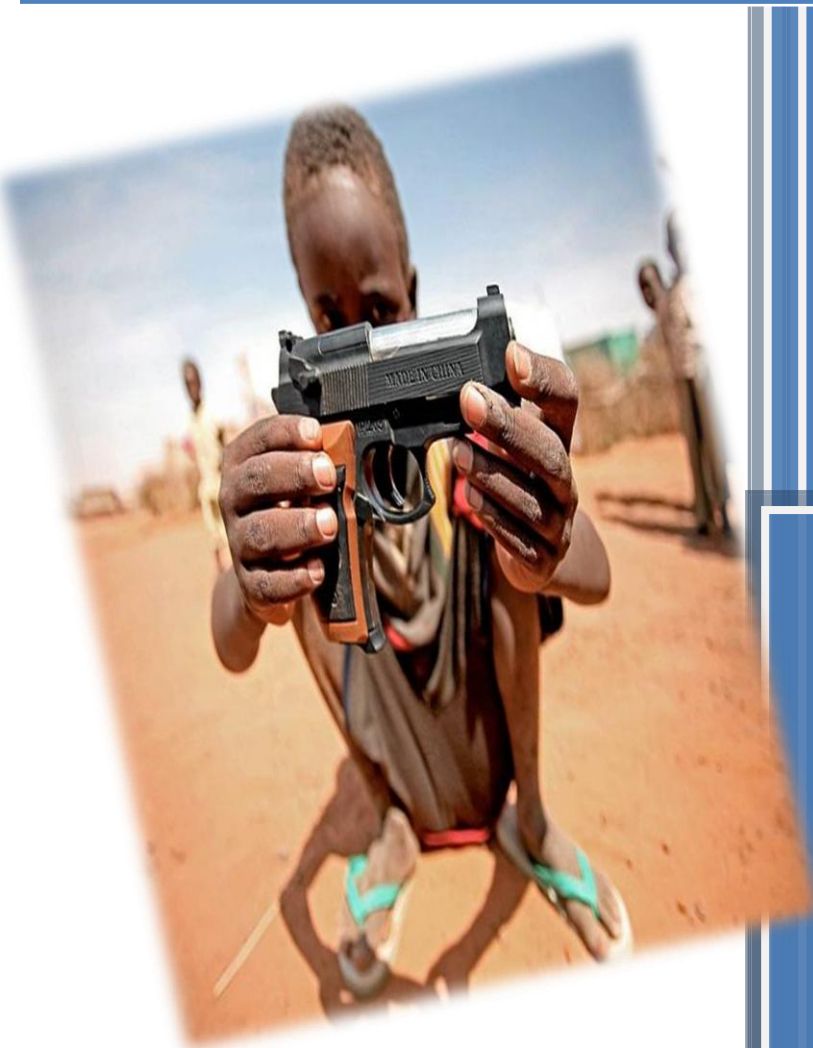




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An idle man is the devil`s workshop



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I will sum up the trip with the words of Michael Holmboe:

*A war can always be won --
but how do we defeat peace?*

I want to thank the people of Sierra Leone who despite their lack of everything shared everything.

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Stavanger. 29/03/2010 Andreas Håheim

Summary

”War is everywhere, were there is a fight for peace” says Elazar Benyoetz.

When wars or armed conflicts end, or at least when violence on the ground decreases, hope for sustainable peace building grows. UN General Secretary Ban Ki Moon pointed out the importance of the immediate post-war period in a report to the Security Council on June 11, 2009: “The immediate post-war period offers a window of opportunity to provide basic security, deliver peace dividends, shore up and build confidence in the political process, and strengthen core national capacity to lead peace building efforts.”

Ban Ki Moon talks about opportunities, but in my findings I found that an opportunity also presents challenges.

A series of urgent needs have to be answered by local and external actors in the immediate post-war period. Three issues are on top of the agenda: disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants (DDR), rehabilitation of the economic and social infrastructure, and the reconstruction of social relations, and most of all mental support for victims.

The aim of this study was to gain new knowledge about one of these challenges; the R-in DRR, and to what extent the reintegration can affect a post -war country.

This study looked upon the phenomenon former soldiers and their lives up to the present; if this group still poses a threat to society.

The theoretical basis for this task has been the cause of soldiering, and the factors which can lead into taking up arms again; to understand whether or not former soldiers pose a threat to society. In this context it was important to look at incentives that make one become a soldier, and to which extent one is willing to new recruitment. Selective incentives, social class, pressure and sanctions and cultural settings proved in theory to be causal-explanatory to be a soldier.

Since this is a study of reintegration of former soldiers, it was also important to gain theoretical knowledge concerning reintegration and factors influencing this process. The theory support important components for a successful reintegration, like livelihood supports, income, education, positive family reunification and acceptance from the community. These factors are vital in helping the former soldier to change his/ her identity and become a full member of a community. Successful long-term reintegration might be a contributor to national conflict resolution. Conversely, failure to achieve reintegration can lead to considerable insecurity at the societal and individual levels. The success of reintegration can also be seen in relation to how resilient the former soldier and the society around him/her are.

To understand DDR it was important to gain knowledge of those who completed the DDR program, which was made through analyzing evaluation reports of the program. This analysis provided new knowledge about the challenges and Lessons Learned, which in turn gave new knowledge about the former soldier's challenges after the war.

To achieve the goal I chose to conduct a field work in a post war country. The choice fell on Sierra Leone, which is struggling with the after effects of an eleven year civil war; a civil war that caused much discussion in an international context because of its brutality and use of child soldiers. Sierra Leone has scheduled elections for 2012, and many international voices have said that this will be the final test of the peace in Sierra Leone. It is therefore necessary to ascertain whether the soldiers; who fought throughout the eleven-year civil war are troublemakers or peacemakers in the run-up to the elections.

I spent a seven-week fieldwork in Sierra Leone, where I interviewed former soldiers, observed them in their everyday life, and had meetings with NGO's, stakeholders and governmental organizations.

It is evident in the findings and theory that there is linked a higher risk to the soldiers who were child soldiers during the war. The former child soldiers in this study, and especially those who live in the capital of Sierra Leone, Freetown, show clear risk factors associated with new recruitment. They have no connection to their family or local community, they are

struggling in relation to employment and education, and they show strong signs that they have not managed to re-define their identity after the war.

Faction and war experience has no direct effect on whether the former soldier pose a threat in today's society, but it is clear that faction has helped to create an identity in young men, which is maintained in today's society, and is contributing to the upholding of sub-groups of former soldiers in Freetown.

This study showed that DDR had a positive effect, but not for everyone, and the findings showed that those who were youngest when entering the war have experienced little positive effect from the DDR program.

On this foundation, I believe it is important to look at the entrance age becoming a soldier in the preparation of measures in a post war country. I also believe that it is important to take in consideration that not everyone will benefit from the DDR program; success depends on a person's identity, qualities, maturity and ability to learn, and this must be taken into consideration when the program will be evaluated and renewed.

Based on the findings from this study, I am of the belief that Sierra Leone must take seriously the situation of those who were child soldiers throughout the war, and steer them in directions that can help them redefine their identity. This paper started with saying that post-conflict societies are confronted with overwhelming challenges, and the challenge concerning former child soldiers is just one of the challenges Sierra Leone faces. Based on this study I am still of the opinion that this group must be given priority. If this group is not being taken seriously, they can pose a threat towards the election in 2012.

Acronyms

UN United nations

APC All People`s Congress

SLPP Sierra Leone People's Party

RUF Revolutionary United Front

CDF Civil Defense Force

ECOWAS Economic Community of West African States

ECOMOG ECOWAS Monitoring and Observation Group

UNOMISL United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone

UNAMISL United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone

SLA Sierra Leone Army

DDR Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration

AFRC Armed Forces Revolutionary Council

NCDDR National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration

NGO Non-governmental organization

ICC Interim Care Centre

CEIP Community Education Investment Program

TEP Training and employment program

PTSD post traumatic stress disorder

MOD Ministry of defense

SPSS Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

GTZ Deutsche Gesellschaft für Technische Zusammenarbeit

UNICEF the United Nations Children's Fund

R&B Rhythm and Blues

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1.0 Introduction

Around 600 million people live in countries affected by conflict. Many of these countries are struggling with the aftermaths of long civil wars. These countries may also be defined by weak institutions and the impact of warfare constitutes a protracted development challenge where results are hard to achieve.

When the guns fall, and the post-war reconstruction and governance begin, post-conflict societies are confronted with overwhelming challenges. In Africa, such challenges range from rehabilitating war-affected and displaced persons to reconstructing the war-ravaged economies. These challenges are often visible in the inability of post-conflict societies to cope with collapsed economies and the loss of infrastructure: health care, roads, water and housing. Others are to create employment opportunities, control inflation, and provide an enabling environment for real national reconciliation. In short, then, the basis for post-war governance and social security in war-torn societies is severely undermined.

War makes everything worse

When peace is finally restored and the armed groups disarmed, former soldiers may encounter much worse reality than the one they had known before the war. The war has left its mark. The poverty may still be there, and worst than ever. The outlook may seem even gloomier.

In many war-torn countries in Africa like Liberia, and Ivory Coast, former soldiers threaten stability and peace. In Liberia unemployed former soldiers contributed to the outbreak of civil war in the late 1990s (Landinformasjon, 2008). In the Ivory Coast, the process of implementing the country's peace agreement into practice was slow. A year after the peace treaty was signed the demobilized soldiers lacked opportunities to become reintegrated into society. At the end of 2007 frustrated and impatient soldiers gathered in the streets, especially around Bouaké and Séguéla,. Violent demonstrations, roadblocks, and high crime were again commonplace. The former soldiers threatened to put an end to the peace process. (ibid)

The disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants play a critical role in transitions from war to peace. The success or failure of this endeavor directly affects the long-term peace building prospects for any post-conflict society.(Knight, 2008)

This study will examine the challenge of demobilization, disarmament and reintegration of former soldiers, to see what impact this might have for a country in the post war period, and if the outcome of the demobilization, disarmament and reintegration affects a country's security.

1.1 Problem to be addressed

Do former soldiers pose a threat to a post war society? If so, why?

1.2 The study objectives and sub-questions

The purpose of this study is to assess whether ex-combatants pose a threat in a post war country. It is therefore necessary to understand the factors that can lead to an understanding of the present situation of ex-combatants. This is done by answering four sub-questions to be answered.

- i. How has the development process been in Post War Sierra Leone?
- ii. How has the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration been?
- iii. Which factors influence former soldiers?
- iv. Why can some soldiers resume a normal life, while others cannot?

If former soldiers pose a threat to society, the findings of this study may reveal how this could

happen. This knowledge can be used to develop and improve efforts in countries that are in danger renewed conflicts.

If former soldiers do not pose a threat to society, this is also useful knowledge. By analyzing the processes that led to the present situation, it is possible to obtain new knowledge about what has been done correctly.

This research will focus on the threat picture in Sierra Leone, which is struggling with the after-effects of war.

Sierra Leone has scheduled elections for 2012, and many international voices have said that this will be the final test of the peace in Sierra Leone. It is therefore necessary to ascertain whether the soldiers; who fought throughout the eleven-year civil war are troublemakers or peacemakers in the run-up to the elections.

2.0 Background

2.1 Sierra Leone Demographics¹

Sierra Leone is located on the west coast of Africa, bordering Guinea, Liberia, and the Atlantic Ocean.

Sierra Leone is among the bottom third of 182 countries on the UN Standard of Living Index, and two-thirds of its inhabitants live on less than a dollar a day (UN, 2009).

The population of Sierra Leone is estimated to be about 5-5.8 million. Sierra Leone has 20 different ethnic groups, the largest of which are the Mende (30-35%), the Themne (30%) others (25-30%), and Krio (10%).

Much of the north is made up of the Temne, while in the south, most are Mende.

About 50-60% of the population is Muslim, 30-40% Christian, and the remaining 10% animist.

Sierra Leone is a constitutional republic with a directly elected president. The current president is Ernest Bai-Koroma who was elected in 2007. He represent the All peoples congress (APC), and has supporters mainly in the north and west, while the biggest opponent, the Sierra Leone people party (SLPP), has its base in the southeast.

The country is divided into four provinces (Western, Northern, Eastern, and Southern), which are divided into districts, which in turn are divided into chiefdoms. Provinces and districts are part of the national governing structure while chiefdoms are local or traditional governing structures. At the head of the chiefdom is the paramount chief, who serves as the leader and protector of the chiefdom and its villages. Chiefdoms are divided into section, each of which has a chief and villages that also have chiefs. Each chief has a second in command known as the speaker.

¹ The demographics of Sierra Leone is taken from Globalis.no

Sierra Leone country has an abundance of natural resources and minerals. International society defined the war in Sierra Leone as a war over diamonds, but there are also deposits of gold, iron, rutile, bauxite. During my fieldwork there was great deal of publicity about the discovery of oil.

