are not just confined to service delivery but include niches such as advocacy, human rights protection, and research on social issues.

To fully account for civil society's continued relevance and growing profile we need to trace its roots. A "theory of civil society" in its modern sense owes its origin to nineteenth- and twentieth-century thinkers such as the Italian political leader and theoretician Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937), French historian and philosopher Michel Foucault (1926–1984), and German philosopher and sociologist Jurgen Habermas (1929–present). These three wrote extensively about the state and civil society in their discussions on hegemony, the maintenance of social order, and power and legitimation respectively. In his treatment of hegemony, for example, Gramsci explores not only the various strategies used by the ruling elites to cling on to power at the expense of the masses but also what the latter can do to bring about social change. He advocates among other things the cultivation of a working intelligentsia capable of articulating the views of the working class. Habermas (1989), in contrast, devoted a considerable amount of his work to what he calls the "public sphere." In his view a healthy democratic society is one in which the citizen interacts with, but is less dependent on, the state for self-fulfillment. Habermas believed in a vibrant civil society in what he referred to as the "public sphere" (voluntary informal arena where people converged to share ideas and operate as equals). For him civil society contains the seeds of true democracy. Foucault takes it a step further by asserting that social order is maintained through an architectural model of modern power: people are controlled by believing that they are constantly under observation as obtains in a prison system. The disciplinary methods for controlling criminals thus become the model for controlling an entire society (schools, hospitals, etc.)—all reinforce this control mechanism.

In contemporary usage, civil society has been equated with the accumulation of social capital in the "public sphere." Francis Fukuyama[8] argues that "societies with substantial endowments of social capital have greater civil security and less conflict than those with less social capital." Subscribers to this view argue that building social relations is important to our understanding of various forms of social identity, including gender, class, culture, ethnicity, and religion.[9] Dukes (1999) sees the participation

of citizens in community life as essential to developing identity, meaning, and self-worth. Effective postwar peace building requires the involvement of a broad spectrum of the society. Each person or group has a critical role to perform. In this sense, therefore, a vocal and vibrant civil society helps improve governance by providing opportunities for marginalized groups to engage with the state and other relevant sectors.

There is now a consensus that a vibrant civil society is necessary for nurturing peace and the building of sustainable democratic culture and institutions. This is because participation enables individuals, organizations, and communities to assume responsibility for their own welfare and that of their community, and develop capacity in order to contribute to their own and their community's development. In this sense, therefore, sustainable postconflict peace building is not feasible without the involvement of a broad spectrum of the society. These community-based civil society groups interact with their environment with the aim of maximizing their welfare; changing attitudes, behavior, and social perceptions between groups; and facilitating social exchanges mainly at all levels of society.

But the analysis in the core literature tends to focus almost exclusively on groups that interact with the state. In so doing, they have overlooked the vast majority of other arenas in which local civil society can engage the wider system. This was what Kasfir had in mind when he posited that seeing civil society only through a formal lens ignores the complex character of Africa's CSOs, thereby failing to capture the full breadth and scope of nonstate actors in most of the developing world.[10]

Some have also questioned whether more harm is being done by vesting too much power and hope in the civic sector. Seeing civil society as a silver bullet for some of the world's most protracted socioeconomic problems is setting these societies up for failure. As I illustrate later on, CSOs often mirror the society they live in. In other words, because they are by-products of their societies it is not surprising that they exhibit some of the same shortcomings that are present in the wider society.

The Civil War and Civil Society

Sierra Leone's civil war (March 1991–January 2002) was a major turning point for "local civil society." The brutal war galvanized and reinvigorated civil society groups into a national organized entity. The instability forced loosely organized groups, various interdenominational religious organizations, women's and youth groups, and other professional bodies to transcend their issue-specific interests and adopt a common front to engage the power structures. Groups such as the Sierra Leone Teacher's Union and

the Sierra Leone Labour Congress realized that their collective interests are best served only when they pool their resources together to address national issues. They therefore coalesced under umbrella entities such as the short-lived National Coordinating Committee for Peace (NCCP), a group consisting of over 60 groups[11] which helped organize prodemocracy activities, demonstrations, and peace rallies that resulted in widening the space for civil society participants in governance and democratization.[12] In May 2000, various civil society groups demonstrated outside the residence of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) leader in western Freetown. They carried signs and placards demanding concrete action on the stalled peace agreement. Armed supporters of the rebel leader opened fire on the unarmed group, killing more than 20 civilians in the process. This tragic episode marked a major turning point in the conflict. As a consequence, the international community realized that the RUF rebels had not been negotiating in good faith. Its leader, Foday Sankoh, fled his residence and was captured shortly afterward by a combination of local residents and government troops. He was remanded in custody where he subsequently died in July 2003.

In addition to galvanizing and emboldening various nonstate actors, the war also led to the proliferation of civil society groups. The number of groups engaged in advocacy, monitoring, conflict resolution, and various kinds of program implementation increased in visibility. According to figures from the Ministry of Development and Economic Planning, an average of 100 new organizations applies for registration each year.[13]

Furthermore the war empowered marginalized groups such as women, youth, amputees, and the handicapped to advocate for issues of interest. Faced with several years of discrimination and perceived neglect, groups as diverse as the University Women's Association, Market Women's Association, and the Amputee Association galvanized as pressure groups to advocate for issues of specific concern. Many of these marginalized groups were founded by the members themselves with the goal of addressing legal and societal discrimination. As the clout of these groups grew, they formed umbrella associations and national networks to advocate for broader issues that engaged a much wider national and international constituency.

Finally, the Sierra Leone civil war contributed to the accelerated professional growth of various civil society groups. To improve the quality of their work and to be considered as partners in development by their international counterparts, local CSOs were required to professionalize. This entailed setting up a functioning office, bank account, and a set number of paid staff, and submitting auditing and annual reports. The networking and collaboration skills that CSOs developed during the war have endured. The Sierra Leone's Women's Movement for Peace and federated groups

such as the NCCP, formed in early 1995, are earlier examples of CSO networks and umbrella organizations. Today, these various issue-specific alliances and coalitions act as platforms for communication, coordination, oversight, and the cross-fertilization of ideas.

Role of Local Civil Society in Promoting Democratic Norms

The work of local civil society in postwar Sierra Leone could be largely divided into two key sectors: service delivery and norms enhancement. The former encompasses social service delivery mainly in the areas of education, agriculture, and public health. The latter involves advocacy and institutional strengthening and stabilization with a focus on democracy, good governance, anticorruption, human rights, and peace building. The work of many of the organizations and networks featured in this chapter straddles these two sectors. Through wide-ranging efforts such as advocacy on behalf of marginalized groups, program design and implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, civil society has become an important third force for promoting good governance and democratic norms. The critical and timely reports of Green Scenery on land grabbing in Pujehun District vividly illustrate how local civil society has become an important agitational force.

I will use select organizations from the typologies outlined earlier to illustrate the wide-ranging contributions of local civil society. The five key categories of organizations are professional membership organizations, nationally oriented faith-based organizations, professional nongovernmental organizations, coalitions, and community-based organizations.

The most prominent category among local civil society is the trade or membership-based organizations. The Sierra Leone Famers' Association, Sierra Leone Labour Congress, and the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ) are examples of these kinds of organizations. SLAJ advocates for press freedom, which often sets it on a collision course with the authorities. These membership-based organizations act as pressure groups and as watchdogs of the institutions of governance. Gender-based organizations are particularly prominent in this category. As a result of years of legal and societal discrimination against women, several organizations at various levels of society have emerged to address issues such as equal access to education, economic opportunities, health facilities, or social freedoms. Organizations such as the Sierra Leone Association of University Women (SLAUW), 50/50 Group, the Forum for African Women Educationalists, and the Women's Forum are all geared toward promoting gender equality either through education, politics, or the economy.[14] For example SLAUW

with its motto "empowering women and girls through lifelong education" promotes women's higher education and advocates for gender equality in education in general and higher education in particular.

The second category is the nationally oriented faith-based organizations. Unlike the professional organizations mentioned earlier, these types of organizations provide physical as well as emotional and spiritual support to their various constituencies. Because the vast majority of Sierra Leoneans generally follow either Islam or Christianity, it is not surprising that the most prominent institutions are from these two faiths. These two groups could further be classified into two subsections: multireligious institutions such as the IRCSL and the single-faith institutions. Examples of the latter include the National Council of Imams, the Supreme Islamic Council, the Sierra Leone Muslim Congress, and the Federation of Muslim Women's Associations of Sierra Leone.[15] The prominent Christian-focused institutions include CARITAS, Christian Brothers, the Council of Churches in Sierra Leone, and the Evangelical Fellowship of Sierra Leone.

As the single most important multireligious institution, the IRCSL deserves further discussion. It was a significant actor in the Lomé Peace Accord. Some of its notable achievements in that tumultuous period include brokering the release of 52 hostages held by the RUF. Since the war ended, the organization has continued to play the role of a healer and reconciler of faiths. It has contributed to the establishment of the West Africa Inter-Religious Coordinating Committee which was instrumental in bridging the religious divide both nationally and at the subregional level. In addition to mobilizing their adherents and others for peace, the faith-based organizations also mediate between conflicting parties and have promoted reconciliation and dialogue between the various factions in the Sierra Leone civil war.[16]

One of the most prominent of these institutions is the Catholic Church. The Church has assumed greater responsibility for peace building and especially peace education since the end of the war. Because of its nationwide presence serving all Sierra Leoneans, the Church sees itself as the perfect conduit for promoting democratic norms at all layers of society. Most of its relief and development work is carried out by CARITAS, established in 1981 by the Catholic Bishops Conference of Sierra Leone. It operates health clinics and agricultural programs aimed at food sufficiency, and programs aimed at skills development and job creation for the youth. According to its brochure, the organization also provides peace education to approximately 16,000 school-going children nationwide. In addition, each school is encouraged to create peace clubs that compete against one another on an annual basis.[17] The expressed aim is to prepare the next generation of peace activists.

A third category of organizations is the secular professional organizations with a national reach. The Campaign for Good Governance, Sierra Leone Red Cross Society, Network Movement for Justice and Development, Fambul Tok Sierra Leone, and Green Scenery are examples in this category. They are neither member based nor are they faith driven. Instead, they are issue-focused advocacy organizations that act as interlocutors between the government and the people on issues of national importance. The Campaign for Good Governance, for example, was founded in 1996 by various civil society actors to promote good governance after the country's first multiparty elections in three decades. The organization works on decentralization and local governance, democratic participation, corruption (especially in high places), human rights, gender equality, peace building, poverty reduction strategy, and budgeting.[18] The Network Movement for Justice and Development (NMJD) was founded in 1988 in eastern Sierra Leone as "a national human rights-oriented civil society development and advocacy organization." Its flagship program is the peace and support program called "Leh wi push pis" (Let us push the peace). The project works with the local community to promote access to justice, through working with community members as paralegals.[19] Like Campaign for Good Governance and NMJD, the Sierra Leone Red Cross Society has several national programs that link development with peace building. Its Community Animation and Peace Support project, for example, includes conflict transformation, hygiene promotion, peace education, microenterprise development, food security, and skills training.[20]

A fourth category is the coalitions and networks of CSOs. There are CSO umbrella organizations and issue-specific alliances of all types, both in urban and in rural areas. Both the Civil Society Movement and the National Elections Watch are conglomerations of various CSOs. The former deals with civil society empowerment in general while the latter deals mainly with civil society's roles in elections monitoring with the goal of preventing elections-related violence (National Elections Watch, 2007). Indeed it is safe to state that networking has become very popular and is the norm among local CSOs. On average, groups in the provinces belong to three networks while those in Freetown may belong to as many as ten.[21] Today these various networks and coalitions act as platforms for communication, coordination, and cross-fertilization of ideas. The advantages are numerous. Forming partnerships with others fosters experience sharing and facilitates technical assistance, financial support, and training. Networking provides the forum for local actors to learn, share, and in the process, become agents of positive change. It is also vital for communication, coordination, sustainability, transparency, and cross-fertilization of new ideas and skills that help prevent the duplication of efforts and the maximum use of limited resources, time, and energy.

Community-based organizations are the final category of local CSOs prevalent in Sierra Leone. These are often either semiformal or informal and are limited in geographical scope. Peacelinks' Kenema branch and Pikin to Pikin are examples of these kinds of organizations. The former, as the name suggests, is based in Kenema, eastern Sierra Leone. It is open to youth in Kenema town. It engages in social activities that help build social capital. Peacelinks in Kenema organizes football matches and operate a day-care center and an agricultural project (where they teach young people how to farm). To supplement their income, they organize "outings" and sell the proceeds from their farm.[22]

The aggregate efforts of these organizations have played an important role in the search for a "democratized peace" in Sierra Leone. They have continued to thrive mainly because they are embedded in society. They have also devised ways to collaborate with third sector actors, including Parliament, donors, international NGOs, and other traditional groups that make up Sierra Leone's "social forces map."[23]

Despite these successes, however, contemporary civil society is also faced with several constraints. Firstly, postwar civil society is a very uneven field characterized by an unequal class system. Large, urban-based, and professionally staffed organizations are better equipped to attract the most funds and technical support. As such "informal" or "nontraditional" groups have been disadvantaged. The civil war also intensified the suspicion between the government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) and domestic civil society. Local CSOs also face serious financial constraints. Many of the donors have left the country and others have scaled back their funding very sharply. For example, direct NGO funding declined from 24 percent in 2004 to 15 percent in 2006 (DACO, 2005). Finally, because the overwhelming number of NGOs are engaged in service delivery it makes it difficult for local civil society groups to influence other critical sectors in the governing arena.[24]

Recommendations

For civil society: To continue to maintain relevance, local civil society needs to establish meaningful linkages with the communities they purport to represent. This is critical not just for financial accountability but also for moral accountability (Kaldor, 2003). As Lederach (1995) rightly argued, participation enables individuals, organizations, and communities to assume responsibility for their own welfare and that of their community. As mentioned already, citizen participation in community life is essential to developing identity, meaning, and self-worth.[25] To realize this vision however, civil society must democratize its own internal practices and attitudes. It must practice

what it preaches by becoming more transparent and inclusive. Civil society must learn to position its experiences in the context of the main political debates of the day and to discover ways of influencing these debates.[26]

For the state: The state should see local civil society as partners in development rather than as competitors. As such, the state should create the conducive atmosphere to allowing local CSOs to thrive and maximize their full potential. It should realize that the greatest resource for sustaining peace in the long term is rooted in the local people. The state should adhere to the generally held wisdom that building on cultural resources and utilizing local mechanisms is the best way to sustain the peace. The government must transform the institutions of governance to meet the evolving needs of modern society. This involves reform and structural transformation at the local levels of governance where most of these organizations operate.

Conclusion

This chapter argues that local CSOs in postwar Sierra Leone have played a vital role in promoting a democratized peace. Its outlines the origins, character, and types of various CSOs as well as their role in peace building. The chapter points out that Sierra Leone's local civil society's rapid growth in both number and visibility has created alternative public spheres critical for democratic norms. The agency of local civil society has created avenues for engagement with some of the most critical areas of the country's postwar reconstruction. They are thus prerequisites for good governance and the main channel for promoting durable peace, justice, accountability, and sustainable development in some of the most remote parts of the country. Local knowledge is particularly critical.

I have also argued that local civil society is also racked by numerous problems, some of which are self-created (mismanagement, nepotism, and cronyism) and others, unavoidable. The latter includes funding volatility and government interference. In spite of these shortcomings the main premise of this chapter is that local civil society in particular is indispensable to sustaining Sierra Leone's peace. In this sense, therefore, their indigenous knowledge in how the system works is critical for the sustainability of a democratized peace in postwar Sierra Leone.

Notes

1. World Bank (2007a).
2. Comaroff and Comaroff (1999: 26).

3. Karns and Mingst (2004).
4. DFID (2007).
5. World Bank (2005).
6. Lederach (1995), Comaroff and Comaroff (1999), Karns and Mingst (2004).
7. UN (1992).
8. Fukuyama (1999: 22).
9. Lederach (1995).
10. Kasfir (1998).
11. Jusu-Sheriff (2004).
12. Naim (2007), Jusu-Sheriff (2004).
13. MoDEP Brochure (2006).
14. http://m.state.gov/md220156.htm
15. World Bank (2007a: 15).
16. Bouta et al. (2005).
17. Personal interview with CARITAS aid worker, Freetown, December 2010.
18. www.slcgg.org/aboutCGG.html
19. NMJD (2008), *Organization Brochure*, Freetown, Sierra Leone, http://www.nmjd.org/home/background
20. Personal interview, Freetown, 2008.
21. Kanyako (2010).
22. Personal interview of members, Kenema, 2008.
23. CIVICUS, Campaign for Good Governance, 2006.
24. World Bank (2005b).
25. Burton and Dukes (1990).
26. Turay (2003).