2.2 The War in Sierra Leone

The civil war that devastated Sierra Leone is often attributed to a fight for control of the country's large diamond deposits but this is an oversimplification. The civil war in Sierra is much more complicated, as are most conflicts in Africa.

In early 1991, 100 Sierra Leonean and Liberian fighters attempted to overthrow the government. The Sierra Leoneans were part of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), led by Foday Sankoh, an ex-army corporal, and sponsored by Charles Taylor, the former president of Liberia. Tensions escalated and civil war broke out on March 23, 1991. The war in Sierra Leone thus spilled over from the civil war in Liberia which had begun in 1989, and for which Taylor has been held responsible.

The conflict had its roots in government corruption, neglect of the provinces, poverty and disaffected youth, many of whom had recruited or co-opted as child combatants. The conflict was exacerbated by a proliferation of small arms, and by the accessibility of large income streams to rebel factions from the mining of diamonds (Ginifer, 2003).

Attempts by regional and international actors to end the fighting during the 1990s, which involved not only the RUF and government forces but Civil Defense Forces (CDF), were inconclusive, with the rebels able to sustain their military campaign, and peace agreements, such as the Abidjan Accord and Lom breaking down (*ibid*).

In 1996, Dr Ahmed Tejan Kabbah was elected President, raising hopes of a breakthrough, but he was not recognized by the RUF and conflict broke out again.

In early 1998, rebel forces took over most of Freetown, but were later driven out by the Nigerian-dominated ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) forces and President Kabbah was reinstated.

However, during 1999, rebel forces took control over half the country, and ECOMOG forces mounted an offensive to drive the rebels out of Freetown. Despite the efforts of ECOMOG, other peacekeeping interventions, including the unarmed observer mission (UNOMSIL) and later the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL), positioned in 1999, the conflict continued (Ibid).

In 2000, the RUF again attacked Freetown and took UNAMSIL peacekeepers hostage. This brought UK military intervention to secure Freetown, ending with a confrontation with the rebel West Side Boys. The defeat of the West Side Boys broke the rebel resistance, and by November 2000 led to the signing of the Abuja Ceasefire Agreement (Ibid).

UN peacekeepers and Sierra Leone Army (SLA) troops deployed during 2001 to rebel-held areas and disarmament started. By January 2002, 50,000 combatants had been demobilized. The peace process was finally consolidated, with the conflict declared over in January 2002 and elections taking place shortly thereafter (Ibid).

2.3 Post-war Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone is one of the poorest countries in the world, despite its wealth of natural resources. Since the end of the conflict in 2002 the country has made progress when it comes to recovery and peace building. The country has had two elections, and is trying to restore governance structures and reconciliation. There has been some economic growth, with recovery in the agriculture, mining, construction and service sectors.

Despite the progress, the causes of the conflict remain bad governance, corruption, human rights abuses, gender discrimination and political and economic exclusion. Since the recovery started from negative growth, it has had only marginal impact on the pervasive poverty. About 70 % of the population lives below the poverty line, especially in the rural areas. (WFP, 2007)²

² draft country programme document (CPD) is based on extensive consultations between the United Nations system offices in Sierra Leone, the Government and its development partners and on the priorities agreed upon in the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) 2008-2010.

Youth unemployment and underemployment remain high at 70 %. Growth in agricultural production is constrained by lack of access to markets, poor national infrastructure and the small private sector. The country depends on official development assistance, with about 67% of public investment programs financed by external resources (ibid).

The country is still ranked at the bottom in terms of human development and social indicators. Sierra Leone is among one the worst countries in the world when it comes to adult literacy, primary school enrolment, life expectancy, maternal mortality and child mortality (UN, 2009).

The high incidence of poverty and the post conflict situation present risks for rapid spread of disease. Erosion, deforestation, floods and environmental degradation also hinder sustainable development (ibid)

The administration of justice, particularly for the poor and vulnerable, is still weak. Gender inequality and violence against women are prevalent. Sierra Leone has a dual system of justice, with 80 % of the population falling under customary law, which places women at a disadvantage, particularly with regard to ownership of productive resources, inheritance and marriage. Women's representation in decision-making bodies at all levels is only 13 %. Sierra Leone is hindered in post-conflict reconstruction and national development by the shortage of personnel, gaps in expertise and skills and poor motivation, which are pervasive in state institutions, civil society and the business sector. Participation in the dialogue on development, especially in civil society and women's and youth organizations, needs to be strengthened, as do the capacities of national governance institutions, such as the Parliament and the newly created Human Rights Commission, to enable them to undertake their responsibilities, particularly in overseeing public administration and protecting human rights.(WFP, 2007)

3.0 Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration

Immediate after a conflict, the environment needs interventions from national and international actors. Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) is a program brought forward by UN and used international society as the first intervention at the end of a conflict.

There are two types of DDR programs:

Those which focus on demilitarization and those that take place in war-to-peace transitions (Colletta, Kostner, & Wiederhofer, 1996)

The demilitarization programs involve a reduction in the number of military personnel following a decisive victory, and the reduction of military expenditure in order to take advantage of the peace dividend. Large-scale downsizing as part of peacetime demobilization initiatives are also considered. In the second type of program, the DDR is part of a peace settlement in the absence of a clear victor. In this case, the outcome of any DDR program depends upon the political context, the political will amongst the belligerent parties remains the chief criterion of success (Knight, 2008).

“Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) of ex-combatants is a first step in the transition from war to peace. Demilitarization can be used in times of peace as well, to reduce the size of armed forces and redistribute public spending. However, DDR is much more complicated in a post-conflict environment, when dissimilar fighting groups are divided by animosities and face a real security problem as they give up their weapons, when civil society structures have felled apart, and when the economy is stagnant. DDR supports the change from war to peace by guarantee a safe milieu, transferring ex-combatants back to civilian life, and allow people to earn livelihoods through peaceful means instead of war”.(Fusato, 2003 page 1)

3.1 The Goals

DDR has short-and long-term goals.

“Short-term goals: The immediate goal is to restore security and stability, through the disarmament of warring parties. Demobilization of armed groups is another fundamental step in the improvement of security conditions at the end of an armed conflict. Progressive disarmament reduces the mistrust that fuels a security dilemma between the fighting factions, allows aid workers to intervene more effectively, and allows peaceful social and economic activities to resume”.(Fusato, 2003 page 1)

“Long-term goals: The final goal of DDR is the sustained social and economic reintegration of ex-combatants into a peaceful society. However, DDR programs are not comprehensive development projects; they are temporary measures to facilitate the transition from war to peace. If a DDR program is to be sustainable and successful in the long term, it must be integrated with and supported by interventions for post-conflict reconstruction and social and economic development”. (Fusato, 2003 page1)

3.2 Phases in DDR

“Disarmament is the collection, control and disposal of small arms, ammunition, explosives and light and heavy weapons of combatants and often also of the civilian population. It includes the development of responsible arms management programs.

Demobilization is the process by which armed forces (government and/or opposition or factional forces) either downsize or completely disband, as part of a broader transformation from war to peace. Typically, demobilization involves the assembly, quartering, disarmament, administration and discharge of former combatants, who may receive some form of compensation and other assistance to encourage their transition to civilian life.

Reintegration is assistance measures provided to former combatants that would increase the potential for their and their families', economic and social reintegration into civil society. Reintegration programs could include cash assistance or compensation in kind, as well as vocational training and income generating activities"(Gislesen, 2006 page 7).

3.3 DDR in Sierra Leone

In accordance to the Participatory Research Study with Adolescents and Youth in Sierra Leone (2002), DDR in Sierra Leone has taken place in three phases, each broken up by a reappearance of violence, between 1998 and 2002. In 1998 the first phase began. ECOMOG drove out the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) military regime and the government of Sierra Leone gained control. At the same time as rebels surrendered to ECOMOG and demobilized, another wave of violence began in January 1999, which in turn shortened the efforts. In October 1999, a more elaborate phase of the DDR began, heralded by The Lomé Peace Agreement of July 1999. The second phase had two main focuses; the collection and destruction of surrendered weapons and the demobilization of ex-combatants prior to reintegration into civilian life. The second phase is also characterized by violent outbursts, which led to the third phase in May 2001. This phase was concluded in January 2002, prompted by a formal declaration of the war's end. The reaserch study estimates that approximately 72,490 former combatants were demobilized, including 6,845 children (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 2002).

Partners

The DDR was governed by The National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (NCDDR), which also supervised the work of the government of Sierra Leone, UN and RUF members. The neutral peace keeping force, UNAMSIL and ECOMOG , were responsible for disarming all combatants. The former was also responsible for the monitoring process and provision of security. For the children in the DDR it was seen as essential with special provision for children, divided in two main streams one for children under 18, and the other for adults 18 years and older. Child soldiers were given particular attention to by UNICEF and other NGOs (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 2002).

Process and provisions

Individuals and groups which surrendered their weapons and military clothing to UNAMSIL were given an identification card, and this card served as a proof for having the right to services provided under the DDR. Interim Care Centers (ICCs) gave children and adolescents immediate care, among other their need for food, clothing, shelter, water, medical care and counseling. ICCs also traced family members, and prepared them for the return of their children. If a family was untraceable foster care could be provided for. To support this work widespread advocacy and sensitization was undertaken, as well as psychosocial activities with families, communities and children. Young people in the ICCs were also offered education and skills training and assisted in returning to formal education. To cover for any educational expenses they were also offered monthly allowances. Two key educational and livelihood support programs were initiated; the Community Education Investment Program (CEIP) and the Training and Employment Program (TEP). CEIP provided among other materials to schools for accepting former child soldiers and TEP was designed to assist young people who had completed skills training in finding jobs and to distribute start-up tool kits (Women's Commission for Refugee Women and Children, 2002).

3.4 Lesson Learned from DDR in Sierra Leone

The lesson learned chapter is based on a document analysis of 18 reports that evaluate the DDR-Program in Sierra Leone, and the work of NCDDR, the government, UN and different NGO's and stakeholders.

Table 1

Reports in Document analysis

| Name | Organization |
|---|---|
| Case study report | UNDP |
| Arms of development | UNDP |
| Sharing New Ground in Post-conflict situation | UNDP |
| A framework for lasting DDR | UNDP |
| Key areas of work | Action aid |
| Country Sheet | The Country of Return Information Project |
| Report | Global Peace Services USA/NCDDR |
| Evaluation Report | UNICEF |
| Reintegration of Child soldiers In Sierra Leone | USAID |
| Lesson Learned | UNAMISL |
| Meeting lesson learned | NCDDR |
| Evaluation | U.S. Agency for International Development/NCDDR |
| Reintegration of ex-combatants | For GTZ |
| A Step Towards Peace Disarmament in Africa | |
| Ex-post evaluation | GTZ |
| Evaluation Report | GTZ |
| Psychosocial adjustment and social reintegration of child ex-soldiers in Sierra Leone | USAID |

Lesson Learned Summarize:

- i. Child soldiers and adults have to be separated.
- ii. Economic opportunities for former soldiers are the criterion for stability. The government must take this into consideration so that it will have a long term effect.
- iii. Reintegration means that the child soldier must acknowledge and commit that he / she will be a part of society, and that society has to accept him / her as a member.
- iv. Measures must be viewed in the context of national needs and market
- v. The needs of the local community must be identified.
- vi. Reintegration of former soldiers is a long process. It is need to move the focus from the label as soon as possible, to get them into the locally-based reintegration
- vii. To achieve a sustained reintegrating process there must continually raise awareness of local community
- viii. Family reunification is essential for good reintegration
- ix. Sierra Leone is comprised of over 50% "youths". When a former child soldier is finished with their DDR programs, they are reintegrated into this group. It means that he / she enters into a majority group which may have a large power aspect. This must be taken into account. "Youths" are often defined as the greatest threat to future unrest, because they are the biggest group. This must be taken into account in Sierra Leone and internationally
- x. Families must be included in the assessment of the skills training their child needs. The family can ensure that the right skills training will be given
- xi. Former child soldiers should receive amnesty no matter what they have done during the conflict. Those who have recruited them should be punished
- xii. Long term thinking related to reintegration should be given priority, and it must be viewed in the context of demobilization and disarmament. Donors should be encouraged to think about the long term.

This “Lesson learned” is a summary of the document analysis of 18 reports³

³ bibliography, reports in the document analysis

4.0 Theory

4.1 Why people become soldiers

4.1.1 Incentives.

To understand whether or not former soldiers remain a threat to the society, we must know why someone becomes a soldier, and the extent to which one is willing to become a soldier again.

Olson analyzed collective actions in the 1960's and saw participation in soldiering from a cost-benefit perspective. He believed that in a situation that requires collective participation, it is not essential if the group gets benefits, but the extent to which individuals receive benefits. Olson says that we rationalize our choice of participation, based by selective incentives (Humphreys & Weinstein 2008).

Other authors have also emphasized the individual aspect of becoming a soldier, and selective incentives have been highlighted both regarding recruitment into the Vietnam War by Popkin, and in more recent African conflicts by Lichbach (Humphreys & Weinstein 2008).

Critics have claimed that Olson's view is too narrow, neglects social class, social pressure, social sanctions and cultural settings in war participation.

Many researchers have applied Marx's thoughts about social class to today's poor rural areas, and analyzed how class can start a revolution. Humphrey and Weinstein (2008) have studied participation in war on the basis of class divisions, and concluded that people are more likely to join a rebellion if:

- i.* They are economically deprived.
- ii.* They are excluded from political decision making.
- iii.* They are alienated from mainstream political processes.

(Humphreys & Weinstein, 2008 page 440).

Richard`s (1996) explains that the rise of violence must be seen as a result of the isolation of most citizens from the political decision making in Africa Richards refers to the recruitment process before and during the conflict in Sierra Leone. Richards says that recruitment must be seen in relation to political power. There will be recruitment of both those who want to unsettle status quo, and those who want to preserve. Further he describes how RUF exploited the oppression, repression, and discontentment of rural youth, the collapse of infrastructure and the erosion of rural schooling opportunities as critical to understanding the RUF`s expansion (Humphreys & Weinstein 2008).

Richards (1996) also argues that both rebels and civilians exploited the rebellion to resume their education as well as to express discontent with the misuse of Sierra Leone`s diamond wealth for politicians` personal gain. At the same time has participation in the resistance also been understood in relation to social class and political position. The emergence of RUF weakened the national army and led to an expansion of local defense militias, which became a major bulwark against brutal insurgent attacks in rural areas. The militias was a reflection of existing power structure at the local level, they were mobilized and financed by chiefs who controlled access to land and levied taxes on local populations (Humphreys & Weinstein 2008).

Social Sanctions

Those who criticize Olson points out that he doesn`t consider social sanctions from the community as reason for participation. Humphreys & Weinstein (2008) presents a perspective, which suggests that individuals are likely to participate in rebellion if:

- I. Members of their community are active in the movement
- II. Their community are characterized by strong social structures

(Humphreys & Weinstein 2008, p 443)

A strong community could in this sense monitor individual behavior and bring to bear a variety of social sanctions. This is essential when it comes to recruitment and participation in war. These communities can start a collective action, if it is in the community`s interests and the community will benefit from it (Humphreys & Weinstein 2008). Further Humphreys & Weinstein (2008) argues that social sanctions from the communities were important in the mobilization for the war in Sierra Leone. Muana (1997) describes the characteristics of the Kamajoi, Sierra Leone`s best-known militia:

“These fighters are conscripted with the approval and consent of the traditional authority figures, maintained and commanded by officers loyal to those chiefs. This ensures a high level of commitment on their part and an insurance against atrocities on the civilian population on whom they rely for sustenance, legitimacy, and support”. (Humphreys & Weinstein 2008, p 443).

CDF militias were among other organized by chiefs who grew strong by the disappearance of central authority. These militias grew from within the community, and participation and good behavior were induced by the threat of social sanction (Humphreys & Weinstein 2008).

4.1.2 Motives for the children

Not only has the participation of children in the Sierra Leonean conflict been forced, it has also been voluntary. It has even been argued that volunteering is the most common source of recruitment in many contemporary conflicts. The International Labour Organization shows that two thirds of the child soldiers in four central African countries are volunteer. This suggests that this is also case for West African countries. (Brett & Specht, 2004).

Scholars agree that volunteering in many cases must be understood in terms of having ‘no other options’. Children are incapable of making mature decisions, Brett and Specht (2004) talk about risk factors leading to ‘voluntary’ recruitment. War which has created military role models and status symbols; the major influence of an absent or exploitative family; little or no access to education and deployment; the chanceless and frustrating life of poverty and the influences of peer groups or other social relations. These factors are cumulative and related in complex ways. However these factors influence the children. Some children think about joining for a long time, but the concrete action of joining is determined by triggering factors (ibid).

4.1.3 What the fighters say

Humphreys and Weinstein's survey of ex-combatants motivations for joining the war in Sierra Leone, concludes that there are very strong differences in motivations. Humphreys and Weinstein found that RUF soldiers were a group of mutual strangers, that had no connection before the war, and the majority was recruited by force. The CDF, on the other hand was more likely to be originated from networks of families, friends, and communities, and had a much higher levels of voluntary recruitment. A lot of the recruitment was driven forward by families and villages, choosing their participants (ibid).

In both factions, political and material motivations were a factor in recruitment. RUF soldiers claimed that they fought to express dissatisfaction and to oppose corruption. CDF fighters argued that their reason for fighting was to defend their homes and communities from the rebels.

Political motivations notwithstanding, there were also strong material incentives.

RUF combatants were promised jobs and money. The CDF helped to meet the needs of the members and provided increased security for their families.

In the conflict it was not politically intensives that made the soldiers maintained their fighting spirit, but access to food, safety, education, drugs and many got access to sexual exploitation and violence. This applied particularly to those who were within the RUF.

This was clearly visible in the peace negotiations at Lomé. Most were not aware of the actual content of the agreement, but was rather concerned about how the agreement would affect their welfare (Humphreys & Weinstein, 2008).

Richards also found that children join armed groups out of disaffection with a political, social, and economic system that has failed them. Lack of educational opportunities, which children saw as necessary for building a positive future, was one of the main sources of alienation. In Sierra Leone, youth cited lack of access to education as the primary reason why they had joined the RUF, which promised and offered training that government had failed to provide (Richards, 1998).

When children lose the protection and care from parents or significant people, this can lead to extreme behavior, and be a push factor that can lead them into destructiveness. This may be the reason explaining that orphans and separated children participating in armed forces (Wessells, 2006).

Youth are not only passive when it comes to participating in wars, but are actors who find meaning and identity in being soldiers. Erikson, who is known for his theories about personality development, said that finding meaning in life is a powerful incentive for everyone, and particularly for teenagers, who are at a stage in their lives when they are trying out different identities and deciding on their role and place in the society (Erikson, 1968).

4.2 Reintegration

Reintegration is generally understood as the reunification with families and once again becoming full members of the community. Research shows that families and communities regard reintegration as conformity with certain cultural norms of relationships; with the opposite sex, with those who are older, and with those of greater social status. In contrast, children mainly understand reintegration as belonging to the society, feeling loved and accepted, and not being stigmatized or isolated (Jareg et. Al, 2008).

4.2.1 Why Reintegration

Successful long-term reintegration can have a profound impact on a national conflict resolution and restoration of the country. In the opposite case, the avoidance of good long-term reintegration can lead to great uncertainty, both for the former soldier and for society (Colletta et al., 1996).

4.2.2 Victims or Functional

Child soldiers are seen as outsiders, rejected from the family and community, for the cruel actions they have performed. In the 1980's, the media described former child soldiers as "future barbarians" and "lost generations" who were incapable of reintegrating back into society and living meaningful and productive lives (M. Rutter, 1985).

Many studies have looked at the psychological disorder many people have because being a soldier and especially child soldiers. The following of this is according to many studies posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Dyregrov & Søvting, 2001).

An opposing view is that the majority of young soldiers are able to adjust when they return from combat. Studies supportive of this view suggest that while symptoms of PTSD and depression persist years after their reintegration, many of these young people become integrated civilians and function at par with others in their community, both socially and economically (Betancourt & M., 2008).

There is also growing consensus that children and youth are participating agents in their experiences, both while with the armed groups and in return and recovery, countering the perception of young people as merely passive victims (ibid).

The Lost Generation

Many studies have seen ex-soldiers as victims when they come back to the community. This view considers child soldiers as the "lost generation" and assigns them a number of handicaps associated with their return to society.

There is a significant body of evidence to support this claim. War-affected children commonly experience anxiety and depression, anger and violence, psychic numbing, paranoia, insomnia, and a heightened awareness of death (Lustig et.al 2005).

In the face of a new life meets many former child soldiers, the challenges of adapting to the new life, and trauma from the war comes up. It is also difficult to adapt to the new life situation and the problems they experience result from anxiety and uncertainty, idleness, stigmatization, fear of being rejected, poverty, lack of livelihood, etc (ibid).

Many former soldiers have been using violence as a way of life for many years, and drag this way of living in to their new life and Surveys shows a relationship between violence, both experienced and perpetrated by the soldiers, and reintegration problems with families and communities (Annan, 2009).

The ability to break with past identity was important because one's reintegration experience depended in part on whether one was seen from the society as a rebel or as an abducted child/youth (Lomo & Hovil, 2004).

Veale and Stavrou's study described how youth were able to make the identity transition back to being a member of the community, yet community members could quickly shift to calling returned youth "rebels" if they showed any aggressive behavior (Veale & Stavrou, 2003).

The factors shown in this chapter have been noted in many contexts, explain the phrase "the lost generation". Other studies, however, claims that major trauma and psychological problems do not need to be synonymous with being a victim forever. Boothby, who followed a group of former child soldiers in Mozambique for sixteen years. All of the boys experienced recurrent thoughts or memories of traumatic events. Overall, the results of this research suggest that a majority of the 39 young men studied, made significant progress in returning to civilian life. However, none fully escaped their violent past.(Boothby, Strang, & Wessells, 2006).

4.2.3 Who makes it?

Boothby argues that apprenticeships, community sensitization campaigns and the outward support of traditional community rituals were critical to the successful recovery of many of the former child soldiers. He concludes that, above all, the crucial element was the need to be accepted by their families and communities after the war (Boothby et al., 2006).

In order to meet the needs of the former soldiers, there must be a continuous dialogue with the former soldiers and their communities. A top-down approach will not create initiative or self-reliance (Kingma & Batchelor, 2004).

Wessels sees livelihood support as the most important element to reintegrate former soldiers, and bring them back to be fully members of the society again. He argues that reintegration is all about changing people's social role, status, and identity (Wessells, 2006).

Wessels said that the economy and having a job may give the former soldier, a redefinition of his social role. The fact that a former soldier has an economy means that he might succeed as

a husband, father, and working man. This can again make sure you are seen as a citizen and not a troublemaker (ibid).

Wessels said that having a positive social role in the society make changes on a person's identity. By having a role, people start to expect that people behave in a specific way and have a specific attitude; this may in the long run produce changes in social identity. The former soldier may go from having the identity of a soldier, to having the identity of a civilian. As former child soldiers perform civilian roles, they undergo changes in identity, which are fluid, constructed by situation, and constituted by multiple elements, any one of which may become active in a particular context. During the reintegration process, former child soldiers begin to see themselves as civilians and to define their futures in those terms. Community members, too, come to see the children as civilians and treat them with respect rather than fear or contempt (ibid).

As former child soldiers redefine themselves as civilians, they become even more likely to continue in their nonmilitary social roles, progressively assimilating themselves into civilian life.

According to Wessel support to the local community is essential in reconciliation. Although it was important to get the community to forgive and show empathy with the soldiers, this is not enough. Local community needs to see people at work, and that the community is rebuilt. To see former soldiers in the work and that they earn a living may be important for change (ibid).

Many sociologists have looked at the effect of social interaction and cooperation, and concluded that cooperating to achieve a common goal is an effective means of reducing inter-group conflict (Sherif & Hovland, 1961).

Wessel clarifies the importance of community in the reintegration process, and believes that this must be taken into account by the NGO's that will carry reintegration forward. With this as a starting point, he has found that a holistic approach has the best chance of success (Wessells, 2006).

4.2.4 All-embracing approach towards reintegration

The all-embracing approach to reintegration typically involves five kinds of support; family reintegration, educational opportunities, psychosocial support, training in vocational skills, and community mobilization (Wessels, 2006).

Family reintegration consists of physical reunification and assistance in readjusting to life at home and learning to handle family conflict non-violently. These are skills that young soldiers lack, as they have spent a large part of their life handling conflicts in a violent way. A great challenge for reintegration is the necessary de-brutalization of children who have learned to think and act like animals, to kill or be killed. Returning to a normal life consisting of constructive human relations and trust can seem almost impossible (McEvoy-Levy, 2006).

Many of the soldiers had not gone to school before the war. Educational opportunities may compensate for the learning they lost as soldiers (*ibid*).

Psychosocial supports help block memories of the war, and assist in the construction of civilian identities and roles as a replacement for the military hierarchical and anarchistic identities. This psychosocial support can either be Western or indigenous (*Ibid*).

Vocational training depends on the children's age, educational background and skills learned as soldiers (*Ibid*).

Community mobilization is meant as a support for the entire community to receive the former child soldiers and rebuild the spirit of unity (*ibid*).

The ideas of Wessels and Jonah were brought forward by Christian Children's Fund and used this in the reintegration of former soldiers in Sierra Leone. This project adopted the principle that cooperation is an effective means of reducing tension and improving intergroup relations. It also built on the value of empathy and traditional reconciliation processes in reducing conflict and on community service as a means of helping former child soldiers.