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8

Critical Examination of Food Security-Insecurity in Postwar Sierra Leone

Earl Conteh-Morgan

Introduction

Sierra Leone experienced violent conflict between 1991 and 2002. The carnage and bloodletting that occurred during those 11 years became one of West Africa's worst post–Cold War tragedies. Once regarded as a small state with great potential in the subregion because of its rigorous and highly respected educational system and its relatively large natural resource base, it instead degenerated into the category of failed and collapsed states. In 2002, the internecine conflict that had displaced about two million people and resulted in the deaths of about 70,000 was followed by Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration (DDR) activities for combatants and refugees.[1] It could be argued that insecurity related to carnage and bloodletting has been eradicated because the physical and military violence that emanated from the neighboring and subregional countries of Liberia, Burkina Faso, and even Libya have all been eliminated.

The objective of this chapter is to critically analyze the level of human security and/or insecurity in Sierra Leone since the end of the war in 2002 and the launching of comprehensive peace-building activities in February 2004. The analysis is predicated on the argument that human security can be viewed as a paradox because with the elimination of one insecurity (a vicious civil war) the Sierra Leone state and society are immediately confronted with new or old insecurities that require serious attention.

Stated differently, human security-insecurity is like a pendulum perennially alternating between security and insecurity. In the case of postwar reconstruction societies, insecurity does not permanently disappear, but instead the violence associated with war is immediately replaced by the acute awareness of food, health, employment, and other insecurities. At the same time, it could be argued that the state should be the guarantor for the provision of human security broadly defined as a vital interest for individuals, groups, and society as a whole. The state as the primary guarantor of human security becomes especially important because state formation came about because of the need for security in a pre-Westphalian world characterized by wars among clans, tribes, groups, or subnational entities in general. In other words, in many ways, the creation of the state reduced the anarchy in the world and enhanced the level of security in many nation-states, especially as democratic values or the rule of law became the norm in many countries.[2] However, even after the integrity of the state is upheld in peacekeeping operation, followed by postconflict reconstruction, there is often still the persistence of human insecurities related to basic human needs. When states are still plagued by, or incapable of eliminating, these basic securities, all manner of societal dysfunctions ranging from banditry to violent protests continue. This analysis will specifically focus on food security and/or insecurity in Sierra Leone since the end of the conflict. In other words, what is the level of food security or insecurity in Sierra Leone since the end of the war? What internal and external factors, if any, are responsible for such food insecurity? What could be done to alleviate those insecurities? The notion of human security-insecurity as a paradox provides an important conceptual framework for analyzing Sierra Leone's overall human security situation since the end of the war. For Sierra Leone in particular, the principal postwar challenge is to achieve a society that eliminates insecurities, especially in the critical area of food, because food security is related to health security, personal security, and therefore overall human and national security.

Conceptual Clarifications

Food security can be defined as "the absence of fear of food deprivation and the elimination of food inaccessibility." It means closing the gap between desiring adequate and nutritious food and the means (income) available for a household or individual to secure it.[3] In order for food deprivation to be alleviated, along with its existential insecurity, the focus of state integrity should shift beyond the outward trappings (territory, independence, sovereignty, traditional national security concerns) of the Westphalian

notion of state security to the level of individual/group needs defined as their most basic/necessary needs that bolster their human dignity. It is the state that is expected to provide the right environment for individuals, groups, and communities to realize their full potential in the areas of food, health, employment, and the like. In human security generally defined, it is implied that the state as the superstructure of society ensures the effective working of institutions with their attendant rules and regulations and procedures as instruments for the realization of human security. The problem is the state in developing countries is used instead to ensure and prolong regime preservation at the expense of even the basic human needs of the population. Budgets are allocated disproportionately by the incumbent regime to protect itself from internal and external threats emanating from legitimate opposition.

In Sierra Leone, the factors that generated human insecurity emanated from the national (domestic), regional, and global (external) levels. At the national level, regimes since independence were so corrupt that over time inequalities deepened because some individuals' and groups' needs were being satisfied at the expense of others.[4] Accordingly, the structure of society was inherently violent to the deprived and resulted in disabilities, and even deaths, due to ill-health, malnourishment, and ignorance from lack of education because of negative effects of nepotism, graft, and financial embezzlement of state funds. The effects of the inherent structural violence that became a part of domestic society spawned violence at the individual, community, and eventually national levels resulting in the destructive violent conflict that occurred between 1991 and 2002. A precursor to the outbreak of civil war was alcohol and drug abuse as well as feelings of hopelessness among youth who saw no prospects for furthering their education or securing employment even after many years of higher education. Conditions further deteriorated from the personal existential insecurity reflected in drug abuse among youth to crimes of robbery or banditry, and interpersonal and group violence especially during election years. Fierce competition for political power even within the single All Peoples' Congress (APC) party was very common. Attempted coups were also common. Eventually all sectors of society experienced frustration at the downward spiral of economic conditions. The negative internal factors that brought about frustration, anger, and misery among the bulk of Sierra Leoneans, especially the youth, were directly due to nepotism, ethnic favoritism, or the politics of exclusion. Most Sierra Leoneans found themselves economically marginalized because they did not have the political connections implied in neopatrimonialism.[5] The distribution of resources disproportionately favored those connected to the political party elite. Public jobs and specific favors were accessible to the few with direct

political connections. This internal corruption summed up in ethnic and party favoritism is a reflection of a country with a low level of national integration, an undiversified and weak industrial base, weak state institutions, and extreme vulnerability to the changes in prices of commodities in the international market. By the mid-1980s, the situation had deteriorated to such an extent that it was quite easy for the Liberian conflict to act as a catalyst for Sierra Leone's pervasive frustration to spiral into a full-blown rebellion. The outbreak of war in 1991 was characterized by the most heinous acts of maimings, destruction of property, and collapse of even the modicum of rule of law in existence. Before the eruption of war in Sierra Leone, the political–economic system was already out of sync in terms of the factors necessary to keep a country in good working order. It was therefore not surprising for the Liberian conflict to spill over into Sierra Leone.

Liberia, since the mid to late 1970s, had experienced a manifestation of insecurity reflected in the 1980 coup d'état that changed the face of Liberian politics. Conditions worsened and continued to escalate during the mid to late 1980s as a result of food insecurity. The overthrow of President Tolbert was precipitated by a campaign to encourage local rice production by increasing its price to consumers. After the government announced a 50 percent increase in the price of a bag of rice in 1979, rioting and looting was eventually the result.[6] In 1980, President Tolbert was overthrown in a bloody coup, and by 1989 Liberia was engaged in a full-scale civil war with undertones of regional and ethnic rivalry. By early 1991, the Liberian civil war spilled over into Sierra Leone with very tragic consequences. By the time the Liberian war erupted in the late 1980s, the ground was already fertile for war in Sierra Leone. Even before the Liberian civil strife served as a "contagion effect" on Sierra Leone, the West African region as a whole had experienced or was itself experiencing political instability in the form of coups d'état, a civil war in Nigeria in the mid-1960s, and student dissatisfaction with the way regimes operated. While Sierra Leone had experienced coups and attempted coups, the entire sub-Saharan African region was itself perceived by the international community as a region in flux and potentially explosive and characterized by widespread misrule and corruption. The negative effects of governmental corruption, neopatrimonial politics, and the blatant disregard for civil and political rights, coupled with the severe shocks and deprivation created by IMF Structural Adjustment Policies (SAPs), acted as fertile soil for Sierra Leone to erupt into civil war. The policies of the IMF and World Bank further fragmented the country into "haves" and "have-nots" and served as a trigger for violent conflicts. With external imposition of SAPs, the Sierra Leone state, for example, became less involved in the delivery of basic services, either because it now lacked the resources to do so, or it

was simply adhering to IMF requirements that called for elimination of subsidies to food, health care, and education, among others. The misery experienced by the youth made many of them ready recruits for the civil war that ensued. It also encouraged the disgruntled and marginalized to join the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) that became the spillover arm of the Liberian civil war. Elements that triggered increased human or existential insecurity and then civil war were the sudden and drastic cuts in social services and state employment. In the end hundreds of civil service employees were laid off, and the Sierra Leone government under President Momoh implemented measures that resulted in over 80 percent reduction in spending for subsidies. The effect was a 300 percent increase in the price of petrol and 180 percent rise in the price of rice, the staple food crop.[7] These austere measures resulted in frustration both in the military and among civilian groups. The Liberian war which had erupted earlier served as a demonstration effect and a precipitating factor for the disgruntled Sierra Leoneans to engage in full organized rebellion against the APC regime.

During and immediately after the Cold War, the focus of peace building was primarily state centric or ensuring the territorial integrity of the state. A state-centric approach also meant ensuring regime preservation and limited sovereignty for the state. It was in 1994 that a new concept of security was first introduced, referred to as "human security." It emphasized the security of people rather than territories; de-emphasized security in arms production and buildup; and also underscored the national and international influences on the security of individuals, groups, and entire nations. The overall focus was on a transition away from traditional military-strategic-defensive security. As stated in the 1994 United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Human Development Report, the focus of security had been for too long interpreted as security of sovereign territory, protection of national interest, or for the developing world's security of independence and territory. According to the 1994 Human Development Report:

> Forgotten were the legitimate concerns of ordinary people who sought security in their daily lives. For many of them, security symbolized protection from the threat of disease, hunger, unemployment, crime, social conflict, political repression and environmental hazards.[8]
>
> (p. 22)

Human security has now become part of the focus of postwar reconstruction and peace-building efforts because of the realization that adequate food, health care, gainful employment, and the like, are essential to peace

and stability. Accordingly, the 1994 Human Development Report identified seven areas of human security-insecurity: economic, food, health care, environmental, personal, community, and political. These areas overlap or are interrelated and touch the lives of all people.

With this new and far-reaching conception of security, achieving real human security in a postwar country like Sierra Leone must be predicated on a profound and detailed evaluation of the underlying causes and dynamics of its conflict to ensure that events never again escalate to the level of carnage and bloodletting. Facile assumptions that a state rescued from total disintegration or collapse results in human security fall far short of understanding the human security dilemma and/or problematic. Basic human needs issues, in particular, food, health care, and gainful employment, are the key factors for understanding a country's escalation from gross inequalities and economic deprivation into outright civil war.

Generally, where overall human security is concerned, Sierra Leone at present can only claim the absence of violence and atrocities that were rampant during the 11-year civil war. Atrocities such as amputations of limbs by the RUF, extrajudicial killings, forced recruitment of children into the war, and the widespread use of rape against women all made the Sierra Leone civil war notorious in its scope and intensity of violence. There are, however, consequences of the war that continue to undermine, or even deepen, personal, health, food, and community insecurity, among others. For example, even before the 1980s, much of the country's infrastructure (educational, roads, civil service, water and electricity, etc.) was already in a state of decay and/or totally outdated. The years of conflict further destroyed and laid waste what was left of the infrastructure. Despite the current encouraging growth rate since 2003, poverty and unemployment, which are bedrocks of human insecurity, are still high. An outdated infrastructure, especially in the areas of the civil service or the absence of a transparent political system based on the rule of law, often breeds systemic corruption. As recently as 2009, Sierra Leone was still ranked by the UNDP's development index as the third-to-last least-developed country. While physical and social destruction was rapid during the war, postwar reconstruction is still slow and in some instances stagnant. Just as before the war, most of the country is still mired in subsistence agriculture. According to the World Food Programme, "There is a considerable deficit in nearly all the country's development spheres, which has held back a quick recovery and development process."[9]

The level of unemployment is closely associated with a growing youth populace known to be frustrated, deprived, and largely unemployed. A National Youth Policy has been put in place to address the lingering problems associated with youth. Whatever measures have been put in place will

take a long while to solve the problem of lack of opportunities. A growing youth population is directly tied to a swelling urban population and the increase in crime, drug dealing, and prostitution as manifestations of human insecurity. The health sector was also devastated by the war and external impositions. Even before the war, the doctor-to-patient ratio was outrageously high. The country is especially notorious in the area of maternal deaths associated with childbirth. Many of the women who die in childbirth either die in their homes or on the way to hospital. The reason is because most deliveries do not take place in health facilities and they are not assisted by a qualified birth attendant. The very wide gap in ratio between trained and skilled medical personnel and patients is due to the flight of the former abroad during and just before the civil war. According to the World Food Programme Report of 2009, there were roughly 300 government-employed doctors in 1990; by mid-2009 there were only 78 still remaining.[10]

There is always a discrepancy between rhetoric and reality when it comes to issues of food, health, economic, and other securities. For example, Sierra Leone is a full-fledged member of many treaties that guarantee the right to health of people. However, the reality is that the country's national health care services are woefully lacking. The number of doctors is still small in relation to the entire population, access to private medical care is difficult for the average Sierra Leonean due to high poverty levels, and there are many patients yearning for medical attention. Moreover, there is a virtual absence of blood banks in some regions of the country. The poorly developed, or absence of, transportation infrastructure also means many rural people cannot easily travel to hospitals or clinics. Even when some get to the clinics or peripheral health units, they present the medical staff with cases for which the staff are not trained or which is beyond their competence. Health problems in Sierra Leone as in many other developing countries are associated with high poverty levels, low levels of nutrition, poor quality of water or its unavailability, ignorance due to low levels of education, and poor hygiene in inadequate housing. The existence of this vicious circle in Sierra Leone means that the country always falls into the category of countries with the highest maternal mortality ratios defined as maternal deaths per 100,000 live births. The problem of rampant poverty coupled with governmental corruption is reflected in inadequate budgetary allocation in the critical areas of agriculture, health, education, and job creation, among others. This discussion of health problems is relevant to food security-insecurity because food and health insecurity feed on each other. In other words, poor health is associated with low food productivity, which in turn is linked to malnutrition and hunger. It is a self-perpetuating cycle that involves and aggravates existential insecurity and is manifested in frustration, anger, and hostility toward the incumbent regime.

Internal and External Causes of Food Insecurity

With the end of the war in 2002, Sierra Leone achieved state security defined as the absence of violent conflict and the restoration of the territorial integrity of the state. Accordingly, in 2002, Sierra Leone embarked on a road to peace building by conducting a relatively peaceful general election. Moreover, since 2002, the country has experienced remarkable economic growth, surpassing 9 percent in 2002 and has registered positive economic growth ever since, in spite of the dismal global economy.[11] Since the end of the war, other remarkable policies—such as the disarming and demobilizing of over 70,000 combatants or the launching of a National Youth Policy aimed at promoting the interests, rights, and welfare of youth in general—have been put in place. The question is whether the end of the war and the introduction of peace-building activities, as well as government policies to combat the ravages of war, have enhanced food security in Sierra Leone. If not, then why not?

In order to accurately assess the level of food security in Sierra Leone, both internal (domestic) and external underlying causes and dynamics must be taken into account. According to the "Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper Sierra Leone" produced in 2005, the major problem in the country is not food availability but rather economic access to food. Sierra Leoneans lacked access to food because as many as 83 percent of the households lacked enough money to buy food.[12] This glaring number meant that many people are either unemployed or, even if employed, just did not earn enough money to afford food. Inaccessibility to food is directly linked to economic insecurity, which could be defined as a lack of sufficient income, high unemployment levels, or a widespread lack of gainful employment. This situation implies a vicious circle of food inaccessibility, health insecurity, personal insecurity, and even community insecurity in the form of robberies, food riots, or violent protests in general, among other things.

In 2005, and again in 2007, household food security surveys were held mostly in the provincial areas of Sierra Leone. The findings were that 44 percent of households were food insecure in the 2005 survey while 29 percent were food insecure in the 2007 survey. The areas of the country that had the least access to adequate food were Bonthe and the Western Rural area. These two regions and some others depended solely on rice consumption, and at the same time they were not able to easily access it. The surveys also found that although rice is the staple diet and people would prefer to consume it on a daily basis, there were nonetheless many rice-deficit districts such as the larger urban areas of Bo, Kenema, Kono, and the Western Area especially Freetown, the capital. Another factor that also translated into food insecurity is the fact that on average individual

households spent roughly 50 percent of their income on food.[13] This is an indication of high poverty levels in which households with more money are able to consume adequate food compared with households with less income.

Food insecurity is still widespread in Sierra Leone, even after over a decade of postwar reconstruction. The first domestic reason for this insecurity is that food production, and especially rice production, is still based on postage stamp cultivation or subsistence existence. In most of the country, small-scale production using traditional methods and tools still predominates. Upland farming is difficult especially where hoes, machetes, and other labor-intensive implements are still being used. Farmers are only able to farm small plots of land every year. There is hardly production of excess food for export. Since farmers are poor, they cannot afford advanced farming technologies to produce a surplus. Even if farmers produce enough to sell, the costs of transportation to market the food crops, the lack of storage facilities, and the competition with other farmers act as formidable obstacles relative to incentives. Second, food insecurity is also aggravated by rampant poverty. The large number of subsistence farmers as well as food imports means that at any time, there is widespread availability of food. However, the existence of many poor households translates into inability to access the available food for household consumption. The low levels of food production due to rudimentary methods of farming result in moderate supply or availability but expensive food prices relative to household incomes. More advanced farming methods would ensure higher yields and therefore greater supply of food. Since the local farmers often produce less because of lack of technology, they are unable to pay their debts after selling their produce. At the end of the harvest period, they may find themselves unable to access food while waiting for the harvest season to begin. They also fall victim to food insecurity due to low income, lack of technology, and overall poverty.