This project, which has subsequently been expanded into other provinces, enjoyed considerable success, visible in reductions of fighting and increased integration of former child soldiers into their villages. Despite the many predictions that it would be impossible for

the child soldier to be accepted and forgiven, they say now that they have become a part of their home villages again and has a new identity. Local Society also says that they no longer look at the former child soldiers as troublemakers, but as part of the community. Although this is only an example, it shows that the holistic approach in efforts to reintegrate former soldiers are important, and that the local community, encourage empathy and reconciliation are important aspects of reintegration (Wessells, 1998).

4.3 RESILIENCE

Earlier we saw the former soldiers either as “a lost generation” or as soldiers that may represent a subset of resilient individuals who drew from personal strengths and external supports to survive a harrowing experience.

4.3.1 What Is Resilience?

Resilience has been defined as” a relative resistance to environmental risk experience, or the overcoming of stress or adversity” (Rutter, 2006 page 1).

4.3.2 Resilience in Stressful Environments

Literature on stress provides a perspective on resilience and adaptation that is useful for understanding the mental health of young people, and in this study may be useful to understand the soldiers who have been in armed conflict (Layne, 2007). Theories about the accumulation of stress, says that it is more likely to have poor mental health if you have many traumatic and strong life experiences (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). A stress accumulation model brought forward by Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend suggests that people are strongly affected by repeated and prolonged exposure to severe trauma or a series of stressful events that exceed the individual's threshold level of stress. Such exposure can cause great mental and or physical problems throughout the life cycle (Dohrenwend & Dohrenwend, 1974).

Resilience research has documented a number of protective processes that can help children achieve good functioning despite exposure to a range of difficult life circumstances.

The stress adjustment paradigm

Lazarus and Folkman consider stress as a transaction between the person resources and what the environment requirements. They write: "Psychological stress is a particular relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his or her resources and endangering his or her well being" (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984, page 19). Stress occurs only if the person considers that his well-being is threatened. This first assessment is the primary assessment. A phenomenological view of stress is, according to Lazarus and Folkman very important, because it takes into consideration an individual's experiences and assessments. Stress is up to each person to define (ibid). they emphasize the role of the individual, to be part of a family, and resources in the community in conjunction with the ability to avoid stress and adapt to psychological stress. According to this, trauma, psychological adjustment, resilience, and the mental health of former child soldiers must be seen as a dynamic process involving a number of ecological levels offering potential sources of protection (Bronfenbrenner, 1979) rather than just individual characteristics (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

These theories indicate that the ex-combatants resilience will be affected by, what happened during the war and what happens afterwards.

People affected by war will differ in the frequency, duration and severity of their experiences. Their life depends on family and community support, and on the resources that are available in their communities.

Research has indicated that the age diversity of the soldiers will affect their ability to cope with post war life. The length of time that young people spends with armed groups may place them at greater risk for exposure to violence and to social and material deprivation (Coalition to stop the Use of Child soldiers, 2008).

The child soldier's acceptance from family, peers and others in the community has been indicated as the most important post conflict determinant of their psychosocial adjustment (Betancourt & M., 2008).

Research has found that former child soldiers that had a strong relationship with their parents and a strong sense of belonging in their home community were likely to have less emotional distress and better social functioning. In some settings, community members may accept a child back despite his or her involvement with armed groups. In other situations, community members may view former child soldiers with fear and distrust (Annan, 2006).

5.0 Methodology

5.1 Type of Study

The goal of qualitative research is to develop understanding of phenomena related to people and situations in their social reality (Dalen, 2004).

This qualitative study because it is a study of ex-combatants in Sierra Leone, based on the social actor's views. It focuses on the social processes in Post-war Sierra Leone. This is a Qualitative study because it aims to gather an in-depth understanding of human behavior and the reasons that govern such behavior. This qualitative study investigates the why and how of decision making, not just what, where, when. It also has smaller samples, rather than large samples as used in quantitative studies (ibid).

I wanted to analyze ex-combatants in Sierra Leone, and analyze whether or not the ex-combatants pose a risk. This paper creates meanings and generates hypotheses on the basis of documentary analysis, observations and interviews.

In this study I will examine a phenomenon behavior based on underlying causes.

There has been much written about the phenomena ex-combatants and it is a research area that has been carefully analyzed. This study has no intention to test earlier research or theories related to the phenomena, but ask new questions that can explain behavior and attitude of phenomena and create a study that can be theory and hypothesis evolving.

This study has an explorative approach, and the meaning is to create new knowledge based on empirical findings. This new knowledge must be produced by interacting with the field that is being studied and let the phenomena being studied be the generator of new knowledge. Patton defines the scope of explorative design: "In new fields of study where little work has been done, few definitive hypotheses exist, and little is known about the nature of the phenomenon, qualitative analysis is a reasonable beginning point for research" (Patton, 2002).

Explorative design is thus to arrive at a more precise problem or to get ideas for further research, and that is what this study will do. The most commonly used methods are the review of secondary data and qualitative techniques. In this study I wanted to analyze the phenomena ex-Combatants, and what influence they can have in a Post-war country, viewed from a threat

perspective. To create this knowledge the natural choice of strategy was to do a Fieldwork in a post- war country.

The war in Sierra Leone has been known for the international society as a brutal war, with a lot of casualties. Dead people, amputees and war affected people marked for life were shown by the media, and the international society condemned the war.

To understand the phenomena ex-combatants and getting an understanding of the field, the period prior to the fieldwork involved earlier research and studies about the field and the phenomena to be studied. Popper was among other critical to certain scientific communities to be overly concerned with data collection and for neglecting the researches theoretical side. It is the scientific question that provides direction to the observations and data collection (Popper, 1979). Popper means that prior to any observation is always a special interest, a question or a problem, something theoretical (Ibid). Poppers thoughts were important in this study as it was important to get an understanding of Sierra Leone, and the war In Sierra Leone. In this context it is important to get to know the people in their past, why people took up arms, what sort of people they were before the war started, and how the war have affected them up to this moment. To understand the phenomena ex-combatants and getting an understanding of the field that should produce knowledge, the period prior to the fieldwork involved earlier research and studies about the field and the phenomena to be studied. By gaining new knowledge through previous studies, it was also made visible restrictions and limitations in relation to the issue to be addressed (Popper, 1979).

5.2 Working Process

Table 2: Activity table

| Period | What | Why | Outcome |
|--|---|--|---|
| Period 1 April 4 th to September 9 th 2009 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Topic and problem - Research Questions - Research strategic - Concepts, Theories, Hypothesis, and models. - Data sources, types and forms. - selection from data sources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gain an understanding of the research field and the phenomenon being studied - Gain an understanding of the research field's limitations and refinements - Create contacts within the research field, which can help to gain access to the defined phenomena being studied | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Prepared and processed a problem - Overview of the research field through previous research - Documentary analysis on ex- combatants - Population - Key persons in the field. |
| Period 2 September 9 th to October 25 th 2009 | Data collection through fieldwork. | Produce findings that may provide a basis to generate new theory that should be generalized to the phenomenon I have studied. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - 37 Interviews - Observations - 20 Meetings - Interviews in 3 different cities |

| | | | |
|--|---------------------------------|--|--|
| Period 3 October 25 th to March 29 th 2010 | Data reduction and analysis. | Analyze whether or not my findings can generate new hypotheses and questions | - Significant discoveries that can derive new knowledge about the phenomenon that is studied |
|--|---------------------------------|--|--|

5.3 Period 1

5.3.1 Document analyzes

This document analyzes gained new knowledge and was a tool in forming the research questions. The aim of the document analysis was to obtain an overview of the work that the international and national community had done in relation to the DDR program, and what lessons they have received. The document analysis was carried through before the fieldwork, and provided a good basis to meet the field, and the phenomenon that was studied. There were reviewed 18 different evaluation reports related to the various NGO's, UN and governmental organizations.

5.3.2 Selection of Informants

A qualitative study has a strategic selection of respondents to ensure qualitative information. The goal is to cover the relevant social roles and perspectives. The units that will shed light on these perspectives are usually people, but can also be events, social situations or documents. The units can be chosen because they are typical or atypical, because they have certain relationships with each other or in some cases simply because they are available (Schatzman, 1973).

In this research has the selection of units or the informants been based on several criteria.

As this research is analysis of the combatants that were part of the war in Sierra Leone between 1991 and 2002, the first criterion was that the respondent had been combatants in this war.

The factions I analyzed were the CDF, RUF and the SLAF.

The criterion for being a combatant was to have belonged to CDF, RUF, or the SLAF, between 1991 and 2002.

I was also interested in analyzing combatants who had been associated with the DDR-program.

The respondents had to have been a participant in the program; ore followed the criteria of being a participator in the program.

I wanted a selection of young and old ex combatants who had a connection to the DDR-program. Respondents had to come from different cities, to see if there are any correlation between age, and place of residence.

This paper is based on a fieldwork in a country where I had no connection and no knowledge of the culture and traditions. I had to select my respondents on the basis of their availability and their meeting of the criteria.

5.3.3 Number of respondents

In the method literature is often referred to a selection strategy that involves collecting data to be achieved saturation, meaning that data collection is in progress so long as the researcher provides new information (Patton, 2002).

I had to conduct at least twenty depth interviews, and go on until I believed that there was no more information to be collected.

I conducted 37 interviews with former soldiers, and 20 meetings with NGO`s, political organizations and Stakeholders.

These meetings became a part of the data collection.

Data collection was constantly in progress, and I collected information until I ended the data collection. My paper may have to many informants being a qualitative research. However the information strengthens the validity and reliability in task.

5.3.5 The Choice of Interview Form and Design of the of the Interview Guide

Semi-structured interviews are the most widely used, and it is what Kvale calls the qualitative research interview. (Kvale, 1996) The topic and some questions are designed in advance, but the order of the questions is determined during the interview. This raises new questions and topics to add to the research. The interviewer can then follow the informant`s story, and provide additional information. (ibid). I made an interview guide before I began the fieldwork .Since this research is based on informants, it was important not to have a strong structure in the interview guide. The interviews form and structure changed during the interview process.

5.4 Period 2-Fieldwork

5.4.1 Learning by Doing

When I started my data collection in Sierra Leone I had few references to culture, tradition, social codes, language barriers, respondent`s temperament, or my position. I started with learning by doing. The more I learnt about the culture, the traditions and the social codes, the more secure I was in the interview context.

It was a dilemma making a research in a foreign culture and that the fieldwork was limited in time. I had to start a parallel process, where I were not just only a researcher, but also a stranger that had no precondition to understand, and had to start a learning process as went along.

I noticed that the fact that you are in two processes at the same time, may influence the data collection and the answers you get, especially since it is a qualitative analysis, and you go in depth.

- i. There is a difference in the first interview and in the last interview, because I change as a person during the time from the first to the last. This means that I can get more out of the last interviews because I have acquired more “real” knowledge than I had in the beginning, which can result in that the validity is stronger the farther out in the interview process I am.
- ii. The opposite may also happen. The more real knowledge I get, the more static I may be in the questioning, and I may forget to get in the depth in issues, I did get in the depth in earlier stages of the process.

5.4.2 Access to the field

I had to rely on local guidance to introduce me to new environments, situations and participants. I had to identify people who could bring me to formal and informal environments.

Getting access to the field and environment of former child soldiers started early in the research. I hoped that NGO`s and other stakeholders working in Sierra Leone would give me access to the field and introduce me to the respondents, but in this context it proved to be more difficult than first thought.

It had been eight years since the civil war was over, but Sierra Leone was still suffering from the trauma. Reminding people in Sierra Leone about child soldiers antagonized them. It was difficult for them to talk about child soldiers. The phrase child soldier was taboo among NGO`s and stakeholders. Change in terminology made access to the field easier.

There are many reasons why people connected to Sierra Leone have difficulty with the idea of child soldiers. The war is over and the young people who had been child soldiers are now no husbands, workers, criminals, and drug addicts. It is natural that concepts are changing and the approach towards people are defined by their new set of roles, but my observations in Sierra Leone tells me that the concept child soldiers were deliberately forgotten.

In this fieldwork many key people gave me access to the field, and this may have affected my findings.

As an example, the young man who helped me contact informants in Freetown was a former child soldier, and worked for former child soldiers' rights. He runs a foundation to expose the neglect which he believes has occurred since the war. His reason for bringing me in touch with the people may be related to his goal for this foundation.