Moreover, Sierra Leone's current food insecurity, reflected in lack of access to food, can also be situated in historical context, in particular the negative effects of colonialism, which disrupted the precolonial cultural methods and patterns of cultivation and exchange, which guaranteed an ample supply and access to food in African societies. The commercialization introduced by colonial rule destroyed the system of mutual sharing, assistance, and traditional obligations that had ensured access for all within communities. Africa's incorporation into the global capitalist system via colonial rule destroyed the diversified cultivation and agricultural system that ensured the production of diverse crops for local consumption. Colonialism enforced single cash crop production and in this way launched the process of food insecurity that is in part being reproduced

today in countries like Sierra Leone and others in Africa. In particular, focus on rice, cassava, potatoes, yams, or millet farming for local consumption was disrupted in favor of cash crops like oil palm, cocoa, coffee, and groundnuts to serve the colonial markets or factories.

It is not just the external introduction of a cash crop system that stifled a diverse supply of food crops, but the fact that marketing boards were also introduced in the 1930s to determine the price of cash crops produced by African farmers. In Sierra Leone, the Sierra Leone Produce Marketing Board eventually assumed the function of determining the incomes of local farmers. The problem was that the agricultural produce was bought at far below the world market price. According to Frances Moore Lappe and Joseph Collins, "Peanuts bought by the boards from peasant cultivators in West Africa were sold in Britain for more than seven times what the peasants received."[14] Even when world prices were on the upswing, the boards were able to keep the prices paid to peasants at well below world market price. The deflated prices paid to African farmers killed their incentives to vigorously pursue cash crop cultivation even after independence.

Furthermore, food aid transferred to poor countries like Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea, among others, contributes to food insecurity because they produced dependence by these recipient countries on the donor countries. The argument is put forth that food assistance has the effect of depressing the price of local agricultural produce resulting in a disincentive on the part of the recipient state to stimulate its domestic agricultural production. Dependency is also reinforced when the recipient government comes to rely on the local currency proceeds of the food and expresses the wish to prolong the program. Besides, even with the availability of external food supplies, because of the pervasive poverty not all individuals or families can afford access to it. A more insidious aspect of external food aid that contributes to dependency and then food insecurity is when it changes consumption patterns and tastes thereby leading to demands for food that the recipient country cannot and does not produce locally. Food aid could also transform a recipient government into the sole importing and marketing agent in a country and as a result destroy private initiatives and incentives leading to adverse consequences and further insecurity.

In sum, in addition to the internal/national factors that contribute to food insecurity in Sierra Leone, external factors also contribute in reinforcing lack of access to food. The focus on cash crop production continues even today with so much of the best land often allocated to it. A big disincentive for local farmers to produce for the export market is the low prices for raw produce at the world market just as cash crops were expropriated at very low prices during colonial rule. Today, the strategy is to flood the local markets with imported food, a strategy which destroys the

market for domestic food, kills incentives to grow local food crops, and in the end creates more food insecurity because families cannot even afford to buy food because of widespread poverty.

Another contributory factor to food insecurity in Sierra Leone is the fact that in Sierra Leone like in most African states, government agricultural spending is far less than 10 percent of central government spending. For example, between 2003 and 2010, average annual agricultural spending in Sierra Leone was only 2.4 percent. In 2012, agricultural spending was only 1.7 percent of total public spending. This means that since the launch of the Comprehensive Africa Agriculture Development Programme (CAADP) in 2003, Sierra Leone has not yet come near the CAADP 10 percent expenditure goal. However, according to Stockholm International Peace Research Institute data, the country spends far more on military matters. Military spending as a percentage of central government spending was 5.9 percent, 6.3 percent, 4.7 percent, and 4.1 percent in 2008, 2009, 2010, and 2011 respectively.[15] In other words, the amount spent on regime survival surpasses that spent on agriculture. Moreover, directly related to food availability and access to food is the other fact that although women in sub-Saharan Africa are major producers, their control of land is less when compared to other regions of the world. Women in Sierra Leone are accordingly marginalized where control over land or large-scale farming projects and activities are concerned. Gender inequality along with other factors such as a poor agricultural technology, inadequate education, and the absence of adequate emphasis on agricultural production plays a big part in food insecurity in Sierra Leone. Sierra Leoneans in the urban areas and small-scale farmers in the rural areas experience a lack of food availability and access especially in the months of July, August, and September. These are referred to as the hungry months before harvest in the months of October, November, and December. During the hungry months food supply decreases, driving up the price of available food, and is accessible to only those who can afford the inflated prices. In addition to budget constraints and the marginal role of women in availability of land is the issue of food preservation. Food preservation is difficult or virtually nonexistent in a country with no regular supply of electricity to make refrigeration or preservation possible. Seasonal foods and perishable foods such as fruits and vegetables could be made available all year round where food preservation is practiced due to the availability of electricity and a refrigeration system. These problems coupled with the 11 years of civil strife which negatively impacted food production in Sierra Leone are the reasons that even before the war, and currently, there are deep-seated historical, political, economic, and sociocultural factors that permanently underlie food insecurity in Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone like most postcolonial societies was

incorporated into the global capitalist system as a producer and supplier of raw materials. This is the reason for the country's continued overemphasis on primary agriculture—cash crop production—even at the expense of food crops. The production of food crops for local consumption lack governmental support and is carried out on infertile soils, with no fertilizer use or access to food storage and preservation. Overall economic incentives to engage in farming is low and for many groups, nonexistent. The low level of governmental investment on agricultural productivity since independence has resulted in lack of basic knowledge and information on farming for most small-scale producers. For example, this lack of technological and information know-how is manifested in absence of crop variety in farming. Rice production has not experimented with different yields. It has been in large part, the same for other agricultural produce.

Moreover, two factors are currently acting as formidable obstacles to food insecurity in Sierra Leone. First is the perennial smuggling of resources to the contiguous states of Liberia and Guinea, and the rising global inflation which affects the buying power of poor countries like Sierra Leone. Essential food items like rice and palm oil are smuggled across the borders creating scarcity within the country and making food more expensive. This scarcity in turn intensifies the rate of inflation and decreases the level of food availability and thereby access to it. For instance, during the past few years the price of a cup of rice increased from Le700 to Le900. At the same time, a pint of palm oil, very essential for cooking, increased from Le400 to Le1,500.[16] The smuggling of essential food items will continue to contribute to food insecurity in Sierra Leone because the customs officers and policemen who are supposed to prevent such smuggling are often bribed by unscrupulous businessmen who have long engaged in this practice especially in the Guinea–Sierra Leone border. The 2011 Comprehensive Food Security Vulnerability Analysis discovered that 45 percent of households experience food insecurity and 6.5 percent are very food insecure.

Furthermore, a more recent and ongoing threatening development in Sierra Leone and other developing countries is the large-scale purchase or lease of farmland by investors engaged in agribusiness or extensive plantation agriculture. According to Green Scenery, a Freetown NGO, roughly one-fifth of the country's fertile land has been leased since 2009 to agribusiness industries. Many of them are involved in biofuel production utilizing crops such as oil palm, sugar cane, and maize.[17] This means that these companies are not producing food crops to be sold in Sierra Leone, but rather they are focused entirely on cash crops and biofuels that most Sierra Leoneans will not be able to afford. The worst part is that it deprives ordinary people of the arable land they need to produce food crops to

feed their families. The consequence will be people will be unable to purchase food and they would simply go without it. By 2010, as many as 20 chiefdoms in nine districts had been affected by this land grab by external investors. Pujehun and Port Loko Districts have been especially affected as very large tracts of arable land have already been leased for the cultivation of rubber, oil palm, or sugar cane. The agribusiness investors range from countries such as Switzerland, the United Kingdom, China, Portugal, and Luxemburg. It is investors like these that contribute to the external exploitation of developing countries like Sierra Leone because their ventures do not provide numbers of jobs for locals. Besides, the labor provided by Sierra Leoneans is low cost, and substantial profits go to these companies because of the huge tax breaks they get from the Sierra Leone government. Apart from all these advantages for these external companies, the ordinary farmers lose a great deal because compensation given to the chiefs or government is inadequate and does not even trickle down to the people within the affected communities. In most of the agreements with the investors, the incentives given them are too generous and end up as a total loss for Sierra Leoneans. Incentives are mostly 10-year tax breaks for agricultural investments, 100 percent repatriation of profits, and 100 percent foreign ownership, among other things. In such communities where the investments take place, most people are still unemployed and food insecure, or even if employed, are paid a meager income for mostly backbreaking work. The power elite, such as the cabinet ministers, chiefs, and other influential members of society are the only ones that benefit from the deals made between foreign investors and the Sierra Leone government.

The agreements signed between the government and foreign investors are often lacking in transparency or the participation of ordinary people within the community. According to NGOs like Green Scenery, Oakland Institute, and Sierra Leone Right to Food Network, documents related to the agreements are never made available to the people. Local officials who benefit from the deals act as advocates who overemphasize the benefits of the agreements for local people. There is no participation by local women, no input from the community, and no collective agreement of what the compensation for the community should be for lost land. If there is any compensation at all, it is either inadequate or not made available to the common people.

This new land grab, as it is described by observers, could spark more frustration, anger, and even rebellion against paramount chiefs and the national government itself. For instance, in Pujehun District (Kpaka Chiefdom) locals complained about one of the land deals in which the chief did not consult them. They claim they have never even seen the lease agreement which was signed in January 2011 by the chief giving Biopalm

Energy, an Indian Company, control over roughly 50,000 acres of land in Kpaka Chiefdom for 50 years with a possible 21 years extension of the agreement. The community of Kpaka Chiefdom expressed its frustration and has even threatened to attack anyone who cultivates anything on its land. This land grab or expropriation of land by foreign investors has been described by Jean Baxter as the next "Blood Diamonds" in Sierra Leone.[18] It is not just this Indian Company that has signed leases involving thousands of acres of arable land, but Green Scenery, the Sierra Leone NGO, estimates that so far over 613,000 acres of land in Pujehun District have been leased to foreign investors. This constitutes over 80 percent of the arable land in Pujehun District. Most of the lease consists of annual land rents of between $0.09 and $5 per acre. These poor compensation rates will mean even more food insecurity as locals will have little or no money to buy food and at the same time no land to cultivate food crops in order to feed their families and sell any surplus that could be used to send their children to school. If this ongoing land grab deepens frustration and misery, it could serve as a precursor to peasant rebellion against foreign investors and the national government.

In sum, Sierra Leone's food insecurity is characterized by lack of access and substantial food imports. The latter often translates into higher food prices and generates further frustration. There is a strong association between higher food prices and increased criticism of government officials who are always blamed and accused of doing nothing to alleviate the problem. The trend in the last 10 years has been less access to food by many in developing countries. The reason has been a steady increase in food prices across countries. In Sierra Leone, there are far more net consumers of rice, cassava, potatoes, and other food crops than there are net producers. For those in the Western (urban) areas of Sierra Leone, including those in the populous towns of Bo, Kenema, and Makeni, an increase in the price of rice and other food crops results in severe frustration and food deprivation. During the Cold War era, countries like Sierra Leone heavily subsidized food prices in order to diminish food deprivation and ensure political stability, but in the present era of globalization and emphasis on balanced budgets food subsidies are no longer the norm. The staple food, rice, is expensive especially for most of the population in a country where about 60 percent of the population lives on less than $1 a day and about 70 percent lives below $2 a day, which is very frustrating. Moreover, since the war, the urban areas have become overpopulated because many people had to leave their villages and towns and head for Freetown, the capital, and the big towns as internally displaced persons. Many of these internally displaced have been reluctant to go back to their villages and towns to farm. The reason is either they have nothing to return to since many villages

were burned down or they have become captivated by urban life and its more "attractive" lifestyle. The swelling number of people in the urban areas contributes to the number of hungry people experiencing food insecurity. Most of these internally displaced have no jobs and no money to afford food items.

Structural Violence and Food Insecurity

The negative structural conditions that contributed to the conflict in Sierra Leone still persist at different levels of severity. While the state may not be as repressive as during the Siaka Stevens regime, it is nonetheless still a predatory state dependent on mineral rents, with a population burdened by austerity measures manifested in the absence of even a modicum of state social welfare programs. The bulk of the youth population is still marginalized and excluded from the political benefits associated with ties to the incumbent regime. The most powerful contributor of structural violence in Sierra Leone is the systemic and endemic corruption that is reflected in use of official political position for embezzlement of state funds, for receiving bribes, and practicing blatant nepotism, among other things that contribute to the satisfaction of the needs and wants of a few at the expense of the majority. For example, embezzlement of state funds or donor aid deprives the majority of Sierra Leoneans of such resources but enriches only a few. Such corruption, whether nepotism or financial peculation, contributes to social/economic exclusion/marginalization, which in turn could set in motion frustration, anger, depression, or hostility in those who suffer the effects of such activities. The corruption is most likely to persist because it is interwoven into the fabric of Sierra Leone society. This is so because Sierra Leone still operates under an old/outdated salary structure that has not kept pace with inflation or with changes in consumption patterns and tastes of Sierra Leoneans. As long as civil servants and law makers are not adequately paid to afford even the basics, corruption will always be a part of society. Such a situation feeds negatively into national development because state funds earmarked for economic development are siphoned into foreign private bank accounts of the political elite. The consequence is neglect of agriculture, education, health care, transportation, and the like. The widespread relative deprivation experienced by many in Sierra Leone during the 1980s was strongly associated with the outbreak of the civil war in 1991. Corruption in the form of embezzlement and misappropriation of donor or state funds raises the level of insecurity in the areas of food, health, or general welfare. The interrelationship among basic human needs further exacerbates human insecurity.

In 2000, the Anti-Corruption Commission (ACC) was established by the government of Sierra Leone. Its purpose is to prevent, investigate, and prosecute acts of corruption, as well as educate Sierra Leoneans about the detrimental effects of corruption. From the time of its establishment till 2007, the ACC was ineffective. Accordingly, in 2007, the United Kingdom which is Sierra Leone's biggest aid donor refused to continue funding the ACC. As a result of this severe loss of funding, in 2008 the ACC's powers were enhanced. Now, in addition to the powers of investigation, it can prosecute corruption on its own without the approval of the attorney general or the government of Sierra Leone, unlike before 2008. The additional powers and added independence of the Commission is making a dent in corrupt government practices in Sierra Leone. In 2009, Sierra Leone saw an improvement of its Corruption Perception Index ranking by Transparency International. From a ranking of 158 out of 180, it improved in 2009 to 146 out of 180. In 2011, it moved further to 134 out of 178, and in 2012, it was 123 out of 174. Well over 30 public officials have been indicted for corruption since 2009. This number includes judges and top officials of the post office and other government bureaucracies. In the health ministry in November 2009, the minister of health was investigated and sacked for corrupt practices. However, based on Transparency International's scale of 0 (interpreted to be very corrupt) to 10 (interpreted as low levels of corruption), Sierra Leone still scores below 5. This means the country is still among those considered to be on the high corruption scale. Bribery and corruption are still widespread. Almost 10 years after the end of the civil war, Sierra Leone continues to face major challenges of weak governance, widespread poverty, and systemic corruption. In the years prior to the ACC, embezzlement of funds or agricultural produce was a perennial occurrence. For example, the post–civil war regime of President Kabbah was accused of selling hundreds of bags of rice donated to the people of Sierra Leone, and during the regime of Siaka Stevens shiploads of fertilizer were privately diverted by a minister of agriculture.[19]

Sierra Leone's agricultural sector is still not as developed as it should be, considering the fact that the country has been receiving donor funds as well as state funds for agricultural development since independence in the early 1960s. Sierra Leonean farmers still use rudimentary tools and outdated practices that are not suitable for high agricultural yields. According to the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), "fewer than 5% of households in Sierra Leone had access to fertilizers, insecticides, herbicides, tractors and power tiller farm equipment."[20] The situation has not changed in any significant way. According to FAO figures, the country still requires a significant amount of imported rice (roughly 500,000 tons of milled rice) to feed its population. Domestic production does not cover

all the rice needed to feed the population. Annually, between 25 percent and 30 percent of rice still needs to be imported to make up for the difference. The problem with countries like Sierra Leone is that they are perennially plagued by a "revolution of rising expectations" because there is a wide discrepancy between financial resources and material wants of both the government and a large segment of the population. For instance, just after the war in 2002, an estimate by the United Nations reported that 57 percent of the population lived below $1 a day, and 75 percent lived below $2 a day. But during the war years of 1990 to 2002, 82 percent lived below $1 a day. In spite of the reported strong economic growth, the country still imports most of its consumer goods ranging from many foodstuffs to machinery essential for manufacturing and infrastructure development. In particular, the material aspirations of the population are never satisfied even at a very minimum level of welfare because of the very low salaries paid to workers or the lack of employment. The consequence is corrupt practices in government and within society as a way to satisfy wants and needs that are often out of the reach of people. These wants or needs fall largely into the category of electronic and social media technology and exert a great deal of temptation to embezzle and encourage bribery. The salary scale in Sierra Leone, even for civil servants, is perhaps not too different from what it used to be during colonial and early postcolonial days. It has not caught up with inflation levels and therefore cannot satisfy the material aspirations of Sierra Leoneans especially with regard to the more advanced and new telecommunications, electronics, transportation, and other technologies. At the same time, as these new enticing "toys" are being developed, the global and national food prices are increasing. In sum, the woefully meager salaries and the ever-widening gap between "wants" and "gets" create a situation of permanent insecurity among Sierra Leoneans. In other words, Sierra Leone is in the category of countries where a combination of factors such as stagnant or inadequate salaries, lack of jobs or extremely high unemployment levels, inequitable distribution of resources, and the continuing effect of many years of civil strife, among others, is creating a situation of anger, frustration, and insecurity. If the frustration and insecurity become intolerable it could lead to rebellion. Besides, the poor remuneration and conditions of service generate unproductivity, encourage corrupt practices, and even spawn low morale, and prove harmful to others. The overall effect of a pervasive climate of insecurity is the negative perception of government or the incumbent regime. This means that the more intense and widespread the level of insecurity and misery, in particular hunger and malnutrition, the more negative the perception of regime illegitimacy and corruption, and insensitivity to the situation.

Summary and Conclusions

Food security is still a problem in Sierra Leone and is a result of both internal and external factors that have longed plagued the country. The effects of the 11-year civil war destroyed any sustainable agricultural growth that was already in place, and further put a strain on the country's natural and human resource base, and wiped out any semblance of good governance until the end of the war. The imperatives of globalization further undermine any trade benefits for Sierra Leone because of the negative effects of commodity dumping by advanced countries and unfair competition for poor producers in relation to industries in the developed countries. Globalization and its pressures on Sierra Leone to integrate political, economic, and technological changes stifles indigenization (greater reliance on the use of indigenous approaches, techniques, etc.) and at the same time exposes the country to the negative effects of trade liberalization (dumping, unfair competition with more powerful and richer producers). Sierra Leone is not likely to surmount its food deficit status without shaking off the extensive constraints/dependence brought about by globalization. Accordingly, achieving an acceptable level of human security in food and other related areas will require a concerted effort by both Sierra Leone elites and the international financial institutions to transform deficient state structures and eliminate negative consequences of globalization. The question is, should weak, poor agricultural producers/industries in Sierra Leone be subject to the same trade liberalization requirements as rich, powerful producers/industries in the developed world? The challenge that Sierra Leone still needs to deal with is that even after over a decade of peace building, it still needs to establish a society that is free from psychological threats associated with a lack of access to food, health care, employment, and general human welfare that eradicates general deprivation. As history vividly reminds us, states and societies that lack "bread" easily become politicized and become a powerful force that may ultimately destabilize a nation to the point of even wiping out the security found in the absence of war (negative peace).

Sierra Leone is still food insecure. For instance, the country ranked 94 out of 105 on the Global Food Security Index.[21] The country is still plagued by the problems of food availability, and affordability in particular. Due to widespread unemployment and poverty, many Sierra Leoneans cannot afford to buy sufficient food to consume even when its availability is widespread. The consequence is that people eat less rice which is the staple food crop in Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone has many more years to go before it enters the "luxury stage" of concerns about nutritional quality of food in the country. It is still at the stage of affordability and availability of rice,

cassava, fish, and the like. Widespread government corruption and lack of resources combine to hamper state expenditure on food security. Although Sierra Leone government budgetary allocation for agriculture increased from 1.6 percent in 2007 to 7.7 percent in 2009, and now stands at slightly more, the problems of food affordability still persists. This means that agriculture in Sierra Leone is likely to be annually underfunded because many Sierra Leoneans tend to gravitate toward the mining sector. Moreover, since minerals generate more revenue than agriculture, the government is likely to focus more of its attention on diamond, iron ore, rutile, and other minerals. In fact, the current GDP growth rate in the country is being fueled by iron ore production. According to African Economic Outlook, the boom in iron ore production because of recent discoveries of the mineral has shifted more attention to the extractive industry because of its contribution to real GDP growth. However, although the country is far from reaching the CAADP target of 10 percent government expenditure on agriculture, it seems determined to improve its food production.[22] In its 2013–2017 Agenda for Prosperity Plan, it has set itself the goal of improved food security, self-sufficiency in rice production, increased potential for long-term production of both cash and food crops, diversifying food sources other than rice, utilizing micro credits in agricultural productivity, and trying to achieve the Maputo Pledge of spending at least 10 percent of the government budget on agriculture, among other things.

In the final analysis, the security-insecurity condition is a permanent condition for many, if not all, states. This is especially the case with developing countries like Sierra Leone where the anxiety of a lack of assurance of future well-being in food access, health access, and community security, for example, will always be present. The crux of the problem is the interrelationships (mutual reinforcement) of insecurities whereby increasing insecurity at the individual level reinforces or causes collective or group insecurities and eventually more widespread national insecurity resulting in increased frustration and perhaps civil war. In other words, if the individual is plagued by insecurity the state eventually collapses or fails as the insecurity becomes pervasive. Sierra Leone cannot achieve long-lasting postwar reconstruction and human security unless it first vigorously pursues security in the basic human needs of food and health care. This is because a well-fed and healthy population is a necessary condition for the achievement of other securities such as community, political, and personal security, among others. This also means that the primary role of both internal and external actors involved in postwar reconstruction in Sierra Leone is to ensure and enhance the basic human security of the population as a foundation for overall human security. In order to even arrive at the point of ensuring basic human needs of food,

clothing, shelter, and adequate health care, another necessary condition involves building effective legitimate and transparent institutions that will neutralize the vicious circle of ignorance, hunger, disease, frustration, and rebellion.

Notes

1. For details on the war and postwar reconstruction, see Lansana Gberie, *A Dirty War in West Africa: The RUF and the Destruction of Sierra Leone* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2005); and United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, "Disarmament, Demobilization, Reintegration (DDR) and Stability in Africa," *Conference Report*, Freetown, June 2–23, 2005. www.un.org/Africa/osaa/reports/DDR Sierra Leone March 2006.pdf
2. Thomas Hobbes and John Locke underscored the reason for the state which sometimes leads to improved lives through cooperation within a well-defined territory. See, for example, Leon P. Baradat, *Political Ideologies: Their Origins and Impact* (New York: Pearson, 2009).
3. There are many definitions of food security. See UNDP, Human Development Report, 1994; and USAID Office of Food and Peace, *Sierra Leone Food Security Country Framework*, FY 2010–2014.
4. See for example, United Nations Office of the Special Adviser on Africa (OSAA), December 2005.
5. For details, see Earl Conteh-Morgan and Mac Dixon-Fyle, *Sierra Leone at the End of the Twentieth Century – History, Politics and Society* (New York: Peter Lang, 1999).
6. On Liberia's rice riots of 1980, see Global security.org. www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/report/1985/Liberia_1_riceriots.htm
7. For details, see *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper Sierra Leone*, 2005, p. x.
8. UNDP Development Report, 1994, p. 22.
9. Michael Kaethler, *Sierra Leone: Human Security in World Food Program Operation: Analysis of Context and Activities in Eastern and Southern Sierra Leone*, October 5–27, 2009, p. 5.
10. See documents.wfp.org/stellent/groups/publics/documents/newsroom/wfp 218183.pdf
11. See Africa Economic Outlook, Sierra Leone. www.africaeconomicoutlook.org/en/countries/west-africa/sierra-leone/
12. *Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper Sierra Leone*, Introduction.
13. See World Food Programme, *Sierra Leone, Household Food Security Survey in Rural Areas*, May 2007.
14. Frances Moore Lappe and Joseph Collins, "Why Can't People Feed Themselves?" issuu.com/ayseozge/docs/whycantpeoplefeedthemselves. p. 7.
15. See www.resakss.org/region/sierra-leone/caadp-targets
16. See *The Telegraph*, www.telegraph.co.uk/news
17. See Green Scenery, 201204 Media briefing.pdf www.greenscenery.org
18. Jean Baxter, *Truth/New Analysis*, May 23, 2013. www.truth-out.org/news/item/16546-farmland-the-new-blood-diamonds-in-sierra-leone

19. For details on corruption in Sierra Leone, see *The Economist*, November 9, 2009, "Sierra Leone's Corruption a Mortal Enemy."
20. See "FAO Initiative on Soaring Food Prices," p. 1 in www.fao.org/isfp/country-information/Sierra-Leone/en/
21. awoko.org, *Awoko Newspaper*, Freetown, Sierra Leone. Sierra-leone-ranked-94th—on-the-global-food-security-index awoko.org/2012/07/20, sierra-leone-ranked-94th-on-the-global-food-security-index/
22. See, Joint Country Assistance Strategy for the Republic of Sierra Leone, March 4, 2010, For FY10–13, World Bank, West Africa, Department 1, IFC.

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9

Promises and Pitfalls of the Free Health Care Initiative in Sierra Leone: An Early Analysis

Fredline A. O. M'Cormack-Hale and
Fredanna M'Cormack McGough

The purpose of this chapter is to examine one of the most significant pieces of legislature passed by the Sierra Leone state to address one component of human security—access to health care for the most vulnerable of populations, women and children. Passed in 2010, the law provides free health care for pregnant women, lactating mothers, and children under five. In light of the appalling figures concerning maternal and child mortality in Sierra Leone, the policy is an admirable one, with enormous potential to improve on these rates and change the lives of women and children in Sierra Leone. However, given the weakness that continues to plague the state and the largely externally driven nature of the intervention, with donors providing the bulk of the funding, to what extent has this policy transformed the health landscape in Sierra Leone in addressing the problem of maternal and child mortality? Based on fieldwork conducted just three months after the policy was implemented in August 2010, we provide an early assessment of the free health care initiative (FHCI), looking at its impact on the lives of women and children and participant satisfaction with implemented activities, compare the assessment with current findings, and offer policy suggestions for improved implementation. While it would seem like the more favorable international climate afforded by the

post–Washington Consensus has enabled Sierra Leone to spend more in public service delivery, the fact that much of this intervention is driven from the outside has had implications on the delivery of the service as well as how it has been received.

An examination of the successes and shortcomings of the program suggests that while definitely a step in the right direction (other positive steps include halving Sierra Leone's high maternal mortality ratio [MMR] from 2,100 per 100,000 in 2005 to 970 per 100,000 live births in 2008) (WHO 2005, 2011; UNICEF 2010), the government still has much to do regarding health care delivery. Continued state weakness, low fiscal capability, and donor dependence mean that although state's attempts to play a more assertive role in public goods provision is welcome, in practice, implementation suffers from a number of weaknesses. Efforts by the state to take on some of the roles previously played by civil society must be accompanied by greater state capacity to be truly effective and to offset the possibility of undermining many of the gains attained. Improved implementation will require greater synthesis between domestic and international interventions, with the state paying closer attention to the domestic context as well as building on existing strengths within the populace. In so doing, health care represents an opportunity for greater collaboration between domestic and international actors, as well as shows the possibilities of synthesis between the two in ways that can advance development and social change.

The chapter is organized as follows: we first review the health care system in Sierra Leone prior to the implementation of the initiative. Next, we look at the case of the FHCI in Sierra Leone by examining the components of the initiative including what is covered and the system of financing. We then discuss the methods and approach of the preliminary study. In the substantive portion of the chapter, we review our findings, discussing the successes and constraints as identified by users that participated in our study and comparing them with more recent findings. We conclude with a discussion of ways to strengthen policy implementation regarding state provision of social services, specifically, health care.

Health Care System in Sierra Leone Prior to the Implementation of the Initiative

The health care system in Sierra Leone comprises public, private, and informal sectors. The public sector includes government establishments, such as district hospitals that support peripheral health units (PHUs) and community health posts (CHPs) and maternal and child health posts (MCHPs) that are found in villages and local communities. The private

sector includes faith-based organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and private clinics that also provide health services. In addition, Sierra Leone had a large sector of traditional healers that includes traditional birth attendants (TBAs), who often attended to deliveries (Government of Sierra Leone (hereafter GoSL) 2008).

Prior to FHCI, health care provision in Sierra Leone was generally poor. The country had about 3 doctors per 100,000, when the WHO recommends at least 228 (*IRIN* 2012a). Approximately 30 percent of health care facilities were staffed by only one health care worker (*Global Pulse* 2011). While as recently as 2008, total expenditure on health care as a percentage of the gross domestic product (GDP) was comparatively high (13.3 percent compared to the Africa average of 6 percent), actual government expenditure as a percentage of this total expenditure was only 6.5 percent. Thus, 93.5 percent is private expenditure, placing an undue burden on the general populace. Furthermore, the per capita government expenditure on health was $7 compared to the Africa average of $71.

Prior to FHCI, maternal use of the health care system was mixed. A majority of women (87 percent) would visit health care facilities for antenatal care (ANC); however, only 56 percent of women received the four or more prenatal visits recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO) (Sierra Leone Demographic Health Survey (hereafter SLDHS) 2008). Less than one-third of pregnant women (30 percent) received ANC for the first time in the first trimester. Usually the first time ANC was received for a pregnancy was during months four to five (41 percent). In other cases, women received ANC between months six to nine (18 percent) (SLDHS 2008). Few women received antenatal care from a midwife or a community health care worker (5 percent), or did not receive any antenatal care (7 percent) (SLDHS 2008). Participants often did not have the financial resources to receive the necessary antenatal care (an essential component for successful pregnancy outcomes) from a skilled health care provider on a routine basis.

Although a majority of pregnant women (87 percent) received ANC at least once in their pregnancy, only 50 percent of women used a health care professional for deliveries (10 percent used a physician; 29 percent a nurse or midwife; 11.7 percent MCH aide). In 45 percent of cases, a TBA was responsible for delivery assistance. About 72 percent of participants were delivering at home and only a quarter of pregnant women (24.6 percent) were delivering at a health care facility (public sector—22.2 percent; private setting—2.4 percent) (SLDHS 2008).

Postnatal care, within 48 hours of delivery, is important to assess and treat potential complications that arise from the delivery and to provide self-care for the mother and child. In Sierra Leone, 37.7 percent received

the first postnatal checkup within 4 hours of delivery, 7.8 percent between 4 and 23 hours, and 12 percent between 1 and 2 days. Forty-four percent received postnatal care from a health professional and 22 percent from a TBA. One-third (33 percent) of women who delivered received no postnatal checkup.

Sierra Leone's maternal care practices resulted in poor health and delivery outcomes. According to the 2008 Sierra Leone Demographic and Health Survey (SLDHS), MMR is estimated to be 857 maternal deaths per 100,000 live births, which is considerably lower than the previous WHO estimates (2,100 per 100,000 in 2005 and 970 per 100,000 live births in 2009) (World Bank 2007; UNICEF 2010). However, it is still far from ideal, when compared to Africa as a whole (MMR = 850/100.000 live births) and other nations such as the United Kingdom (12/100,000 live births). In Sierra Leone, an estimated 27 percent of deaths among women of childbearing age (15–49) are due to maternal causes (SLDHS 2008). Several contributing factors to maternal mortality are unqualified doctors, conditions of service for health care workers, and deliveries by unskilled birth attendants (GoSL 2008).

Compounding structural issues were obstetric complications. Three delays were identified as hindering complicated cases: the delay to seek care, the delay to meet with a quality health care professional, and the delay in accessing quality care at the health care facility. Recommendations were made to address these problems, but were fraught with issues (Table 9.1).

Table 9.1 Descriptions of the Obstetric Emergency 3 Delays and Their Considerations

Complication	*Delay consideration*
The delay to seek care	Identifying when there is a complication and making the decision to seek professional help; this could be the family, a TBA or a person who identifies the problem
The delay to reach proper medical services	Issues of transportation, income to get that transportation, ascertain if an ambulance exists, etc.
The delay in accessing quality care at a health care facility	Are there qualified and sufficient health care workers? Are these workers willing to work?

Source: World Health Organization (2005).

Table 9.2 Maternal, Newborn, and Child Health Indicators

Maternal mortality ratio
Under-five child mortality, with the proportion of newborn deaths
Proportion of demand for family planning satisfied (met need for contraception)
Antenatal care coverage (at least four times during pregnancy)
Antiretroviral (ARV) prophylaxis among HIV-positive pregnant women to prevent HIV transmission and antiretroviral therapy for (pregnant) women who are treatment eligible
Skilled attendant at birth
Postnatal care for mothers and babies within two days of birth
Children under five who are stunted
Exclusive breastfeeding for six months (0–5 months)

Causes of maternal mortality include postpartum hemorrhage (25 percent), infections (15 percent), unsafe abortion (13 percent), pre-eclampsia and eclampsia (12 percent) and obstructed labor (8 percent), and other indirect and direct causes (28 percent) (WHO 2005). To monitor and evaluate reproductive, maternal, and child health, the WHO recommends monitoring the indicators in Table 9.2.

To address the dire statistics, FHCI was implemented to look into the financial constraints to receiving health care services for pregnant women, lactating mothers, and children under five years of age. There was an increase in government spending from 7.8 percent to 9 percent of the national budget on health to meet the $19 million cost to implement the program initiative implementation that aims to serve up to 1.25 million mothers and children (*BBC News* 2010; WHO Bulletin 2010). The price tag includes the increase of health care provider salaries by 200 percent and 500 percent (*BBC News* 2010; Koroma 2012).