5.4.3 *The Informants*

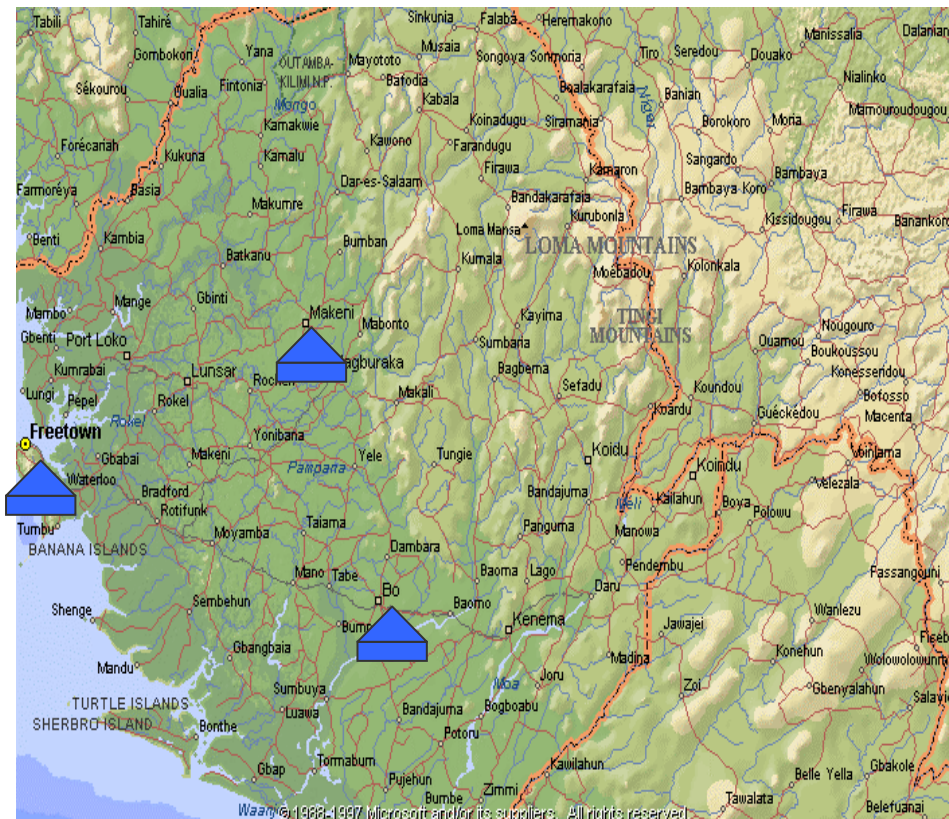
Table 3

Informants

| Sex | Town | Age |
|------------|-------------|------------|
| Male | Makeni | 29 |
| Male | Makeni | 29 |
| Male | Makeni | 25 |
| Male | Makeni | 25 |
| Male | Makeni | 23 |
| Male | Bo | 25 |
| Male | Bo | 8 |
| Male | Bo | 9 |
| Male | Bo | 15 |
| Male | Bo | 7 |
| Male | Bo | 22 |
| Male | Bo | 22 |
| Male | Bo | 14 |
| Male | Army | 14 |
| Male | Army | 20 |
| Male | Army | 18 |
| Male | Army | 20 |

| | | |
|--------|----------|----|
| Female | Freetown | 10 |
| Female | Freetown | 11 |
| Male | Freetown | 15 |
| Male | Freetown | 12 |
| Male | Freetown | 9 |
| Male | Freetown | 8 |
| Male | Freetown | 6 |
| Male | Freetown | 8 |
| Male | Freetown | 11 |
| Male | Freetown | 11 |
| Male | Freetown | 9 |
| Male | Freetown | 10 |
| Male | Freetown | 10 |
| Male | Freetown | 8 |
| Male | Freetown | 8 |
| Male | Freetown | 8 |
| Male | Freetown | 11 |
| Male | Freetown | 8 |
| Male | Freetown | 12 |
| Male | Freetown | 15 |

I had interviews in three cities and in rural areas of Sierra Leone.



Makeni is the fifth largest city in Sierra Leone, and is dominated by Temne people. Makeni is also the hometown of President Ernest Bai Koroma. The city has always been a stronghold of All People`s Congress.

Bo is the second largest city in Sierra Leone and the largest city in the southern province. The population is ethnically and culturally diverse. The city is home to a all of the country's ethnic groups. The city and the entire Bo District is a stronghold of the opposition Sierra Leone People's Party.

I had 24 interviews in Freetown. Freetown is the capital and the largest city in Sierra Leone. Freetown is home to all of the country's ethnic groups but mainly of the Creole people, who make up the second largest ethnic group in the city after the Temne.

My interviews in Sierra Leone were in-depth interviews. I also followed my respondents to see how they live, where they worked and to meet their friends.

5.4.4 Selection of Sites for Interview

The selection of sites for the interviews proved to be a challenge when interviewing in one of the poorest countries in the world. The location of the interview was settled in relation to the context and the condition of the interviewee.

Some of the interviews were conducted in noisy environments where respondents were easily distracted. Interruptions made the respondents more aggressive and they shooed off by being bodily and loud in the interview. The answers might have been different if the interviews had been held in a quieter place without interruption. As a researcher I had to take in consideration that the respondents had statuses and roles that had to be maintained when I made the interview in their environment and with insight from others (Fossåskaret, 1997).

Another challenge was having many consecutive interviews, in an environment where the informants could hear each other. Some interviews were held on the terrace of my contact person, and all the respondents were present. The fact that the respondents were friends, and that they could sit in on each others' interviews may have influenced their responses.

Most of the respondents spoke poor English and I had use an interpreter. The interpreter was often interrupted and corrected by the other interviewees when he tried to translate what I said. This was another disadvantage of conducting interviews when other respondents are present.

The interview context influenced the respondents. A couple of respondents told me after the interviews that there were some things that they had not wanted to say in the interviews, they were afraid of how the other respondents would react.

5.4.5 Making Interview in a Traumatized Country

Conducting interviews in traumatized countries presents dilemmas and challenges concerning the mental state of the respondents (Hydén, 2000).

Qualitative research in the traumatized country often means that the case can be related to trauma origin. This means that a researcher must be aware that his or her questions can cause reactions and bring up old traumas (Ibid).

An interview with a former Kamajore created some problems.

The Kamajores had been involved in heavy fighting during the war. When I was talking to one about the war, he started banging his head against the wall. The interview could not continue. I felt responsible for my respondents and had to make sure he was going to be okay. I monitored his behavior for the rest of the day.

5.4.6 Linguistic Barriers

In Sierra Leone, English is the official language, however, the Krio language (derived from English and several African languages) is spoken by 97% of the country's population.

I needed an interpreter for about half of the interviews. The interpreters used were people in the local community who were fluent in English. I used three interpreters, one for each city in which I conducted interviews. An interpreter should have an important role in linking the

interviewer with the interviewee. He should ideally be a neutral party who should not add or subtract from what the primary parties communicate to each other. (Freed, 1988)

Using interpreters created some difficulties. Before I used interpreters I spent half an hour discussing my research with them. This gave me confidence that the question I wanted to ask would be translated accurately. I had my interpreters explain how they understood the question, before translating it for the informants.

5.4.7 Role and Status

As researchers in a foreign culture the researcher will be assigned roles and statuses that can affect the data collection, and affect the reliability of the data. It is important to be aware of the roles you as a researcher hold and how this affects the results (Fossåskaret et al., 1997).

Sierra Leone is one of the poorest countries in the world, and I was a white man coming from one of the richest. I was seen as “the white man that has a lot of money”. This status followed me throughout the fieldwork.

Regarding the relationship between researcher and informant in qualitative study comments Thagaard that it is important that the informants both accept and understand the role the researcher has (Thagaard, 2009).

In my approach to informants, contact persons and other stakeholders I always presented myself as a researcher, who was in Sierra Leone to do research on former soldiers. I presented the task, problem, and my intentions. Although I presented myself and my role clearly, and didn't give the impression that contact with me would result in any benefits, I experienced challenges.

All of my respondents saw me as a researcher, as a friend, advocate and a change maker, and believed that I would make their world different.

No matter how hard I tried to keep the role as a researcher, I was assumed to be a liberator.

This role may have influenced the answers the respondents gave, and make the data less reliable.

Possible outcomes of their preferred role expectations can be:

- i. My respondents may have presented their situation falsely, in the belief that this can change their life.
- ii. Incentives to participate in the interview may be to achieve change, not to describe reality.
- iii. It could be difficult to conduct follow up interviews, when informants realized that participating didn't change their life situation.
- iv. My contact person`s may also be advocates for a better life, and introduce me respondents that can confirm his/hers thoughts.
- v. My contact person may influence my respondents and make them believe that my role was quite different from what it actually was.

Through the fieldwork I was not able to change my status, and I thought that the image of the white man was ingrained in Sierra Leonean culture.

5.5 Meetings.

Table 4

Different NGOs, stakeholders and governmental organizations

| Name | Role |
|---|--|
| Human rights Commission Sierra Leone | Governmental |
| UNICEF | NGO |
| City Council | Governmental |
| West African Youth Leadership Centre | Stakeholder and Advocacy |
| Sierra Leone House Association | Governmental |
| Foundation for Democratic Africa | Stakeholder |
| The Ministry of Labor and Employment | Governmental |
| Human rights | Stakeholder |
| Interpol DIPC/ICOP | International Criminal Police Organization |
| ENCISS | Stakeholders |
| NACSA | Governmental |
| Police Media | Police |
| Talking Drum Studios | Stakeholders |
| Office Of National Security | Governmental |
| UNDP | NGO |
| TIMAP For Justice | Stakeholders |
| Lawyer Centre for Legal Assistance | Stakeholders |
| Social Welfare | Governmental |
| GTZ | NGO |
| CARE | NGO |
| MINISTRY OF DEFENCE (MOD) | Governmental |
| GOAL | NGO |

5.5.1 The meeting process

The main goal of having meetings with stakeholders was to meet actors who dealt with ex-combatants on a daily basis.

I wanted to obtain perspectives from a wide range of organizations, stakeholders and other interest groups. I had 20 meetings with different groups that thought could confirm or refute my observations.

This way of collecting data is in accordance with Schatzmann & Strauss and their perspectives on qualitative studies. A qualitative study uses a strategic selection of respondents. In the strategic choice, the goal is to cover the estimated relevant social roles and perspectives. The units that will shed light on these perspectives are usually humans, but can also be events, social situations or documents. The units can be chosen because they are typical or atypical, because they have certain relationships with each other or in some cases simply because they are available (Schatzmann,1973).

Questions that were posed in the meetings were open and gave the informant an opportunity to reflect on former soldiers, on the basis of their work towards former soldiers.

The questions that were asked were:

- What has your organizations role towards former soldiers been in Post- war Sierra Leone?
- What are the challenges facing former soldiers?
- How will your organization approach these challenges?
- Are former soldiers a threat to society?

I did not always know whether informants were speaking for themselves or for their organization all of the informants spoke fluent English.

5.6 Observations.

Qualitative observation is used when studying phenomena in their natural contexts over time, and the research are looking for more complete information. The approach is open with a low degree of structuring in advance. The research is interested in people's subjective experiences and the interaction between them, and we will know the purpose or meaning people have with what they do (Dalland, 2000).

Qualitatively oriented observation has the following characteristics:

- It seeks a full understanding of what is observed, where the relationship between the individual and the environment is important.
- It is aimed at interaction between people and people's subjective experiences. We want to know why people act as they do, and what purpose they have with what they do.
- It is process-oriented, looking at the processes the individual is in, and describing the development over time to obtain depth and understanding with regard to the phenomenon being examined.
- The observer is aware of his own role in the observation (Ibid).

In this paper I used a non-participating observation approach. The observations were based on following my informants through a regular day in their own environment. I kept a logbook of my observations. My goal was not to affect the informant's actions and not to become emotionally involved when.

Data must be collected in such a way that is reliable. A researcher has to be aware of several factors (Løkken & Søbstad, 1995).

Physical and mental condition: We must be mentally and physically obvious, attentive, focused and sustainable. During the fieldwork in Sierra Leone access to food was difficult, travels were long and unpleasant, and people were afraid and traumatized. I had to be aware of how this affected me and my ability to maintain neutrality

First impression: My fieldwork had a time limit, and was able to observe my informants for only a couple of days. My impressions I got during the time, might have been different if I had had more time for my fieldwork.

Halo effect: Coming from one of the richest country in the world to one of the poorest countries in the world, I had to be aware of my perceptions of my informant's actions.

Personal relationships: Spending time with my informants meant that I formed a personal relationship with them, and I had to be aware how this affected my neutrality (ibid).

5.7 Period 3

5.7.1 Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS)

To systematize the data collection, I used the SPSS software program, which is often used in quantitative research

SPSS allows data analysis, statistical analysis, summary and presentation of data and different types of calculations and graphs.

5.7.3 Making categories

Using SPSS made it easier to verify what I had observed and the impressions I gained from fieldwork. Using SPSS revealed a significant difference between the informants in Freetown and the others. The findings showed that the informants from Freetown were all younger than 18 years old when they entered the war, and must be defined as Child soldiers according to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Involvement of Children in Armed Conflict (2000) The protocol sets 18 as the minimum age for direct participation in hostilities, for recruitment into armed groups, and for compulsory recruitment

by governments. States may accept volunteers from the age of 16 but must deposit a binding declaration at the time of ratification or accession, setting out their minimum voluntary recruitment age and outlining certain safeguards for such recruitment. The findings also showed that a lot of the informants from Bo, Makeni and Army were older when they entered the war.