The Department for International Development (DFID) has committed $60,500 from 2010 to 2015 to Sierra Leone's reproductive, maternal, and newborn health as well as budgeted £10.3 million to supplement health care worker salaries (DFID 2012a, 2012b). According to DFID reports, 170,000 women received health care during pregnancy and childbirth and 29,509 births were delivered with DFID support in 2011 (DFID 2011). Figures show signs of continued commitment by both government and the international community. Augustine Samba (2011) reports that the Free Health Care program budget allocation was Le3.3 billion ($76,000) in the financial year 2011 and was projected to rise to Le6.1 billion in financial year 2012. Local councils will be allocated Le30 billion ($691,500) for

PHUs; drugs and other supplies; and rehabilitation, refurbishment, and completion of hospitals, medical stores and ambulances (Samba 2011).

Successes of the Program/Early Assessments of FHCI

Preliminary results show an increase of services for women and children (Donnelly 2011). One year after the April 27, 2010, initiative, there was a 214 percent increase in children under five receiving health services and a 61 percent decrease in deaths related to emergency obstetric complications at health clinics (Nossiter 2011). In Kenema District, both health care workers and pregnant women respondents also reported an increased use of facilities. Attitudes toward delivery options in the hospital were largely positive; more participants believed that the hospital staff was better equipped than TBAs to address complications with delivery including eclampsia, had more training to save a child's life, and could reduce the numbers of infections.[1] Overall, participants believed that hospitals could provide better delivery care than home-based care from TBAs. In response to the initiative, participant comments ranged from praise for the program ("We thank God/tell God tenki" and "I am satisfied. Usually we paid for services but now we don't have to pay! So is that not a good thing? That is why I am happy.") to hopes that the program would continue ("Now that it [FHCI] has started, it will have to continue."). Overall, respondents expressed satisfaction with the provision of free health care and availability of the ambulance services (Field survey data 2010; M'Cormack et al. 2012).

While beneficiaries expressed positive sentiments during discussions around the idea of the FHCI and perception of hospital staff as compared to TBAs, responses around actual experience of the initiative and especially with the level of service provided were less enthusiastic, suggesting that problems with implementation of certain aspects have outweighed participant benefits. In particular, respondents expressed concerns with drug provision, space availability in facilities, and adequacy of equipment. Also referenced were resource constraints, lack of training, and salaries (Field survey data 2010). These will now be discussed in turn.

Satisfaction with drug availability was actually lower following FHCI. Many respondents expressed concern with both the quantity and overall access to necessary drugs. A main problem articulated by beneficiaries was the lack of availability of drugs. The following are indicative of concerns expressed by participants:

> I am not satisfied with the drugs because before, I paid money and I got the drugs I want. Now, I get to the hospital [and the] nurse . . . will tell me that

> there are not drugs and sometimes when I ask, they say she has gone for the drugs and the child dies. So do you think I will be happy?
>
> (Lactating mother at nonemergency obstetric clinic (hereafter EmOC) PHU)

> Even the children when we take them to a hospital, the medicines they provide are not enough! It is not sufficient. They have finished. Except I [have to] go buy medicines [and] that costs more money.
>
> (Lactating mother at hospital)

> I would be happy to pay for drugs and get them rather than I don't pay and don't get better.
>
> (Pregnant woman at non-EmOC PHU)

Based on the responses, while respondents indicated that having free medicines was a good idea, in actuality, this did not transpire due to lack of availability of medicines. Some mentioned a preference for paying since at least this way, they could be sure of receiving what they needed. Hospital staff[2] also shared many of these concerns, noting that not only were drugs limited in supply, they also did not correspond to demand:

> The drugs are not correct. They send too much of some drugs and not enough of others.
>
> (Male store manager at EmOC PHU)

> We don't receive oxytocin. I have to buy it for my facility.
>
> (Female MCH aide non-EmOC PHU)

> Freetown needs to ask us what we need. The drugs should not be "pushed" on us!
>
> (Female MCH aide non-EmOC PHU)

Moreover, drugs faced shipment delays and the absence of regular mechanisms to supply the drugs hindered the smooth running of the clinics:

> When the drugs were not distributed, we had to go and pick them up. It means that no one is in the clinics.
>
> (Female MCH aide non-EmOC PHU)

> This facility received their second supply of drugs on July 21st (2010) almost 3 months after the first shipment but it was incomplete as nothing for antenatal or postnatal. No ORS (oral rehydration salts), only syrups for pediatric group.
>
> (State-enrolled community health nurse at EmOC PHU)

The concerns expressed are supported by an Amnesty International (2012) report and United Nations (*IRIN* 2012a, 2012b) reports. As of July 2012, the

unavailability of drugs continues to be a challenge for FHCI (*IRIN* 2012a). Now, health care providers are writing prescriptions so that beneficiaries are forced to buy needed drugs (*IRIN* 2012b). Practitioners diverting the drugs for private sales further compound the shortages. Although polices are in place to minimize the issue, they continue to exist (*IRIN* 2012b). Shortages are also a result of poor needs assessment, planning, and procurement procedures. Lack of infrastructure such as electricity and running water poses additional challenges. Increased utilization means increased demand for water and need for running water as opposed to gathering water in buckets. In addition, there was a shortage of health care workers to address the increased demand (*Global Pulse* 2011). Finally, currently there is no revenue model to wean off donor support (*Global Pulse* 2011).

In addition to the inadequate medicine supplies, respondents (both beneficiaries and health care workers) expressed concerns about the facilities, notably the lack of space for sick and recovering patients:

> After delivery, my daughter was sick but no medicine was given to her and I was left to go home [the facility was too full to keep her in recovery]. I am afraid that many people will die this way if that is how they treat everyone. I don't feel that the health center staff are trained enough or have lifesaving equipment. My grandmother warned me not to deliver at the PHU. I refused and went ahead anyway.
>
> (17-year-old lactating mother at EmOC PHU catchment area in 2010)

> It is good [the FHCI], but I would like to see more added facilities. Because there are not enough of them [beds, benches] so we would like for there to be more . . . the beds, the medicine.
>
> (Male In-charge at EmOC PHU in 2010)

> The facilities are not adequate at all. With all these people coming, we do not have the space, we do not have benches.
>
> (Female MCH aide at non-EmOC PHU in 2010)

Aside from these constraints, health staff in particular identified two other issues that adversely affected implementation: resource constraints, including donor dependence, poor infrastructure and facilities, and low levels of training for hospital staff. Just over three-quarters of workers stated that health services would not be possible without NGO support and that NGOs played an instrumental role in providing maternal medical supplies (Field survey data 2010). External infrastructural issues also hindered the effectiveness of health care deliveries—in particular, poor road conditions that made it difficult to distribute drugs to medical facilities as well as for people to access the health centers:

> Have you experienced the road network? It is bad. We have such difficulty getting the drugs out.
>
> (Hospital administrator in 2010)

With regard to level of training, only 39 percent of respondents felt comfortable with the level of training received, although 13 of the 14 health care workers were confident they could provide delivery services (Field survey data 2010). The lack of qualified health care workers to meet the growing demand was another expressed constraint. A total of 84.6 percent of respondents felt unprepared to meet the increased health needs given the explosion in usage of facilities. In the words of some of the respondents:

> I am the only one here. I do antenatal, education, delivery, everything. There are too many people coming. Some days I have to be off.
>
> (MCH aide at non-EmOC PHU in 2010)
>
> I am too tired, I do everything. The TBAs help. They do not get any support. Even my volunteers don't get support so I give from my salary.
>
> (Female MCH aide at non-EmOC facility in 2010)

Two issues emerged around the discussion of salaries. On the one hand, staff expressed some satisfaction with salaries. The Sierra Leone government is working with donor organizations to raise health care worker salaries to be commensurate with what obtains in other parts of the world. As one respondent put it:

> The salaries have much improved. People are in fact moving from NGOs to government.
>
> (Male NGO worker in 2010)

However, while salaries have improved for primary health care workers, there has not been similar attention paid to volunteers and TBAs who in the past had helped to meet the shortfall in skilled staff. In the words of one MCH aide:

> The salaries for the MCH aides and nurses are good but what about the volunteers? They have families and they work for free.
>
> (Female in-charge at EmOC facility in 2010)

Clearly, the health policy has been a huge step forward for the Sierra Leone government. However, given the increased numbers now using the health care facilities, corresponding improvements have yet to be made to enhance the capacity of health institutions to meet the increased demand. There are numerous constraints to the effective implementation of the policy

as examined above, which can be grouped around four main issue areas: (1) confusion about plan components, (2) capacity, (3) financial sustainability, and (4) drug supply. These are now examined in turn.

Despite the intensive attempts at spreading the word and informing communities about the intricacies of the FHCI, health care provider confusion remains. More needs to be done regarding the explanation of the various components of the plan to people in rural communities. For example, the level of services to be provided between vulnerable and nonvulnerable populations is unclear. One hospital administrator stated, "We cannot provide all treatments for women. It should be pregnancy related . . . I mean, if she has a broken leg, that cannot be treated for free" (interview with hospital administrator in 2010). However, an MCH aide at an EmOC facility refuted this statement, saying that radio advertisements stress that children under five, pregnant women, and lactating mothers can receive any free health care service (Field survey data 2010). This suggests that while information is out there, confusion nevertheless exists, necessitating improved communication.

The new policy criminalizes the taking of monies for services rendered to target groups (namely, pregnant and lactating women and children under five). Additionally, community watchdog groups exist to monitor and address any violation (Field survey data 2010). However, health care providers are so fearful of violating the "no monies" rule that in some communities all community members are receiving free consultations, as health care workers are not sure of how the policy addresses nonvulnerable groups. According to one PHU administrator, "Nurses have been told not to take money so they don't at all" (Field survey data 2010). A related problem is the selling of drugs. In the past, communities received cost-recovery drugs that could be sold to the community as a means of receiving income to offset costs. However, now health care workers are afraid of selling ANY drugs, although drugs can be sold to nonvulnerable populations (Field survey data 2010).

The lack of capacity of the health centers to implement the policy spans across a number of areas. First, facilities face a shortage of trained and capable staff—increased demand has not been met by increased supply, although the government is undertaking steps to provide more trained workers. Health centers and PHUs service numerous villages and in some cases attend to populations of up to 5,000. Health care providers travel around their communities to provide health and nutrition education to community members in addition to seeing beneficiaries at the health care facilities, which is a heavy burden. Staff overload has been compounded by the discontinuation of compensation for nonformally trained volunteers and TBAs that formerly assisted in birthing since user fees have been abolished.

Infrastructural capacity is another problem. The hospitals and centers do not have adequate beds, medical equipment, and so on to address the needs of the populace. Poor road conditions make it difficult to get medication to health care centers and for beneficiaries to get to the hospitals. Although the government is trying to encourage women to deliver in hospitals, when accessing these hospitals is difficult, women are more likely to find it easier to deliver at home. According to the National Health Sector Strategic Plan 2010–2015, TBAs had accounted for nearly 90 percent of deliveries prior to the initiative within local communities. Although ambulances have been provided to address transportation constraints, the increased demand in the face of greater usage of health care facilities has put a strain on these vehicles and demand outweighs supply.

Financial sustainability is another constraint that the government faces. According to one estimate of a staff person based in the Strategy and Policy Unit (SPU), about 80 percent of the health care costs are being borne by donors. Traditional ways of generating income through user fees and cost recovery from the selling of drugs to the populace that formed the greatest bulk of consumers of health services has been discontinued. Currently, health care facilities are receiving quarterly cash transfers of Le1 million from the central government to help cushion the blow, but again this is facilitated by donor funds.

Drug availability and supply is another problem that the new policy faces, which has some attendant implications. For example, as recently as March 2014, pregnant women seeking services over the weekend at the main maternity facility, Princess Christian Maternity Hospital, complained that they were told that free drugs were not available on weekends and that they would have to fill written prescriptions. They were also told that antenatal registration was also not available except during weekdays (*Awoko* 2014).

The absence of drugs in medical facilities means that some health care providers have to write prescriptions. However, some providers are reluctant to write these prescriptions, as they have no control over where the prescriptions will be filled. While the hope is that they would be filled in Kenema town, where legitimate pharmacies exist, there are no guarantees that prescriptions will be appropriately filled given the prevalence of "quack" doctors/pharmacies and peddlers that supply drugs that are often outdated or inappropriate. Others fail to understand the dosage requirements. The prevalence of quacks also reflects the lack of effective government policy toward volunteers and TBAs that were instrumental in providing health under the old system, as will be discussed later.

The problem of drug distribution should improve, however. While almost all the health care providers interviewed said they were not

consulted about what drugs were needed in their communities, a representative from the SPU unit that is monitoring initial implementation of the policy has said the second wave of implementation will ensure that the next shipment of drugs will reflect community needs and priorities rather than what NGOs are willing and able to provide.

Toward Government and Civil Society Synthesis in Health Care Provision

Prior to the installation of free health care, civil society played an instrumental role in helping to fill some of the gaps of a weak state. These organizations could continue to play a role alongside the state and help ameliorate some of the resource and staffing constraints in the short term. For example, health development committees could be used to disseminate education about the new policy and ensure that both community members and health care providers are fully educated about the particularities of the new law. Greater involvement of local community groups and local leaders would also help to create greater ownership and stake in the new plan. Chiefs have complained that the new law was undertaken without their consultation or involvement. Community members in the surveyed chiefdoms also expressed confusion at the selection of the target group of mothers and children and wondered why free health care had not been extended to all people. This confusion could be addressed through interactive discussions with community members, or the use of community groups such as the health development committees or TBAs to explain why this group is perceived as the most vulnerable.

Furthermore, TBAs could be better incorporated into the new plan. In the absence of affordable government health care, TBAs filled the gap, delivering children from home and receiving compensation directly from families. Or TBAs that brought women to hospitals could receive half of the user fees charged to delivering mothers. Given problems with accessing formal health care services, TBAs provided a valuable service, and additionally, the use of TBAs in home deliveries was culturally acceptable. Now, however, these TBAs have been left out of the process as a result of the high rates of deaths among women delivering at home, TBAs have been encouraged to tell women to give birth in formal health care facilities and can face criminal charges if they facilitate births outside of government health centers. Given the lack of user fees and their failure to be incorporated into formal state systems, they do not receive any monies from recommending women to deliver in health centers. Although some TBAs do still assist MCH aides in hospital deliveries, any form of compensation

would come directly from the MCH aide's own salary and is at the discretion of the MCH aide. Furthermore, while TBAs do assist in delivery at the PHU level, they are not adequately qualified, and this can present a continued source of danger to the welfare of expectant mothers and newborns.

Overall, however, the government is trying to remove TBAs from the delivery process. They are encouraging institutional delivery since research shows that maternal mortality is high when deliveries take place outside of hospitals (UNICEF 2010). The attempt to remove TBAs from the delivery process is problematic for a number of reasons. In some communities, TBAs are mammy queens (women leaders) who hold a lot of sway over women in the community. In such communities, TBAs that are unwilling to forfeit an important source of income could quite easily refuse to encourage women to deliver in health care centers, despite the new law. In other communities, in the past, community leaders like chiefs were encouraged to identify people to train as TBAs to meet the undersupply and underuse of hospital facilities. In the context of the new law, these trained TBAs no longer have a supplemental source of income, or craft. Providing TBAs with some additional training to strengthen their capabilities in child delivery and monitoring maternal and child health and salaries would help to alleviate some of the staffing constraints while encouraging TBAs to bring women to local health institutions to deliver. TBAs could also be used along with health development committees to deliver health education to the communities in which they live. Thus, in the short term they could help meet some of the resource and staffing constraints. Incorporating TBAs as well as other volunteers that formerly received compensation could also help address the problem of quacks as some of these volunteers that once worked with nurses have set up their own "practices."

Conclusion: Public Service Provision in a Recovering State

While the attempts to provide free health care to pregnant and lactating mothers and children under five is commendable, limited government capacity has led to initial hiccups in policy implementation. Given the ambitiousness of the undertaking, the government should have perhaps taken things sequentially, rather than trying to do everything at once. For example, they could have started with a subset of the population, such as pregnant women, and then introduced other populations as capacity expanded. The capacity of the system to accommodate the reform was also limited. Government should have worked on improving the facilities to accommodate the increased load, as bedding, staff, and medical supply

shortages limit the numbers of people that can benefit from the initiative, as do poor road conditions.

Better linkages need to be developed between government health care workers and civil society organizations working in the arena of health. Village development committees and health development committees played significant roles in facilitating access to health care prior to the government initiative, and they could be better incorporated into the current process. Community watchdogs (civil society groups) do exist under the present system, especially to track drug delivery and compliance between orders and deliveries, and the system is working quite well. This calls for an expansion of their involvement, their capabilities, and jobs. For example, in some chiefdoms, chiefs have introduced bylaws that criminalize the activities of quack doctors. However, this is more likely in communities where chiefs were fully included in the discussion and implementation of the new law. Moreover, set policies/guidelines also need to be developed that clearly spell out who the intended beneficiaries are, the terms under which they are eligible, and methods conceived to inform community members of these guidelines to minimize confusion.

Finally, donors heavily subsidize the initiative, although the government intends to take over after five years. A system to generate income to support the health care initiative, which is particularly urgent given that user recovery fees from the majority of the populace that use these facilities have now been scrapped, needs to be set in place. Although the recommendation is to continue user fees for nonvulnerable populations, this will not be adequate. There has also been some discussion of approaching Sierra Leoneans in the diaspora, but a more regularized system of income generation must be found.

Early assessments of the initiative are optimistic, the system is functioning, and the provision of health care to pregnant and lactating mothers and children under five has risen. For example, a recent Demographic Health Survey (Statistics Sierra Leone 2013) notes especially that antenatal coverage from a skilled provider was high, at 97.1 percent. However, it is clear that problems remain. Although deliveries in health care facilities have risen and are now at 54.4 percent, nearly half of women are still using alternative delivery mechanisms (Statistics Sierra Leone 2013). Also despite downward trends in maternal mortality (UNICEF reports the 2010 figure of 890 per 100,000 live births was revised to 860 per 100,000 live births for the period 2008–2012, which incorporates the inception of the program), overall rates remain high (UNICEF 2013).

While beneficiaries are indeed benefiting, some stress is evident among service providers who are obviously overstretched. Furthermore, the outcome of such investments can be problematic where governments still lack

the capacity to properly implement such huge investments and donor priorities fail to align with country needs. The 2014 Ebola outbreak clearly illustrated the shortcomings of the national health care system despite years of international investment in the health care sector (Wright, Hanna, and Malfert 2015), and moreover rolled back many of the gains in maternal health as pregnant women died due to reduced availability of care. The implementation of health care in Sierra Leone provides one example of the importance of finding ways to localize international interventions through contextualizing interventions and innovativeness and searching to see how to work with what is domestically available. Building on the strengths of what exists locally, including civil society, can be one key way to build ownership and ensure that policies are successful. While not sufficient to address all the problems that still exist, including financial shortfalls, lack of trained staff, and infrastructural development, that would provide one avenue through which to address some of the highlighted concerns.

Notes

1. Participants responded to an attitude scale that looked at attitudes toward delivery options. The scale ranged from −3 (strongly disagree) to 3 (strongly agree), where 0 was neutral.
2. The composition of interviewees was skewed toward formally trained workers: 14 (78 percent) of respondents were MCH aides, medical officers, or state certified nurses. Only four respondents were community health workers, TBAs without formal training, or a porter (22 percent). They are collectively referred to as volunteers.

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10

Corruption and the 2014 EVD Crisis in Sierra Leone: Ebola as "Total Disease"

Jenise R. DePinto

> Corruption and Ebola are essentially the same hemorrhaging disease. If we cure corruption, we will have the healthy planet we all truly want and our children deserve.[1]

The 2014 Ebola virus disease (EVD) crisis has underscored the frightful human consequences an unanticipated public health emergency can bring when corruption is left to fester unchecked in a country lacking even the most basic health care infrastructure, despite earlier efforts to rebuild and expand services following the end of the rebel war.[2] Sierra Leone consistently ranks high on global corruption indexes. Transparency International locates it at 119 out of a list of 177 countries.[3] The outbreak of a public health emergency within such a context of systemic corruption has made for an especially chaotic situation, underscoring the vital connections between reducing corruption and attaining human security.

The brutal emergence of EVD into such conditions formed a catalyst of devastating disruption across the very fabric of society, threatening to tear apart the whole. Consulting reports from international and government agencies and local and international media, this chapter will take a brief critical glimpse at EVD's disruptive effects from the time of its official arrival in late May 2014—when the first case was confirmed in Sierra Leone[4]—through the end of December of that year. EVD will be examined along a trajectory of earlier corruption scandals that have hindered efforts to improve health care, casting an eye backward to longstanding structural

weaknesses that ominously signaled the suffering EVD would bring when it arrived. EVD is a "total disease," the effects of which reverberated beyond the infected to disrupt societal functioning at every level—the social, economic, and cultural—affecting the healthy as well as the sick.

Written in the midst of a still-raging EVD emergency in Sierra Leone with new cases daily escalating and no end yet in sight,[5] any conclusions drawn must necessarily be tentative. What seems clear, however, is that EVD, as a total disease, promises to permanently transform Sierra Leone in profound if uncertain ways that are fraught with complex risks and possibilities. Like the brutal civil war from 1991 to 2002, EVD has brought about a watershed moment in the nation's history.

Official Response and Crisis Mismanagement

EVD emerged quietly over the border in neighboring Guinea in December of 2013, detected first in Guékédou—a small city bordering both Sierra Leone and Liberia that formed the locus of the initial outbreak. By late March 2014, more than 60 cases had been reported there, prompting Guinean authorities to ban the sale of bush meat, which was targeted early on as a likely vector of the virus.[6] By April 3, two deaths that had occurred in late March were under investigation in Sierra Leone. The World Health Organization (WHO) was reporting the broader subregion's death toll at 86—with "dozens more ill"[7]—while Medecins Sans Frontieres (MSF) warned of EVD's likely spread. The first confirmed[8] case in Sierra Leone was reported on May 25—a pregnant woman who presented with symptoms at Government Hospital in Kenema following a miscarriage.[9] But the virus remained largely confined in the east of the country until summer.

Alarm over EVD's spread heightened in late May when a family removed their sick relative from a clinic in Koindu on the pretext the disease did not exist. By June 9, there were 12 recorded deaths and 43 confirmed cases—out of 113 tested—"mainly in the Kailahun district" but with some new cases "recorded in the northern district of Kambia."[10] As of June 18, the WHO was reporting that deaths had surpassed 300 in West Africa, with 49 confirmed for Sierra Leone. That week, the first EVD deaths were confirmed in Monrovia, seven people who had traveled there from Sierra Leone.[11] By late June, reported cases were rapidly escalating and some restrictive measures were put in place in the east. Schools were closed and borders closed to trade, soon followed by a military-enforced quarantine, a "cordon sanitaire," as *New York Times* reporter Donald G. McNeil Jr. described it—a tactic not used for more than a century.[12]

By mid-August, MSF's president, Joanne Liu, reported that EVD was progressing faster than the ability to respond to it, while the WHO

confirmed that the "scale of the outbreak appeared to be 'vastly underestimated'" and "'extraordinary measures' were needed to contain it."[13] In-depth investigations later revealed that administrative changes at the WHO were partly responsible for missed opportunities to mount a more vigorous regional response to EVD early on. Lack of regional coordination among locally staffed WHO country offices led to communication failures between WHO personnel in Sierra Leone and Guinea. It was found that EVD had actually crossed the border into Sierra Leone in March, two months earlier than initially believed. As a result, a few documented EVD cases and deaths went unreported to Sierra Leone health authorities, even as Guinean health officials, an MSF-led research team, and two different WHO country teams were operating in the very same area on either side of the border. WHO officials attributed the failed communication to devolution of responsibilities away from the organization's central headquarters in Geneva onto country offices, in recent years, amid budgeting and staff cuts. Reliance on local staff meant that areas of concern for country offices usually did not extend beyond national borders.[14]

President Koroma's government drew criticism for failing to take a proactive approach to the looming crisis early on, when initial reports were coming out of Guinea and some were calling on the government to close the border. A heavy reliance by the regional Kissi population on informal cross-border trade networks, which make up a significant portion of the local economy where Guinea, Liberia, and Sierra Leone meet, signaled that EVD would likely cross the border with the 2,000 or so traders[15] who daily traversed it.

Critics in Sierra Leone contended that the government's response was one of neglect and denial until it was no longer possible to ignore the looming catastrophe.[16] No plan of action was in place, nor was a state of public health emergency enacted beyond the eastern district[17] until July 30; it was rolled out on August 1 with a lockdown and house-to-house searches for the sick.[18] The official approach then shifted to a combination of heavy-handed measures and mismanagement, marked by a continuing failure to coordinate an effective response, along with steadily intensifying authoritarian measures—from quarantines to curfews and lockdowns enforced by soldiers, to invasive searches, surveillance, and the jailing of journalists critical of the government's handling of the crisis. Some exceptional measures were certainly necessary to halt EVD's spread, but apprehensions were raised about the consequences of resorting to tactics that might "lead to violation of fundamental human rights."[19] This was particularly concerning in light of the sweeping emergency powers invoked by the president and the history of brutality that marred the records of both police and military.

Sierra Leone had three lockdowns/curfews in which people were confined to their homes for several days. The first was in August, when the state of emergency was first declared. A second took place from September19 to 21, 2014, which mobilized both military and civilian law enforcement officers, as well as 28,500 volunteers to go door to door in "Operation Ose to Ose Ebola Talk," the first direct action of the national sensitization campaign to raise awareness of EVD. The purpose of these visits was to inquire after EVD victims while sharing information about EVD and distributing bars of soap to remind people of the importance of maintaining hygiene to prevent illness.[20] Critics questioned whether certain features of the campaign were really helpful considering the dire situation. One anonymous security officer told *The Guardian* that "people are feeling enraged because you can't imagine you've lost two or three members of your family, and then someone comes knocking on your door with a bar of soap. That's the only real aid filtering down to a lot of people."[21]

Acknowledging that restrictions on ordinary social activities and travel and even the use of quarantine and lockdowns were necessary to bring the virus under control, the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) nevertheless expressed concern about the potential for abuse. UNECA stressed that such measures should be implemented with great care, grounded in democratic consent, and undertaken "after close consultation with affected communities to avoid a backlash through unintended outcomes such as community denial and concealment of suspected cases, putting more people at risk."[22]

Backlash was indeed inadvertently provoked because of the haphazard manner in which emergency measures were implemented, eliciting anger, fear, and resistance—sometimes violent—from both urban and rural communities, and hampering efforts by aid workers to locate the sick and bury the dead to prevent further infection. The track record of official interventions since the war, after all, was not one to inspire trust and confidence in the population. As a report published in the *New York Times* about all three countries hardest hit by EVD pointed out, "distrust of government ran so high after decades of civil war and corruption that many West Africans had to be convinced Ebola was real and not a plot to attract foreign aid."[23]

Investigative reporter Umaru Fofana observed that "lack of information and suspicion of medical staff has [sic] led many to shun treatment." In late July, the first reported EVD case in Freetown was removed from a hospital by her family, who "stormed the hospital and forcibly removed her and took her away," leading officials to issue a panicked public appeal for help in finding her amid fears by health ministry officials that dozens who had earlier tested positive for Ebola were unaccounted for.[24] Panic nearly

ensued when residents of Kingtom saw MSF vans near the local dump site (*bomeh*), fearing they were disposing of contaminated materials that would harm them. Squatters living in the area of Government Wharf in the King Jimmy community—who live amid appallingly unhealthy conditions of squalor—complained that medical staff from Connaught Hospital were dumping biomedical waste in the back of the hospital, further endangering the health of the community.[25] Rumors of EVD conspiracy and government plot became rife. *The Guardian* noted in September that in Kailahun District "many believe Ebola was spread by local politicians to decimate the Kissi population ahead of elections, or that foreigners are using it as a way to harvest body parts."[26]

Riots erupted in Freetown[27] and in the eastern district of Kono after a district health management team tried to remove a sick elderly woman from her home and relatives refused to let her go. Two people were killed when police sprayed tear gas and live bullets into the crowd. A 24-hour curfew was imposed and more than 30 people were arrested.[28] The heavy-handed response by authorities elicited criticism from journalists. Tam Baryoh, the host of the popular radio program *Monologue*, was arrested and beaten up severely by police and imprisoned in Pademba Road prison after criticizing the violent crackdown in Kono. He was arrested while hosting an opposition politician who was critical of President Koroma's plan to seek changes to the Constitution to pursue a third term. Baryoh's arrest was the result of an executive order personally signed by President Koroma under the auspices of the EVD emergency regulations, illustrating the sweeping powers at his disposal and how they could be used to silence dissent.[29]

By December, Sierra Leone was the epicenter of EVD in West Africa, with Freetown host to the highest number of new confirmed cases, accounting for 149 of the 337 cases reported for Sierra Leone in the week of December 28. A house-to-house search was held in the Western Area, as part of "Operation Western Area Surge" (WAS), which began in mid-December. Operation WAS, organized by the government, WHO, and the UN, aimed at "curb[ing] the disease in the western parts of the country . . . to break chains of transmission, identify cases for early isolation and treatment, and conduct safe burials."[30] It was described as an undertaking of "massive social mobilization and massive surveillance." Focused primarily on Freetown, its purpose was to frighten people into changing their behavior, surrendering hidden family members, and informing on neighbors who might be harboring ill relatives.[31] A concurrent lockdown from December 25 to 27 was declared for the north as Sierra Leone's EVD caseload exceeded 9,000 and its confirmed deaths 2,400, "more than double the number of cases in both Guinea and Liberia combined," according to the WHO.[32]

All shops and travel were banned and both Christmas and New Year public festivities—except for church services—were canceled; prohibitions were enforced by soldiers on the streets.[33]

Extreme discrepancies in the number of cases and deaths reported were an ongoing concern throughout 2014. These discrepancies prompted accusations that the government was underreporting in an effort to hide the sheer magnitude of the crisis, or that its inability to accurately trace and monitor cases was a sign of official incompetence.[34] Both media and official statements regularly pointed out that there were far more cases and deaths than the official numbers—perhaps two or three times the official counts—despite the fact that international agencies like the WHO relied on those provided by officials on the ground. A virologist working with a team of Tulane University researchers and doctors told National Public Radio (USA) in June that there were "many villages in the eastern part of Sierra Leone that are basically devastated," adding that his team had found 25 corpses in just one village and had come across one home in which all seven family members had perished.[35]

Local health officials in Makeni—the capital of Bombali District and the fourth largest city in the country—reported in late September that at least 90 people had died, "a figure far in excess of what the government in the capital had reported for Bombali."[36] In late October, when the WHO was reporting the official number of cases at 13,467 with 4,951 deaths, Rony Zachariah, senior coordinator of operational research for MSF, insisted the real numbers were much higher, perhaps as many as 20,000. He said "the situation was catastrophic. There are several villages and communities that have been basically wiped out. In one of the villages I went to, there were 40 inhabitants and 39 [had] died. . . . Whole communities have disappeared but many of them are not in the statistics."[37]

Over the course of the EVD emergency, infected people were hidden in homes and fled treatment centers, endangering others as they spread the virus. Medical facilities, isolation wards, and holding centers were generally described as dangerously filthy, ill-equipped, understaffed, and disease-ridden hellholes,[38] perceived by many to hold out the prospect of certain death and undignified burial.[39] Most private hospitals and four of the main public hospitals closed down as the virus spread.[40] Essential medical and emergency workers perished in frightfully large numbers; those in service increasingly resorted to strikes over pay issues, lack of protective gear, inadequate training, and all-round dangerous working conditions.[41] Throughout much of the crisis, the number of EVD treatment centres (ETCs) were few and located exclusively in the eastern districts, where those who tested positive in other parts of the country were transported in long and dangerous journeys, provided they survived the wait for test

results and beds were available there for them. From the northern city of Makeni, the nearest ETC—until the British opened one in Tonkolili in December—was operated by MSF in the eastern district of Kailahun, a journey of "eight hours over bad dirt roads."[42]

Those who did seek medical treatment were often turned away or left to die in the isolation wards of hospitals for lack of available beds in ETCs. Unburied EVD-infected corpses accumulated in the streets, posing grave public health dangers as a result of the increased potency of the virus in the bodies of dead victims. Such spectacles fostered demoralization and evoked traumatic memories for those who had lived through the war. As burial supervisor Andrew Kondoh told an investigative reporter from the *Chicago Tribune*, during the war mass graves and piles of dead bodies "left to rot" or "incinerated in mass cremations" were a common sight. "Such treatment of corpses was deeply painful to the victims' relatives."[43]

The EVD crisis had horrendous effects on children. Out of the thousands of children infected with EVD about a third perished. Schools were closed as part of the state of emergency, initially for 60 to 90 days, but remained closed through the end of the year into 2015.[44] Reliance on child labor increased as children were subjected to additional hard labor to make up for the loss of adult contributions to household income. Abandonment of orphaned children by relatives fearful of bringing infection into their own homes spiked. Many, especially older children and teens, were turned out onto the street, where they were at risk of falling into crime, prostitution, or human trafficking. UNICEF has estimated that the crisis has created thousands of "Ebola orphans," many of whom "are stigmatized and shunned by their own communities" and rejected by their extended families,[45] sadly illustrating how EVD has severed the powerful obligatory bonds of kinship. The first "Ebola orphanage" opened in October in Kailahun District, where children were taken from ETCs following the loss of their parents.[46]

Corruption and the Failing Health Care System

> In Sierra Leone, war forms the silent backdrop to the country's newest tragedy. It was war that destroyed the nation's infrastructure, leaving behind a decrepit medical system. It drove away the doctors.[47]