Because of the significant distinction in age and other variables shown using the SPSS , I decided to compare the informants from Freetown with the informants from the other cities.

In the presentation of the findings there will be a comparison of two groups.

The Freetown-group consists of 20 interviews in Freetown, the Group-Others consist of 17 interviews in Bo, Makeni and the Army.

5.7.4 Validity, reliability, transferability and compliance

Validity and reliability must be considered also in qualitative studies, although some argue that the concepts belong exclusively to the quantitative tradition, and is adapted to quantitative methods. Johannsen et al. writes that critically discussing the validity and reliability is not the same as submitting to quantitative logic.(Johannessen & Tufte, 2002) Guba and Lincoln believe that in qualitative research must operate with the concepts of reliability, credibility, transferability and compliance as a measure of quality (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

Reliability

Reliability shows how the data is produced, collected and processed. How the data is produced and collected is explained in chapter: 5.3 and chapter 5.4 and shows the reliability in the paper. When it comes to how this paper has processed the Data, this is explained in chapter. 5.5.1 and 5.5.2.

Credibility

Credibility is the ability of the data to measure what is supposed to measure, and see if the data production and thus the findings reflect the goals of the study (Guba & Lincoln, 1989).

Through the theory there has been demonstrated knowledge of why humans become soldiers, concepts around reintegration and concepts around resilience. The theory gives us guidelines on the phenomenon being studied.

The data present findings on soldier's lives during and after the war. There are also findings giving us indications on whether or not the former soldier have gained anything from aid given to them after the war. The findings reveal whether or not former soldiers become a threat to society again.

There are also different meetings with different NGO's, Stakeholders and governmental organizations. The meetings gave indicators on whether or not the former soldiers are being seen as a threat to the society.

The data collected are related to the goal of the study, but to improve its credibility the fieldwork should have lasted longer or the findings should have been quantitatively tested. In this study however, there were a design that made it not possible to neither be a longer period in the field nor do a quantitative research.

Another aspect related to credibility is that this study does not take into account the effects of mental health in making a person a risk. A way of strengthening the credibility would be to compare the findings in this study with a study of mental health of former soldiers.

Transferability

Transferability is a parallel to what is called external validity in quantitative studies. A key question here is whether the results from a study designed for one context can be transferred to similar phenomena in a different one.

Generalization of such analysis cannot be done statistically, as is common in quantitative studies, but rather conceptually through development of analytical concepts that have transfer value also for actors in second contexts and other fields.

This study's transferability has been done by making comparisons with other studies on former soldiers in other time periods and in other countries.

Comparable studies have been:

A Case Studies in War-to-Peace Transition: The Demobilization and Reintegration of Ex-combatants in Ethiopia, Namibia and Uganda, by Colletta and others (Colletta et.al 1996)

What the Fighters Say: A Survey of Ex-Combatants in Sierra Leone
By Humphreys and Weinstein (Humphreys & Weinstein, 2004)

Footpath to reintegration, Armed Conflict, Youth and the Rural Crisis in
Sierra Leone by Krijn Peters (Peters, 2006)

Fighting for the Rainforest: War, Youth, and Resources in Sierra Leone by Paul Richards
(Richards, 1996)

Young Soldiers in Northern Uganda From "Rebel" to "Returnee" by Annan and others (
Annan et.al, 2009)

Compliance

Compliance is an assessment of whether the data and analysis produced are the result of research and not an expression of the researcher`s subjective perceptions (Johannessen & Tufte, 2002).

The compliance question is important because this study is based on the fact that this study is based on my fieldwork in a foreign country and that being in a fieldwork, living with and observing the field I were studying created challenges concerning the objectivity in the research (Fossåskaret et al., 1997).

One way to ensure compliances in the research was to do a thorough account of the research process, which has been showed in the previously chapters. I also had to be reflexive to my own thoughts and attitudes that could affect the interpretations in the study (Johannessen & Tufte, 2002).

In the process analyzing the data I had to be aware my thoughts and attitudes at all time. The findings in this study are the result of a fieldwork conducted me. In the analysis process, I had to be aware of my attitudes, my pre-understanding of the phenomenon that was studied, the country that was studied, and the culture. It was also important to be aware of my past work experience and life experiences that may affect the neutrality of the analysis.

Having the field work in a foreign culture also meant that I had to take into account how the mentality and the situations I experienced through the fieldwork affected me.

5.7.5 Strengths and weaknesses

Strengths

- i. The data in this study is based on the informants own stories.
- ii. Data produced through a fieldwork with interviews and observations, was useful for describing the complexity of the phenomena being studied, because I could follow the complexity by interact with the informants and observe their behavior.
- iii. Doing a qualitative research gave me the opportunity to provide individual case information from the Phenomenon being studied.
- iv. Collecting data through fieldwork and qualitative interviews provided understanding and descriptions of informant's personal experiences.
- v. Can describe in rich detail phenomena as they are situated and embedded in local contexts.
- vi. The Fieldwork gave an opportunity to study the dynamic processes in post-war Sierra Leone
- vii. By interviewing former soldiers in their own environment, it gave me an opportunity to determine how the informants interpret constructs.
- viii. By having a fieldwork in Sierra Leone I collected data in naturalistic settings.
- ix. The study was responsive to local situations and conditions.
- x. By having a qualitative research and a fieldwork the study was responsive to changes that occur during the conduct of a study, and in this case their came a curfew during the fieldwork, which made it possible to shift focus.

Weaknesses

- i. There was a small number of informants, so the findings and may not generalize to other people or settings.
- ii. It is difficult to make quantitative predictions.
- iii. It is time consuming; it generally takes more time to collect the data when compared to quantitative research.
- iv. The results are influenced by the researcher's biases.

5.8 Ethics

Informed consent means that the researcher informs the respondents about the purpose of the study, main parts of the design, and about possible physical or psychological risks or benefits of participation in the research. Informed consent also involves voluntary participation by the informant, and his right to withdraw at any time.

The possible risks and benefits of a study on the participants must be explained in advance. There should be a balance between what informants contribute to the study, and what they get out of it, but sometimes just that anyone are listening to them and are interested in their experience be a positive experience for informants (Thagaard, 2009).

In this study the participation was based on volunteering, and the informants signed a paper after being interviewed. The document clarified the use of the study, and stated that the informants would remain anonymous. The respondents understood that the study would have no impact on them. It was also stipulated that the information they gave would not put them at any risks.

6.0 Findings

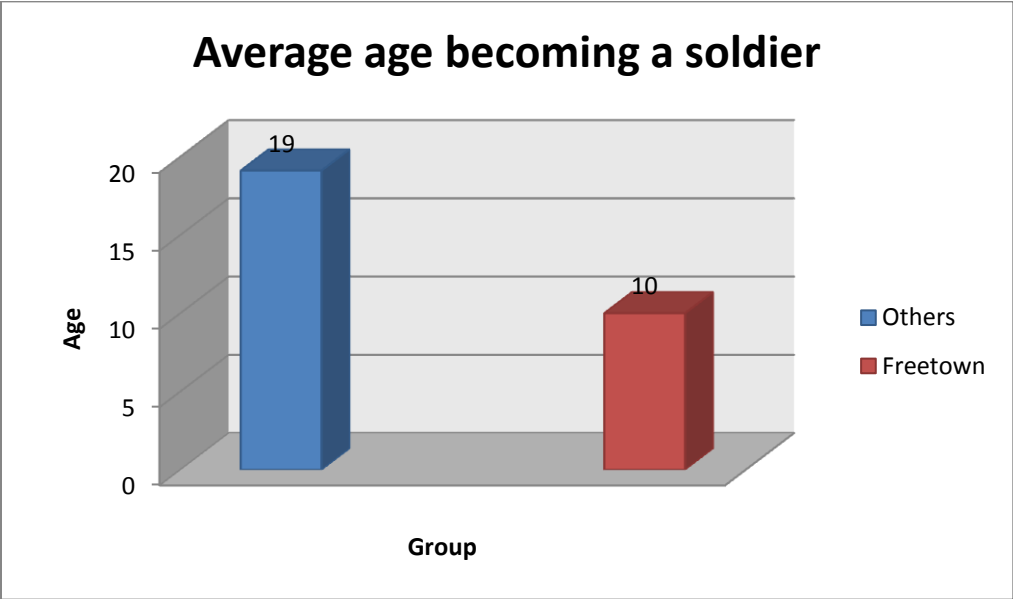
There is a significant difference among former soldiers. The DDR program has had an effect on some and no on others. Some former soldiers pose a greater risk in the community than others do.

6.1 Significance of Situation before the War

All informants entered the war at different times and at different places. They all had different starting point to go in the war and their life situation also varied. In my fieldwork I found correlations between the life before they entered the war, and the life they are living now.

6.1.1 Age Diversity

Figure 1: Differences in age entering the war



There was a significant difference in age amongst my respondents. The average respondent in the in Freetown group was ten years old when he became a soldier (The youngest was six). The average respondent in the other- group was 19 years old.

The Day He Lost His Mother

In 1991, Kabba was about six years old and lived with his mother in Waima village. One day his mother sent him to sell uncooked rice in nearby villages. Kabba was at Sembahun when he heard the sound of gunfire coming from the direction of his village.

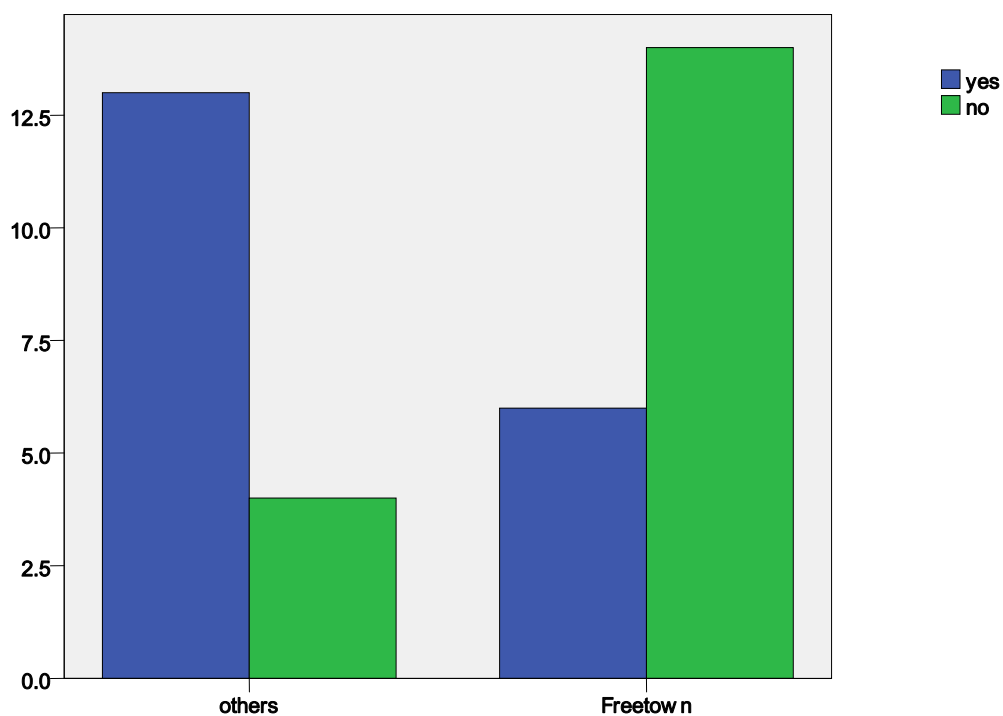
“I was very scared and raced home to look for my mother. At Waima, the air was full of smoke; people of all ages, including women with babies on their backs, were fleeing the village in terror. Dead bodies lined the road. In Waima, I was met with a complete and very frightening silence. I crept into my house calling softly “mama, mama”, but no one answered. My mother was not there and I have never seen her again.

Suddenly, rebels entered my home shouting and pointing guns at me, demanding food. The rebels forced me to carry the rice and to go with them, together with some other captured children”.

6.1.2 Civil Status

None of the respondents, who were characterized as child soldiers, when they entered the war, is married. The oldest respondents, who are 35-40 years old at the time of the interview, were married. This can be seen as a natural consequence of the Sierra Leone culture, and that it follows international patterns. But in this context, it has to be seen as findings that shows variations in the status of former soldiers.

Figure 2: Do you have children?⁴



A larger proportion of respondents from the other-group established families after the war. This also applies in relation to having children; the majority from the other-group has children. The oldest respondents are in this group. I then compared those who have children in the other- group and those who have children in the Freetown-group.