A *Sierra Leone Telegraph* editorial published in late December highlighted the many parallels of the war on EVD with the earlier rebel war, both metaphorical and actual. The beginnings of both in the eastern districts of the country, the slow response by both government and the international community to take action and render aid, the omnipresent soldiers and

use of military terms like "operation" for each new campaign, even the very conception of a deadly enemy destroying the lives and sapping the spirits of the people were features of both. And also like the rebel war, there is the ever-present specter of corruption. The editorial noted concerns "from many quarters that monies and other resources meant to keep the enemy at bay are reportedly being mismanaged, misappropriated, and diverted to personal use."[48]

EVD's ravages have exposed the destructive potential of systemic corruption. Reports and interviews conducted throughout the crisis suggested widespread perception among both ordinary Sierra Leoneans and international observers and officials involved in relief efforts that donor and tax monies, food aid, and supplies slated for the war on EVD were misappropriated,[49] and that corruption was responsible for the overall failure to contain and halt the spread of the epidemic. Allegations of corruption and incompetence became increasingly sharp in light of Liberia and Guinea's much more dramatic progress in containing the virus and reducing the number of new infections by December.[50]

Indeed, a report issued by the Auditor General—Audit Service Sierra Leone (ASSL)—released in February 2015 found that both the Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MoHS) and the National Ebola Response Centre (NERC) had presided over gross mismanagement of funds slated for combating the virus; more than 30 percent of internal EVD funds were unaccounted for and possibly misappropriated, internal funds being those provisioned through taxation and "donated by institutions and individuals mostly within Sierra Leone" rather than external funding from international donors and agencies like the UN.[51]

The MoHS came in for especial criticism in having shown "complete disregard" for the law in its disbursement of EVD monies; Le74 billion disbursed from the Health Emergency Response Account from May through October 31, 2014, in the form of dubious contracts, overcharges, payments to MPs, ghost workers, and various other individuals that totally lacked documentation or explanation, remained unaccounted for into 2015.[52] The Audit noted the persistent "lapses in financial management system in Sierra Leone and [how] these have ultimately resulted in the loss of funds and a reduction in the quality of service delivery in the health sector" that could have needlessly cost lives. The report stressed that while the EVD crisis could not have been predicted beforehand, audits in the years before 2014 consistently exposed how financial mismanagement adversely affected the health care system.[53]

Ministerial siphoning of donor aid, the allocation of supply contracts to cronies, and embezzlement through "ghost worker" scams have long been features of the endemic corruption plaguing the health, education, and

various other public sectors in Sierra Leone. During the EVD crisis, the Anti-Corruption Commission was alleged to be investigating a fraudulent scam of 6,000 ghost medical and emergency workers who were collecting EVD voucher pay checks through an Airtel money system. The company reportedly informed the Chief Officer of the National Ebola Response Centre (NERC)—retired army major Paolo Conteh—that a large number of employees were listed with the same number to collect their pay, which prompted the government to switch to cash payments made in person. According to one report, only half of the approximately 12,000 workers employed for the EVD emergency showed up to collect their pay on the appointed day.[54] The ghost worker scam came amid serious shortages of trained medical workers and strikes by medical staff and burial workers over failure to receive hazard pay.[55]

Problems of corruption and incompetence surrounding the health care system and efforts to contain it have dominated President Koroma's tenure. Several high profile cases have been exposed by previous health emergencies[56] and are detailed in investigative reports. A 2012–2013 audit conducted by the GAVI Alliance uncovered evidence of gross corruption by administrative officials in Sierra Leone's MoHS. GAVI is a private charity set up by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation that provides vaccinations for children and cash grants to governments of poor countries to improve child health services; it has been operating in Sierra Leone since 2001. The cash program for Health Services Strengthening provided by GAVI was suspended in late 2012 after allegations were raised of heavy siphoning by MoHS officials from 2008 to 2010.[57] A sum of US$1,140,000 was initially unaccounted for and testimony by former health minister Zainab Bangura (2011–2012)—who left her ministerial post in 2013 to take up a position in the UN Secretary-General's office—to GAVI's Transparency and Accountability Team (TAP) told of disbursements of donor funds to private bank accounts.[58]

The GAVI-TAP audit found evidence that US$523,303—31 percent of the US$1,684,750 GAVI had disbursed to the government between 2008 and 2010—had been misused in the form of undocumented expenditures (US$202,756) at both the national and district levels: "unjustified disbursements" (US$171,016), unexplained cash withdrawals directly from the program bank account that lacked documentation; "overcharged procurement" of three ambulances at a cost of US$225,600, 80 percent (US$100,872) higher than the same vehicles purchased by UNICEF for US$41,576 each in 2009; "diversion of programme assets"—of 35 motorbikes that were supposed to be allocated to peripheral health units (PHUs), at least 14 were diverted to people ("beneficiaries") unconnected to the program (amounting to US$43,386 in "ineligible expenditures"); and

miscellaneous other "irregularities" in expenditure for which there were no receipts. The audit described the operational environment of the MoHS as being completely devoid of mechanisms of oversight and accountability, and even lacking a "basic book-keeping" system. The charity would not restore funding until reforms in line with the audit report's recommendations were made, including total restoration of the misallocated funds.[59] Twenty-nine officials from the MoHS were indicted in 2013 by Sierra Leone's Anti-Corruption Commission for "misappropriation of a half-million dollars in vaccination funds," though they were later acquitted.[60]

The taint of corruption also marred the start of the Free Health Care Initiative (FHCI) for maternal and child health care in 2010.[61] Sierra Leone ranked highest in the world in maternal and infant mortality, making childbirth a death sentence for one in eight pregnant women. Several exposés published in international media in 2008 drew attention to these alarming rates of maternal and infant mortality and the appalling conditions of the health care sector.[62] The FHCI was seeded with donor money, mainly from the United Nations and United Kingdom, to get it off the ground, with the aim of making it self-sustaining with public revenue within a few years.[63]

A 2011 investigative report published by Amnesty International detailed numerous accounts of corruption in the forms of bribery, denial of service, and theft, hindering the fledgling FHCI.[64] The report prefigured the precarious conditions into which the EVD crisis emerged three years later, showing the lack of preparedness for a public health emergency of such magnitude. Many women and children were prevented from accessing the services intended for them. Both UNICEF and Sierra Leone's Anti-Corruption Commission raised concerns at the time about the all-pervasive corruption that prevented the program from functioning, noting among other things that "large quantities of drugs intended for the FHCI may have gone missing since the initiative was launched."[65]

The government consistently failed to properly administer the program. Doctors who were interviewed wondered if the system could be sustained once donor money ran out in light of the total "absence of functioning accountability." Bribery, theft, profiteering, failures in the procurement and delivery of needed medicines and consumables, and the "rerouting" of program essentials to private for-profit hospitals and pharmacies were found to be the main hindrances to successful implementation. As with the GAVI case, the lack of any system of inventory management or oversight of stock allowed health care workers and pharmacists to engage in rampant private profiteering at the expense of patients. Those seeking care were told that needed drugs and supplies were either unavailable or available but not free. Women were often charged for supplies and medicines at the point of service, or directed to pharmacies to buy them, or denied

treatment if they could not pay. Doctors and community health officers reported frustration with the constant failure to procure essential drugs because of "stock-outs," inability to communicate supply lists to district medical stores, or receiving the wrong supplies so that they were left with no recourse but to "beg from other hospitals" to get essential medicines. Their complaints usually fell upon deaf ears.[66]

Problems began right at the point of entry for imports. At the port of Freetown, bribery and theft were found to delay and divert shipments of medicines and essential supplies needed for the program. Drug shipments tended to "go missing" while port authorities demanded bribes to clear them. In 2010, disbursement of the initial shipment of supplies sent to launch the FHCI was delayed because authorities at the port refused to grant clearance. The personal intervention of both President Koroma and Vice President Sam Sumana had to be sought to secure the consignment of "all the free care drugs for nationwide distribution." The report noted that the very fact that it was necessary to solicit the president's intervention to secure this shipment from port authorities "is clearly problematic."[67]

Similar charges of corruption plagued efforts to combat the EVD crisis despite the infusion of more than US$137 million in donor aid and US$40 million in government revenue allocated toward that end. Private aid initiatives by Sierra Leoneans in the diaspora have also been organized to bring needed supplies into the country. Private aid shipments have run up against the same obstacles to clearance at Freetown Port, generating debates in the media over endemic corruption's exacerbation of the crisis.

On August 9, 2014, a large container of supplies collected from various donors in the United States arrived at the Freetown Port. It was organized and shipped by opposition politician Chernoh Alpha Bah from Makeni, President Koroma's hometown. The container held essential equipment that health workers on the frontlines of the Ebola fight desperately needed at a time of dire shortage. But instead of being cleared and dispersed, "100 bags and boxes of hospital linens, 100 cases of protective suits, 80 cases of face masks and other items—in all, more than $140,000 worth of medical equipment" sat on the docks for nearly two months because port authorities—now reorganized under the Emergency Operations Center to coordinate EVD relief shipments—refused to give it clearance. An anonymous foreign official told Adam Nossiter of the *New York Times* that "no one appeared to be in charge at the agency . . . and that different factions made decisions independently."[68] During the time the container sat on the docks, the number of confirmed cases and deaths from EVD skyrocketed. From August 27 to October 5—the publication date of the story in the *New York Times*—the number of confirmed cases rose from 935 to 2,455, and the number of deaths from 35 to 725. In the 21 days leading up to October 5 alone, 924

cases of EVD had been confirmed, 125 of those among health care workers, 91 of whom perished in the same 21-day time frame.[69]

The delay allegedly turned on a dispute over a US$6,500 shipping fee that was due upon receipt, which the government refused to pay because of the sender's failure to submit proper forms for authorization. In light of the EVD crisis, the shipping company had reportedly agreed to ship before payment, but when payment was not forthcoming the company halted the shipment of three additional containers of supplies in the United States that were scheduled to follow. Another Sierra Leonean donor resident in Canada ran up against the same problem with government balking over the US$5,000 shipping fee due for a container containing US$55,000 in needed supplies; and this was at a time when government had already directly received US$40 million in donor money to fight EVD, according to the anonymous foreign official interviewed for the *New York Times* article.[70]

Government spokespersons contended that shipments were arranged without seeking prior authorization from the health ministry. But one wonders why in the context of a health crisis of this magnitude, with scarce health workers perishing in alarming numbers and reinforcements in short supply, that the creation of a special coordinating body for relief shipments would not have extraordinary protocol in place to expedite the clearance and disbursement of relief supplies. But the MoHS itself remained bogged down in allegations of corruption and mismanagement. Minister of Health Miatta Kargbo was mired in controversy over the summer of 2014 and ultimately forced to resign. She was transferred to the Policy Strategy Unit in late August amid charges of incompetence and nepotism.[71] An anonymous government official working to get Bah's container of supplies released observed that the EVD crisis, like the earlier civil war, had "exposed the extent of government corruption."[72]

A health care system bereft of basic resources and disabled by fraud and corruption was totally overwhelmed by the strains produced by the EVD crisis. Medical workers in what were already severely understaffed hospitals, community health centers, and ETCs[73] risked their lives under appalling conditions to treat EVD victims. Since EVD spreads through contact with bodily fluids, poorly equipped workers were constantly at risk of infection. Even the removal of adequate protective gear, which had to be discarded after each use, had to be done with great care and according to a prescribed set of instructions to prevent infection. As of December 28, 2014, 143 medical workers were infected with EVD and 110 had died in Sierra Leone;[74] 11 of those deaths were of leading doctors. Sierra Leone lost a total of five leading doctors in the one-month period from November 17 to December 18.[75]

EVD has paralyzed the health system, creating an atmosphere of fear in which all visible signs of sickness are suspect. As a result, people not infected with EVD die because of it, underscoring how it functions as a total disease. Most hospitals and PHUs in rural areas have closed as the virus spread, elevating the numbers of people dying from treatable diseases like malaria, polio, tuberculosis, and cholera—which are already responsible for tens of thousands of deaths annually.[76] Routine medical needs and common symptoms of other illnesses—fever, vomiting, bleeding—are perceived as potentially life threatening because it is impossible to determine whether or not the patient is EVD-infected prior to testing. Testing itself carries significant risks of infection for medical workers because of the need to draw blood under rudimentary conditions without proper gear and supplies.[77] Dr. Thaim Kamara, chief of surgery at Connaught Hospital in Freetown, told *Al Jazeera* that "a physician refused to anesthetize a patient because he had a history of vomiting and fever." His surgery was delayed pending the results of EVD tests while he waited in the isolation ward.[78] Lacking proper supplies, training, and protective gear for treating EVD patients, health workers are understandably fearful of contracting the virus from those who seek treatment for routine medical needs.

EVD was particularly deadly for pregnant women. The very first confirmed case of EVD in Sierra Leone was that of a pregnant woman. Contaminated at the funeral of a traditional healer, where at least 300 others were infected, she was fortunate to recover.[79] Despite this first recovery, pregnant women were disproportionately at risk of death during the EVD crisis. Pregnancy was like a death sentence, whether the woman was infected or not, since "virtually all prenatal, obstetric, and postnatal care has been paralyzed." An October report in *The New Yorker* related how pregnant women were often denied obstetric care. The prevailing assumption among medical workers was that they were hopeless cases who would die anyway and that they carried much higher risks of contamination for staff due to the amount of blood, sweat, and amniotic fluids involved in giving birth, along with the possibility of prenatal complications hard-pressed facilities were not equipped to handle.[80]

In consequence, an "unwritten code" governed their treatment, which resulted in neglect. The scarcity of supplies, staff, and beds gave rise to a rationing system directing care to those thought most likely to survive. Pregnant women who tested positive for EVD were often segregated from other EVD patients who received treatment first. One doctor who ran a medical nonprofit explained that in treatment centers unequipped with obstetricians and thus unable to attend to pregnant women's special needs, they were the last to be triaged and "aren't even given beds. They get put in

an area where they get no interventions. They are 'assumed to die.' Priority is given to the patients who health-care workers believe they can save."[81]

Pregnant women normally exhibit the main symptoms of EVD, so were immediately suspect when seeking care, and placed in isolation wards to await testing, which normally meant days for the results to come back. Isolation wards were usually no more than a tarpaulin-covered area separated from the rest of the facility where people were sent to die, as Umaru Fofana described Kenema Government Hospital's isolation ward.[82] Pregnant women who were not sick when placed in isolation were put at high risk of infection by others they were confined with.[83] In August, staff at Princess Christian Maternity Hospital in Freetown—the only maternity hospital in the country—delayed treatment of a pregnant woman, Shola Davies Margai, who was admitted for bleeding, until results of her EVD tests confirmed she was free of infection. She died in the isolation ward while awaiting the results, which came back negative.[84]

Underscoring EVD's characteristics as a total disease, the executive director of United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) remarked in an October press release that "Ebola not only killed those infected, but those affected."[85] The UNFPA projected that in the 12-month period from November 2014 to 2015, 213,281 women would give birth and out of those more than 31,992 could face complications, further raising levels of maternal and infant mortality.[86] In an effort to ameliorate these conditions, the UNFPA and World Bank "developed a joint project to support the government of Sierra Leone to establish appropriate arrangements to revitalize Reproductive, Maternal, Adolescent and Newborn Health services in the context of Ebola."[87] EVD as a total disease destroyed the healthy as well as the infected, diminishing the future generation as well as the current.

Impacts on Economy and Food Supply

The EVD emergency was a total economic crisis, causing serious disruption in all sectors of the economy: national, local, and regional; and formal and informal. The crisis brought contracting gross domestic product (GDP), price inflation, market closures, capital flight, postponed foreign investment projects, plummeting household incomes, reduced agricultural and manufacturing output, and caused significant loss of government revenue. While the overall long-term effects on the economy remained unknown at the end of 2014, the convergence of EVD with a devastating global slump in iron ore prices prompted significant downward revisions in projected GDP for the second half of 2014 and into 2015[88] following the failure of the two largest mining companies—African Minerals and London Mining.[89] The failure of both these companies erased significant mining

sector growth since 2009, the expansion of which had skewed statistics of national and subregional economic growth in recent years, masking "the performance of other sectors in the economy."[90]

Since 2011, iron ore had been Sierra Leone's biggest export commodity, comprising 16 percent of formal GDP. In early June 2014, after the first confirmed EVD deaths were reported, the two major iron miners—London Mining and African Minerals—decreased nonessential staff and advised those on leave not to return, while placing travel restrictions on employees still on the ground.[91] Shares in both suffered significant drops following these announcements. Fearing the possible closure of borders, several other mining companies were assessing risk factors for personnel and considering what steps to take.[92]

By September, growth estimates for the second half of 2014 were revised down 3.3 percentage points from a previous 11.3 percent to 8.0 percent.[93] Reports warned that iron mining in Sierra Leone was on the verge of collapse. The larger problem lay at the level of global trade, the market value having decreased 39 percent over the course of 2014. But the EVD crisis compounded the fallout from plummeting prices as the main companies, already in financial turmoil, quickly scaled down their commitments. The impacts were projected to be dire for both government revenue and employment. By October, London Mining's shares had lost virtually all their value and were suspended from trading as the company defaulted on a US$200 million loan.[94]

African Minerals followed suit on November 20 when its shares were suspended from trading on the London Stock Market. Crushed under US$790 million in debt, by December 1 the company was out of working capital and had placed its Tonkolili mine in administration, enacting a "temporary controlled shutdown" after failing to secure additional investment to implement a cost-reduction plan mapped out in September.[95] African Minerals was "the biggest single contributor to Sierra Leone's economy, employing 7,000 people at the Tonkolili mine that cost more than $1.7 million to build" in 2011. *Bloomberg News* noted that "African Minerals' royalty payment to the nation dropped to $1.3 million in July 2014 from an average of US$2.5 million monthly" before the EVD crisis.[96] As of December 3, 2014, direct government expenditure on the EVD crisis had reached US$41 million, with a further US$137 million contributed by donors. A budget deficit of US$150 million was projected for 2015.[97]

In September, uncertain as to the trajectory the epidemic would take, the World Bank proposed two possible situations of "medium-term" economic impact through the end of 2015: a "Low Ebola" and a "High Ebola" scenario. These two scenarios depended respectively on a rapid or slow containment of the disease by the end of 2014 in the "core three countries"

of Liberia, Guinea, and Sierra Leone, whose informal economies are heavily intertwined because of cross-border trade in crafts, agricultural produce, and other locally produced items. Under a Low Ebola scenario, Sierra Leone was initially projected to lose approximately 1.2 percentage points GDP for 2015, while under a High Ebola scenario the projection was a loss of 8.9 percentage points; the difference being a "serious" effect in a Low Ebola situation versus a "catastrophic" effect "under a slow-containment, High Ebola scenario."[98]

By December, these projections were dramatically revised. GDP for 2014 was reduced by half from September estimates of 8.0 percent down to 4.0 percent, down from an initial precrisis projection of 11.3. It was becoming clear that something more along the lines of the High Ebola scenario was taking shape. EVD cases were still on the rise, especially in Sierra Leone, with little hope of containment in sight before the end of the year. Both the World Bank and International Monetary Fund forecasted a contraction of −2.0 percent for 2015, down from 8.5 percent pre-EVD projections and resulting in an estimated loss of US$1.3 billion in income.[99] Most alarming was the reliance of recovery in 2014 on the profits from iron ore. In the Low EVD scenario of rapid containment, "an economic recovery emerges over the course of 2014, anchored by government spending and iron ore," along with a 2 percent reduction in agriculture and a rebound in manufacturing and tourism. The alternative catastrophic "High Ebola" scenario, envisioned the shutdown of the mines, plummeting agriculture due to abandonment of farms, and an overall contraction of the non–iron ore sectors by 3 percent. A delayed recovery would depend solely on increased imports, aid, and government spending.[100]

Compounding the economic devastation, travel and mobility restrictions due to quarantine and border closures, heavy losses of life in rural districts, abandonment of farms, and widespread fear of contamination greatly reduced agricultural output to alarmingly dangerous levels, afflicting both local and export markets, as well as subsistence farming.[101] Agriculture comprised 50 percent of the national economy in 2013. The two eastern districts of Kailahun and Kenema are the most productive agricultural regions—forming the rice bowl of the nation—which together are responsible for 18 percent of the country's total rice production. Also home to one-fifth of the population, it was in these districts that the EVD outbreak began in the spring, and they were the first to be quarantined in June. People in these districts faced the gravest risk of shortage and starvation by the fall of 2014. At least 40 percent of farmers in Kailahun had "either abandoned their farms and moved to new safer locations or died," according to the Food and Agriculture Organization, and "about 90 percent of the plots" were reportedly not planted in 2014.[102]

The greatly reduced planting over the summer of 2014 created significant problems that would last at least through 2015, due to a shortage of seeds to plant from the previous year. To make matters worse, the rice harvest was also preempted by heavy rains in September, further increasing food insecurity for rural and remote populations, who lack easy access to markets. Even before the EVD crisis, the summer months were a time of heightened food insecurity, referred to in rural districts as the "hungry season," when "about 45 percent of the population, or 2.5 million people, do not have access to sufficient food."[103] EVD greatly compounded the dangers of this situation. Closure of the borders further devastated the household incomes of these rural communities who were dependent on the informal economy that traverses Guinea and Liberia. The regional trade is critically important to Sierra Leone's rural populations' household income, constituting perhaps as much of 43 percent of Sierra Leone's GDP—which, according to the UN Economic Commission for Africa, makes it nearly equivalent to Sierra Leone's formal trade in the official GDP.[104] The World Food Program (WFP) "ramped up its feeding program" in response,[105] supplemented by private efforts led by the diaspora and smaller aid groups that were more locally focused. The UK military partnered with the WFP in a three-day mission to bring extensive food aid to the Turtle Islands off Sierra Leone's southern coast. The Islands have no cases of EVD among its population of 16,000, but their economic lifeline to the rest of the country and outside world has been cut off by EVD, putting them at risk of starvation.[106]

World Bank reports highlighted two distinct forms, or "channels," of economic impact from EVD: the actual reduction of the workforce through sickness and death and diversion of scarce health resources to the infected, and the psychological effects of EVD that manifested in widespread panic and unnecessary fears of infection—"alarmism,"[107] or what the World Bank calls "aversion behavior." Aversion behavior has had a far greater impact on the economy than the actual numbers infected by the virus: internally by closing shops, markets, and other places of employment, and internationally as other countries limit relations and close their borders to prevent spread of the virus. In both the SARS epidemic of 2002–2004 and the H1N1 pandemic of 2009, aversion behavior accounted for as much as "80 or 90 percent of the total economic impact."[108] Aversion behavior, in conjunction with other official restrictions on travel and congregating in public, can bring the local economy to a grinding a halt, while at the international level it results in the virtual quarantining of an entire nation by the outside world. "Like a virtual 'economic blockade,'" the World Bank noted, a quarantine policy "applied to a country" will prevent the "entire country from receiving the help it needs to fight the epidemic, and by alarming trade, business and tourism partners, will exacerbate aversion

behavior and the resulting short- and medium-term economic impact of the disease."[109]

International aversion behavior included closing ports, suspending air[110] and other transport services, recalling citizens and employees, and postponing or canceling business expansion and investment. As the crisis gained momentum over the summer and early fall, international aversion behavior reached alarming levels as countries sought to eliminate any chance of EVD contagion crossing their borders. International and continental carriers fell in line, suspending flights to core EVD-affected countries. By mid-August, one-third of flights into the EVD countries had been eliminated with most African carriers, British Airways, and Emirates airline suspending service, followed by Air France, which suspended flights to Sierra Leone (but not to and from Guinea) the last week in August after its air crews refused to board planes heading to the affected countries. The panic even spread beyond focus on the three countries to other parts of Africa far from the crisis. In the same week that Kenya—a major hub for international travel in East Africa—suspended air service and banned citizens from the three countries, South Korea suspended flights to Kenya, which had no reported cases of EVD.[111]

The WHO warned that travel bans and suspension of air service would be counterproductive, hampering the ability to move medical workers and supplies in and out of the countries where they were needed with rapidity and ease, making it more likely the epidemic would spread.[112] By December, the only two national carriers still holding flights into Freetown were Royal Air Maroc and Brussels Airlines, which explained its maintenance of regular air service as a "humanitarian duty."[113]

Conclusion

This chapter has given a brief overview of the 2014 EVD emergency in Sierra Leone, from its arrival in the spring to the end of the year, in hopes of giving some sense of its impacts and the various responses it elicited. It does not claim to be a comprehensive or conclusive analysis but has tried to offer some insights into this pivotal tragedy. This chapter has illustrated the destructive effects of EVD as it emerged into a volatile context of a nonfunctioning health care system and endemic corruption, making it a total disease that upended all areas of social and economic life and may prove a catalyst for profound changes. It has exposed what UNECA called health care's "low ranking among government priorities"[114] and the disaster that lurks behind such neglect—the whole of national life descending into chaos when epidemic strikes.

The incursion of the EVD virus demonstrated that a viable health care system is in fact central to the broader functioning of society and that its attainment is nearly impossible without confronting rampant corruption in government and all other levels of administration. The emergency revealed the widespread sense among the population and foreigners that corruption bore some responsibility for the inability to get the crisis under control, underscoring lack of public trust in government. Government must work to build that trust and make life better for the people it is supposed to serve; its first priority should be eliminating corruption, as many commentators have argued during the EVD crisis.[115] The impacts of EVD will no doubt resonate into the future for quite some time. People will not soon forget or easily return to pre-EVD routines. It will no doubt play a part in the upcoming elections in 2017–2018 by bringing the problem of endemic corruption to the fore once again, showing the possible extent of its deadly potential, and shining a critical spotlight on the performance of the government during the crisis. As a total disease, EVD exposed the appalling deficiencies and fragility of the system and as such may prove a catalyst for profound change.

Notes

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Conclusion: The Interface between Democratization and Human Security

Joseph J. Bangura

Since the end of the Cold War in the 1990s and the cascade of events that followed, many African countries like Sierra Leone were forced to pivot from despotic order, repression, and dictatorship to democratization and human security with the aim of achieving political and economic renaissance (Diamond and Plattner 2009). In fact, the political milieu created in many African countries such as Sierra Leone by events that accompanied the fall of communism and the Berlin Wall led Colin Legum to boldly proclaim on the eve of the new millennium that "the momentum of democratization and the clamor against human rights abuses will be maintained, so that, by say, 2015, the great majority of African states will have adopted viable democratic institutions."[1] It is obvious that such a prediction was premature and overly optimistic. Others have observed that though many African states embarked on the process of democratization, very few were able to strengthen the "formal structures" of democracy (Joseph 2009). Clearly, many African postwar nations like Sierra Leone still struggle to create and maintain institutions that uphold the rule of law, foolproof electoral systems, viable civil society, and an independent judiciary, among others (Diamond and Plattner 2009).

This anthology has shown that democratization and human security in Sierra Leone, like many other postwar African states, is fraught with convoluted problems and substantial challenges. The study has examined the transition to democracy in postwar Sierra Leone and highlighted areas where the political leadership and body politic need to do more to secure human security through effective democratization. As illustrated in the study, a great deal remains to be done to ensure that Sierra Leone does not retreat from whatever democratic gains it has made since the end of the

civil war. Therefore to avoid a departure from whatever democratic gains postwar Sierra Leone has made so far, public institutions must perform their fundamental functions in a relatively efficient and predictable manner (Wyrod 2009). In fact, Joseph Lansana Kormoh in his analysis argues that the democratization process in relation to chieftaincy reforms in particular must be rooted in the culture, tradition, and customs of the locals rather than predicated on Western orientation and tradition. This is because the integration of local customs and traditions in the democratization process could contribute to the goal of achieving human security, which in turn enhances participatory development and good governance. Thus it is imperative on the state to implement recommendations of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report (TRC). As Marda Mustapha shows in his chapter, elections must be free and fair with little or no electoral malfeasance. Further, Sierra Leone's political elite, as Joseph Bangura indicates, must shed the colonial legacy of divide and rule and renounce the use of divisive tools like identity politics, or what Harbeson and Rothchild call "ethnocracy" (Harbeson and Rothchild 2012). From the foregoing, it is implicit that the political elite should deracinate ethnoregional politics for democracy to flourish in the postwar nation.

Additionally, the study has shown that human security in postwar Sierra Leone remains desirable but peripheral. The discourse on security shows that human insecurity undermines development and democratic transition in Sierra Leone (Human Security Center 2005; Human Security Center Report Project 2008). As stated in the introduction, there has been a paradigm shift in security discourse; that is, nation-states now direct their focus on external threats or foreign assaults on their territories. This paradigm shift is explicit in the UNDP Report,[2] the African Union's description of the concept,[3] and also in the discussion of the concept by some scholars.[4] Therefore, to sustain peace in many postwar and/or postconflict African countries like Sierra Leone, the hallmarks of human security outlined above must be protected.

The chapters by Diane Szántó, Vandy Kanyako, Earl Conteh-Morgan, Fredline A. O. M'Cormack-Hale and Fredanna A. D. M'Cormack, and Jenise R. DePinto address the imperatives of human security and the failings of the Sierra Leone government to prioritize the phenomenon. Against this backdrop, democratization and human security must be pursued synchronously to enhance development and economic growth in the postwar state. The government of Sierra Leone should do more to implement state-wide police reform and address corruption at all levels of law enforcement. Political interference in the police force as discussed in the chapter by M'Cormack-Hale and M'Cormack along with practices like money laundering and drug trafficking must be tackled and obliterated

for Sierra Leoneans at home and abroad to have confidence in the political system. Mariane Ferme's chapter alludes to this point—the necessity to maintain democratic values for the benefit of all Sierra Leoneans including distant Sierra Leoneans. Her analysis also brings to light the imperative to ensure that diaspora Sierra Leoneans effectively and credibly utilize the electoral process for the benefit of the electorates. Beyond upholding a credible and efficient electoral process, postwar Sierra Leone must work sedulously toward achieving food and health security, a point Conteh-Morgan expounds in his chapter. Food security is a principal element of human security along with health, economic, community, and political securities. Hence, advanced agricultural techniques and methods should be developed to increase agricultural productivity. In other words, to achieve food security the government should sharply increase agricultural spending while drastically reducing food imports and its heavy dependence on foreign aid.

Related to the above, achieving food security enhances other dimensions of human security, particularly health security. As M'Cormack-Hale and M'Cormack explicate in their analysis, the health care infrastructure is plagued with myriad challenges. Even a well-intentioned and externally funded program to provide free and comprehensive health services to women and children below the age of five (FHCI) fell far short of its goals as a result of poor service delivery, administration, and limited government capacity to provide adequate oversight. Corruption in its multiple forms—plundering, bribery, profiteering, and filching and scrounging state resources at all levels of government and administration—became endemic from the local to the national level. Not only that, corruption affected the efficient running of community clinics and the Department of Health and Sanitation, which in turn enervated the effective delivery of emergency health services, as DePinto lucidly demonstrates in her rendition of the health system in postwar Sierra Leone. DePinto shows that corruption undermined the delivery of emergency health services in the cases of the FHCI, the GAVI vaccination program, and the EVD crisis of 2014. The outbreak of the EVD epidemic underlines the connection between food and health care and the centrality of both phenomena to the crucial functioning of the economy as the crisis significantly abate rice production and local trade. Although the Ebola epidemic seemed to be finally under control with the reopening of schools in April 2015, further outbreaks remain a continuing threat and the health care system remains inadequate to serve the nation's needs.

The political leadership should give careful consideration in addressing the numerous deficiencies of the health system including the bane of corruption in the postwar state. This collection has shown that corruption

pervades the health system (African Renewal 2014). In other words, entrenched corruption greatly contributed to the government's inability to put the Ebola epidemic under firm control. In light of this, we believe it is exigent for the government to extirpate corruption in all sectors of the state machinery. Health care must be treated as an essential element of human security because a viable health care system is vital to the functioning of the economy. Though the Ebola crisis is gradually ebbing, the outbreak of other epidemics remain a spooky reality as the health care infrastructure remains largely deficient.

In sum, this volume establishes that there is a strong synergy between democratic transition and human security (Englebert and Dunn 2013; Wiafe-Amoako 2014). Though the collection has addressed a variety of questions relating to the democratization process in postwar Sierra Leone, a comprehensive and detailed analysis of the above issues deserves additional research and attention. Much more research is needed in areas that address the numerous challenges postwar Sierra Leone confronts in its transition to democracy. Politically, recent developments have taken a more negative turn. The recent action of the incumbent head of state, Ernest Bai Koroma, in summarily dismissing his elected vice president speaks to the shallowness and fragility of Sierra Leone's constitutional order. Many denigrate this action as a blatant violation of the country's 1991 Peter Tucker Constitution discussed in the Introduction and Chapter One. Sierra Leoneans at home and abroad and friends of Sierra Leone are forced to inquisitively reflect on the overall implication of the president's action, which many deem unconstitutional. Put another way, curious minded Sierra Leoneans at home and abroad wonder whether the action of President Koroma should be seen as a one-off development and therefore a mere political misstep. Or is this action the start of a steady erosion of the democratization process in the postwar nation? Specifically, does this act by the head of state expose postwar Sierra Leone's frangible democratic credentials?

Though the Supreme Court has validated the president's basis for dismissing the vice president, many scholars and leading legal experts vehemently disagree with the ruling. As the president's action and the Supreme Court's decision continue to generate fierce debate among political and legal observers, Sierra Leoneans at home and abroad certainly hope that the postwar state is not on the verge of accelerating a return to despotic order, incessant repression, tyranny, and anarchical disorderliness—factors that, among others, strongly contributed to the outbreak of the noxious civil war. In light of the above, if postwar Sierra Leone is to consolidate democracy, democratic institutions must be made to uphold transparency and undergird and maintain the rule of law. This is because research shows that democracy and human security are integral phenomena.

Notes

1. Legum (1999, 94).
2. UNDP (1994, 22).
3. Englebert and Dunn (2013).
4. Wiafe-Amoako (2014); Mustapha and Bangura (2010).

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