All of those who have children in the other-group have daily contact with their children, and are the main provides. Among the other-group, family life was important. Many respondents' expressed frustrations and hopelessness over being unable give their children a good life.

⁴ Are you a biological parent?

Among those in the Freetown-group who had children only one of the respondents has contact with her children, and is the main provider. She lived with her aunt and uncle and needed help taking care for her children

The feeling of not being able to help, addiction to drugs and a hopeless situation in life explained why the other respondents from Freetown not contributed in relation to their children.

It was not unusual for fathers to send their children away, either to their mother's parents or other relatives. Most of the respondents were still in a relationship with their child's mother, but the contact was sporadic.



“Amad”, 20, homeless and the father of two said:

“I think and pray for my children, but I have nothing to offer them, and I don't know if they will have a life with me” I pray that they are ok, and given the love that I would like to give them”.

Respondents from Freetown seemed more distant in perception related to their children. Most of them described a life independent of their children. This was made visible in their reflections about their situation. The informants in the other-group included their children when they talked about their situation, while the informants in the Freetown-group did not. I asked: What must the government do to make Sierra Leone a better place to live?

“Augustine”, from the Other-group said

“I earn too little on the job as a motorbike driver. Some days I earn so little that I cannot give my children food. This is very frustrating, and I pray that my children will get food. The government must give me a job so I can make sure my children get a good life and education. The government must make sure that youths get jobs and education. The children and the youths are our future, and I am concerned when I see how the youths are being treated”.

“Sentus” from the Freetown-group said

“We have been neglected because we were soldiers. The government must give us money and jobs. I want an office, perhaps as a politician. They give us nothing and we are hungry all the time. They must give us houses and jobs, so we do not need to stay on the street. If we get jobs and houses, I think Sierra Leone would be a better place to live”.

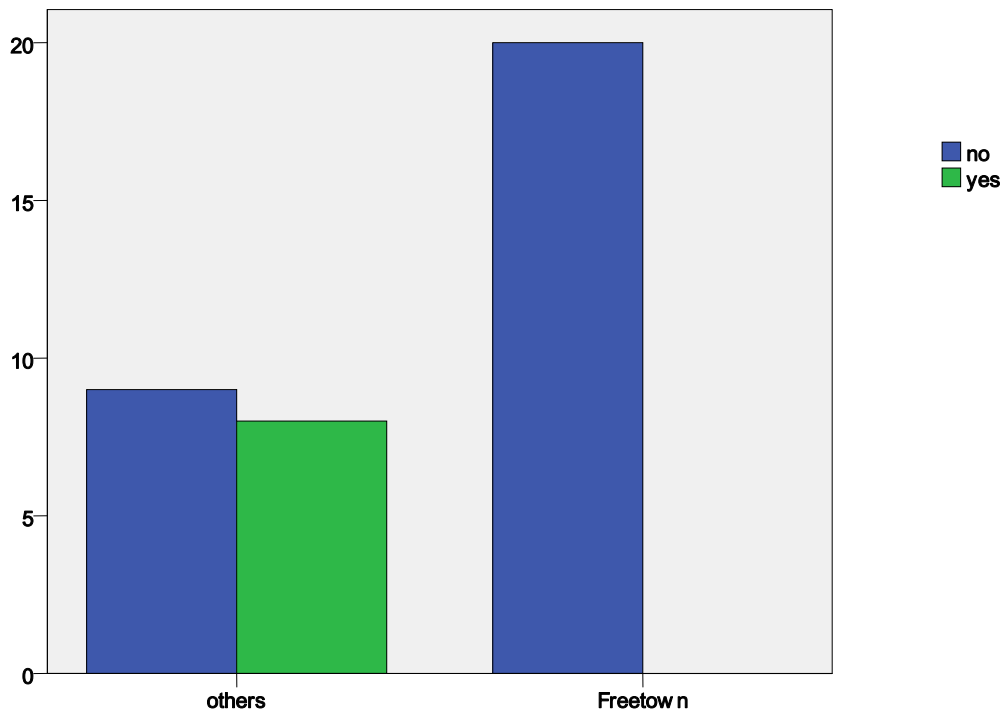
Both of these respondents have two children.- but their perceptions are different. The respondent from the other-group sees the issue in a broader context than the respondent from the Freetown- group. Respondent from the Freetown- group has a much more individualistic perception of what government should do for Sierra Leone.

Both through interviews and through observations in the field, I saw this tendency. Respondents from the other-group had a greater tendency to see the world in a collective matter; while the Freetown- group associated more about themselves. The age difference explains these differences.

6.1.3 Present Place of Living

None of the former child soldiers live in the town in which they were born and lived before they became soldiers.

Figure 3: Are you living in the same town as you did before the war?



All these respondents from the Freetown-group were under 18 when they became soldiers, and no live in a city far from their home town. They are all from different places in Sierra Leone. The main reason why they live in Freetown is because it's capital. None of them wants to live in a village ore in a smaller city. They settled in Freetown hoping for a job or education.

Their reason for not living in their hometown must also be seen in the matter of not being thru a good reconciliation, and “Sentus”, 20, explains that he had moved to Freetown after he was abandoned:

*“I was reconciled with my mother in 2002 and we lived a couple of miles outside Freetown. Life was ok, but then my mother got re-married. Her new husband didn’t like the rebels, and he gave me the blame for everything that happened. If the neighbor said that there had been thieves in the village, he said that it was me. After a while I couldn’t deal with it, and moved to Freetown”*⁵

In a meeting with the Ministry of Labor and Employment there was showed great concern with the rapid urbanization of Freetown after the war. They asserted that Freetown’s infrastructure cannot support the influx of new residents, and are very concerned about the effects on young people’s living conditions. Attempts have been made to move young people out of Freetown and back to villages, but without success. Concern about how this affects the former child soldiers was big.

NGO`s and other stakeholders expressed a similar concern .The explosion of population has meant that large groups of young people have nothing to do. GTZ, UNICEF and other major aid organizations are fighting a battle against urbanization, where the biggest challenge is to make rural areas and villages attractive to young people again, youths and former child soldiers are not willing to leave Freetown.

These former child soldiers want to live like other young people do. Freetown has an established youth culture, where R & B music, sex and partying are a part of everyday life.

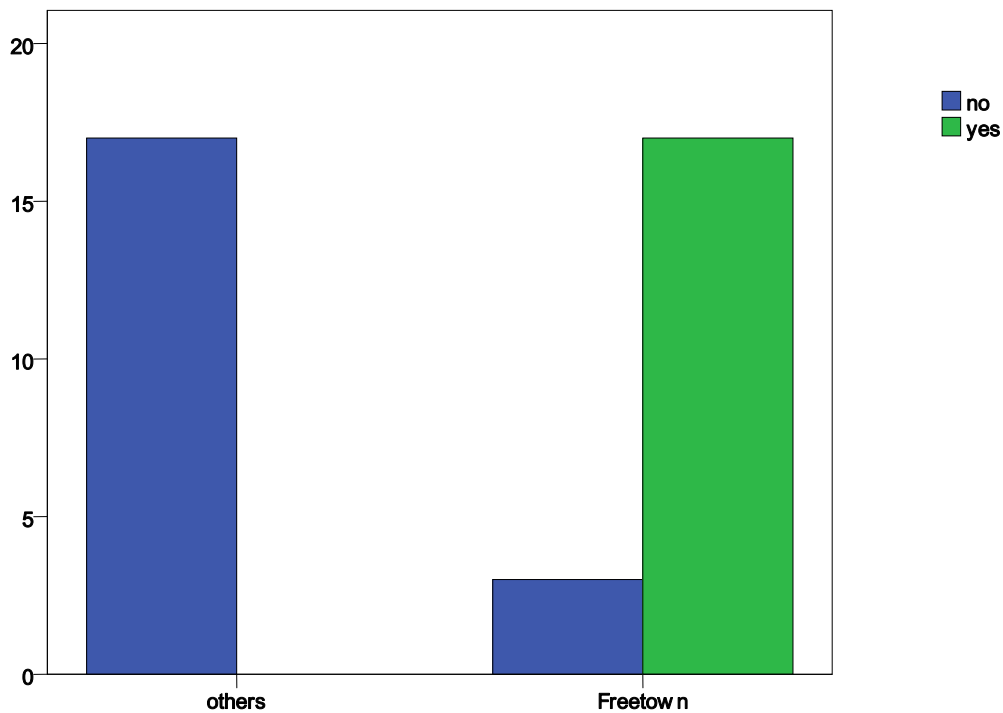
⁵ Reconciliation was a measure within the DDR- Program and the findings concerning reconciliation will be showed more in depth in chapter 6.3.

The R&B music was played on every corner of Freetown, and music videos were shown in the streets. My respondents explained that they wanted the fast cars, beautiful women, jewelries, guns and parties that they saw in the videos. I thought that these videos set unrealistic expectations of the world and for their lives. This meant that the rural areas held no appeal for Freetown`s young people.

6.1.4 Drug addiction

Many informants of the Freetown group are drug addicts and are intoxicated every day.

Figure 4: Addicted to drug or alcohol?⁶



⁶ Addicted to drug or alcohol definition: Use drug or alcohol every day, and feel that intoxication is a part of your everyday life.

It was common to see young people gathered in drug areas or ghettos. One of my respondents said that these areas were home to former child soldiers. At a conference in Freetown this was confirmed by one NGO called CITY OF REST, which works to counter substance abuse among youths in Sierra Leone.

Drug addiction was mentioned in my meetings with NGOs and local stakeholders. Members of the West African Youth Leadership Center, Foundation for Democratic Africa, Talking Drum Studios and the Police were all concerned about the spread of substance abuse among young people in Freetown and especially among former soldiers. They explained that the neglect of former soldiers could be a reason for their drug use.

My Freetown respondents who are addicted to drugs explain their addiction in relation to trauma, idleness and despair. “Kabba “a long time advocate for former child soldiers explained that child soldiers use drugs because they have been neglected. The neglect and trauma from the war leads to the drug addiction.

No members of the other-group are drug addicted. In this group there are also a number of former child soldiers as in Freetown. It is not clear why this group isn't dependent on drugs, but it can be seen in their attitudes to life and their thoughts of the future.

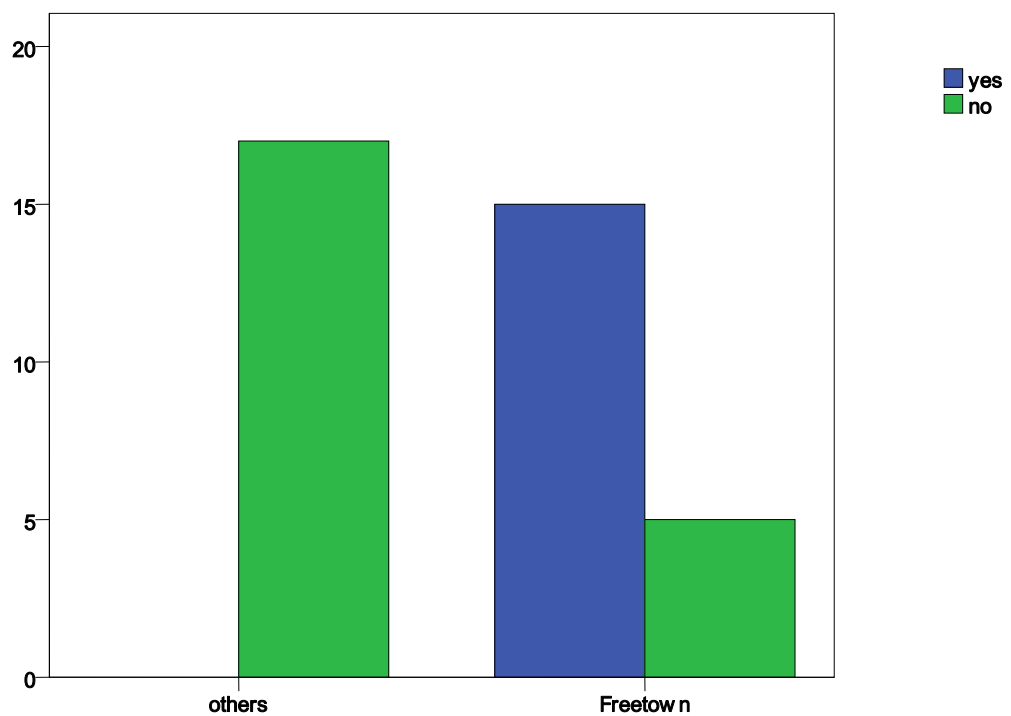
“Ali” a 26-year old student from the other-group summarizes his thoughts:

“You have to be determined. They say, the idle mind is the Devils workshop. If you don't find something to engage yourself in, weather there is employment or not employment, you only think about the negative things and you think about bad things. If you have nothing to do, if I want to eat and have nothing, I see something and take it; and so on....your boundaries vanish.”

6.1.5 Perception Related to New Wars

The respondent's perception related of having to take up arms again is strongly correlated to age and residence. The Freetown-group has a much greater propensity to take up arms again.

Figure 5: Will fight again?⁷



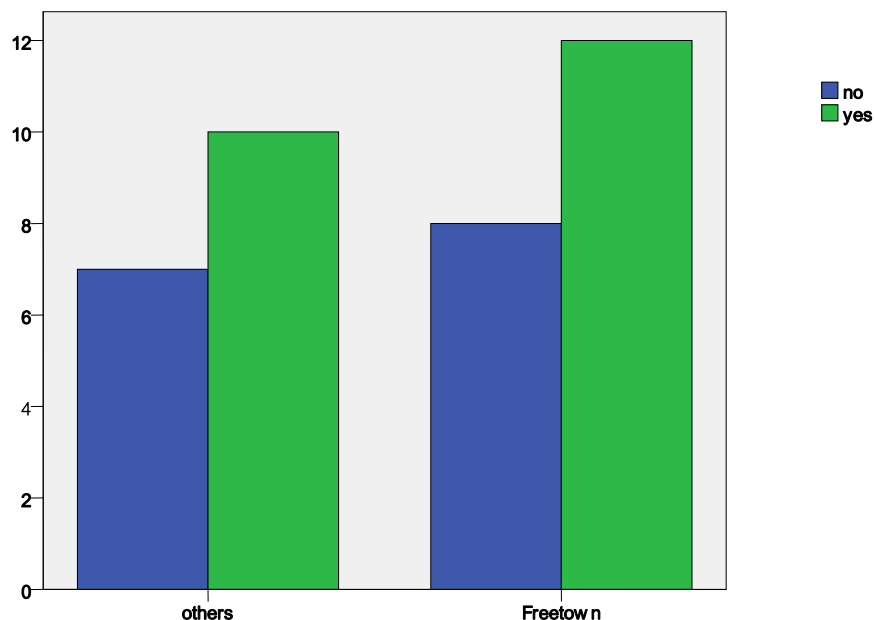
⁷ Are you willing to fight again, and under what circumstances?

Respondents from Freetown are willing to take up arms again for pay. They have been trained as soldiers, and if taking up arms is a way out of poverty, they might find it acceptable. Many of the respondents were aware of the conflict that had started in Guinea, and seemed excited by the prospect of making money as a soldier. I saw long rows of young people outside the Ministry of Labor and Employment each day. In a meeting with the Ministry of Labor and Employment I learned that Sierra Leone would send over 2,500 soldiers as a part of the UN forces in Iraq, Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia. The spokesperson estimated that queues consisted of over a thousand young people every day who wanted to enlist, and that lines had become even longer shortly before my arrival in Freetown.

The other-group had a much more fiery approach to a new conflict in Sierra Leone, and taking up arms again was not an option. The oldest respondents put the future in the hands of God, and asked for quiet times. They feared another conflict. The youngest ones stated that they would not become soldiers again, and said that Sierra Leone had taken a lesson from the terrible conditions of the war had, and that this lesson would result in peace.

There is a greater willingness among the Freetown- group to fight another war again. My impression was that the disarmament after the war had not been perfect, and that there were still weapons throughout the Republic of Sierra Leone. According to Interpol and the police in Freetown, weapon deposits in Freetown could be linked to criminal factions made of former soldiers. It was likely that the willingness to take up weapons also could be connected to the supply.

Figure 6: Do you have access to a weapon?⁸



The figure shows no connection between the willingness to take up arms and the supply of weapons. Both groups have equal access to weapons.

The concern about former soldiers was brought up at a meeting with Interpol. The representatives of Interpol were of the opinion that Freetown is home to many former child soldiers who could not or would not return to their home places. These peoples were difficult to identify, but Interpol believed that they posed a security threat. This is explained by the existence of ghetto activities organized by former soldiers, who are trying to recruit new members. Interpol is also concerned about the large number of the weapons that were not submitted through demobilization, and that is still available. The government imposed a curfew and assembled armed forces, following series of armed robberies and shootings. Interpol claimed that the weapons used in these crimes had been issued during the war.

⁸ Do you have access to weapon?.

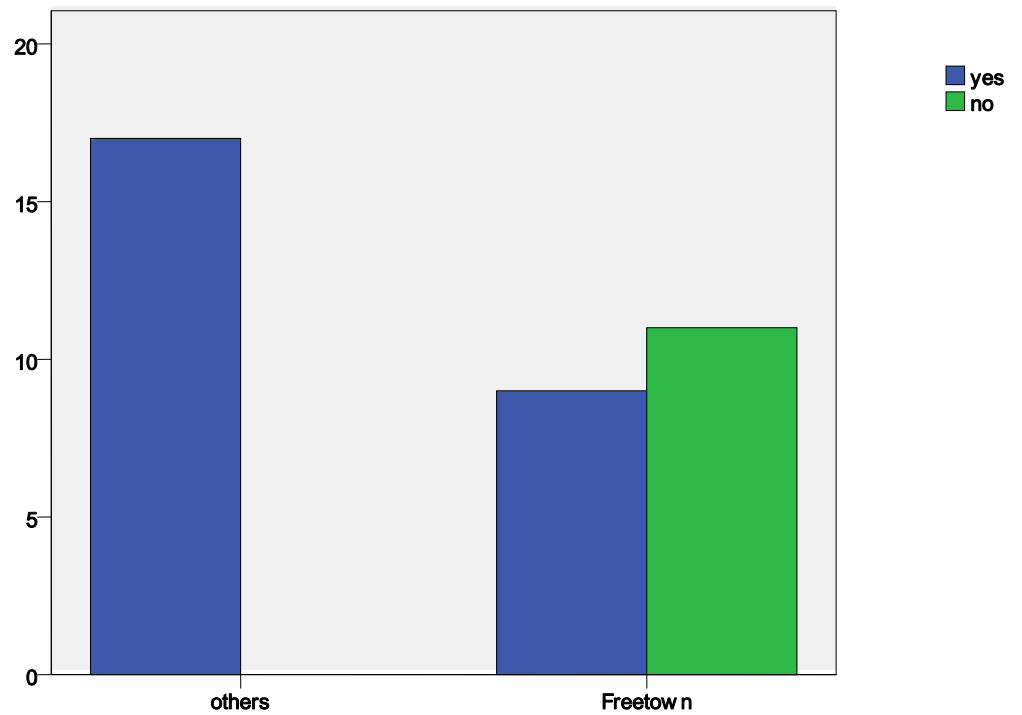
The City Council sees these young former soldiers are a threat. The national government deployed 3000 soldiers and 3000 police officers to Freetown to stem the rising violence and crime. The members of the City Council blame the high crime rate on young people and ex-combatants. The government imposed a nationwide curfew from 7:00 pm to 7:00 pm. Soldiers were placed at check points to conduct vehicle and body searches. I saw that people were frightened of the soldiers. Shops closed earlier and there were fewer people in the streets at night. Most people I spoke with were worried that this was the start of a new conflict, and trauma from the war came back. I observed also that the concept. The same people who had referred criminals and drug addicts were now using the term ex-combatants about the same people. The investigation has shown that the criminal activity that resulted in massive efforts from the government, was organized by the police and army, and could not be linked to former child soldiers.

Such episodes revive out anxiety and fear that a conflict will flare up again. The government, police, NGO's and other stakeholders expressed great concern about this situation.

6.1.6 Work and Income

The correlation between income-based employment and age shows no big differences, but we can see that there is a difference when we see it together with where they live.

Figure 7: Income in the Present? ⁹



⁹ Sierra Leone is estimated having unemployment up to seventy percent. This statistics only take in consideration people that have contract based work. In my fieldwork I noticed that there were a lot of people that didn't have a contract based work relationship, but had daily activities that gave them some amount of money during the day and can be consider as a job.

All of the respondents from the other-group have employment income, but we among the Freetown-group, the majority do not. In Freetown most of my respondents sold junk on the street. My respondents told me that this was a way to make money, but it was unpredictable. In the other-group most of the respondents had work contracts. None of the members of either group, however, earned a great deal of money.

I observed my respondents from Freetown over the course of several days. Most of them were homeless, and slept in the streets. Sometimes their friends took care of them and fed them. I saw them steal and try to hustle other people (And me). When I asked them why life was like this, they explained that they had been neglected by everyone because they are former soldiers.

“Amad”

“I have a lot of frustration, I see all the people at my age doing things that I can't. I don't talk to them; because that makes me frustrated, and they don't want to be associated with me either, fuck them for that. I don't like people interviewing me either. They just make promises and you never see them again, fuck them. I just trust myself”

Youth unemployment was a concern among all of the NGO`s and organizations I met with in Freetown. One of the largest NGO`s in Sierra Leone that I met with; GTZ, is trying to help young people from Freetown to find work in rural areas, but few young people want to move. GTZ find that Freetown is too overcrowded for the marginalized groups to come into the job market because there are not enough jobs, and believes that getting them to the rural areas is the only thing that might work. This was confirmed by the Ministry of Labor and Employment which was also trying to encourage young people to move out of Freetown.

GOAL, an Irish NGO operates programs that try to place Freetown's young people in jobs in the city center. GOAL specializes in making micro loans to young people, so they can start up business. The challenge has been to gain the trust of young people. Participants in GOAL`s program had to complete some training in business and economics. Two of my respondents

had expressed an interest in GOAL's program, but found that it was not the way to earn fast money. They decided that it would be easier to earn money selling junk or washing cars.

6.2 Diversity in War Experiences

Nothing in my findings suggests that the way in which my respondents became soldiers, or which faction they joined is significant in their present circumstances.

6.2.1. Faction

The majority of my respondents had been captured by and fought for the RUF. Some of the respondents had fought for several fractions during the war. According to them, their faction has not had affected their choice of domicile, reconciliation, income-generating work, or other variables in their lives today. What did emerge the interviews was that the respondents, who been members of the RUF and child soldiers, were more likely to be stigmatized as “rebels” after the war. This stigma was often linked to conflicts in school, at home, or in the community. There is still nothing to suggest that this stigma was different between respondents in the other-group and the Freetown-group.

6.2.2. Way of entering the war

There is nothing in my findings that suggests that life situation today is affected by whether someone joined the war voluntarily, was captured, or was a vigilante. The majority of my respondents explain that they had been captured and forced to fight.

“Augustine” was 19 when at the rebels came to his city. He described his first encounter with the rebels as follows:

“In 1992 I left to Tongo. I lived there until 1994. then they attacked. I had never seen rebels, and because off all the myths about the rebels, I thought they were pigs or looked like animals. I was curious about them, and stood watching when they came. I wanted to see if they were animals so I joined them in the bush. Then I saw that they were people, people like me. I joined them and started fighting”

Members of the Freetown group expressed bitterness and anger against a system and a country that had taken their childhood. These respondents had reflected actions as soldiers and their consequences, but consider themselves as victims who have not received what they were entitled to after the war. I also found this sentiment in the other-group, but those respondents showed a greater propensity to see their own role and the effect of their actions on innocent people.

6.2.3 Time period spent in war

My respondents were soldiers from three months to eleven years. I found no evidence that suggest that their length of time as a soldier has had an impact on their present lives. The year in which my respondents became soldiers seems to not have affected their current situation. Some of my respondents fought for several factions, and entered the war at different stages of the war. This does not seem to have affected their present life.

I did not ask questions about my respondents' mental health and identity. It is likely that the mental health status of respondent who had been a soldier for eleven years would be different from that of a respondent who had been a soldier for three months. I found no evidence of differences in the life situations of these respondents.

6.2.4 War experiences

The respondents participated in war in a variety of ways. Some had been involved in heavy fighting and confirmed that they had killed at least one person. Others had been carriers, cooks, spotters, and not used weapons. My research does not find that the type of experience has affected their current situation. It is likely that taking mental health into consideration would show a correlation to type of experience. In my meetings with NGOs and other organizations, mental health and trauma were brought forth as factors that influenced development. Many stakeholders described mental health as a late burning crisis that has made Sierra Leone fragile.

6.3 DDR program's impact on the present

I am examining the DDR program to understand the preventive effects of international assistance in post-war work from a security perspective. My hypothesis was that those people who had the best DDR offer will be the least likely to pose a risk in the present.

Before beginning my fieldwork, I analyzed evaluations of the DDR program. I saw that there were some lessons learned and some future challenges. Based on these points, I now present the findings related to DDR.

6.3.1 Contents of the DDR program.

Nothing in my research indicates that variations in the content of the DDR program have had a great impact on respondents' present lives. There is nothing that suggests that the respondents have been treated differently by the DDR or encountered discrimination. Most of them have gone through the traditional DDR program, where they have been given the choice among five different types of measures

Four respondents had not had access to DDR. These four had wanted to be involved in DDR, and were eligible to participate. Problems with the system accounted for their inability to take advantage of the program.

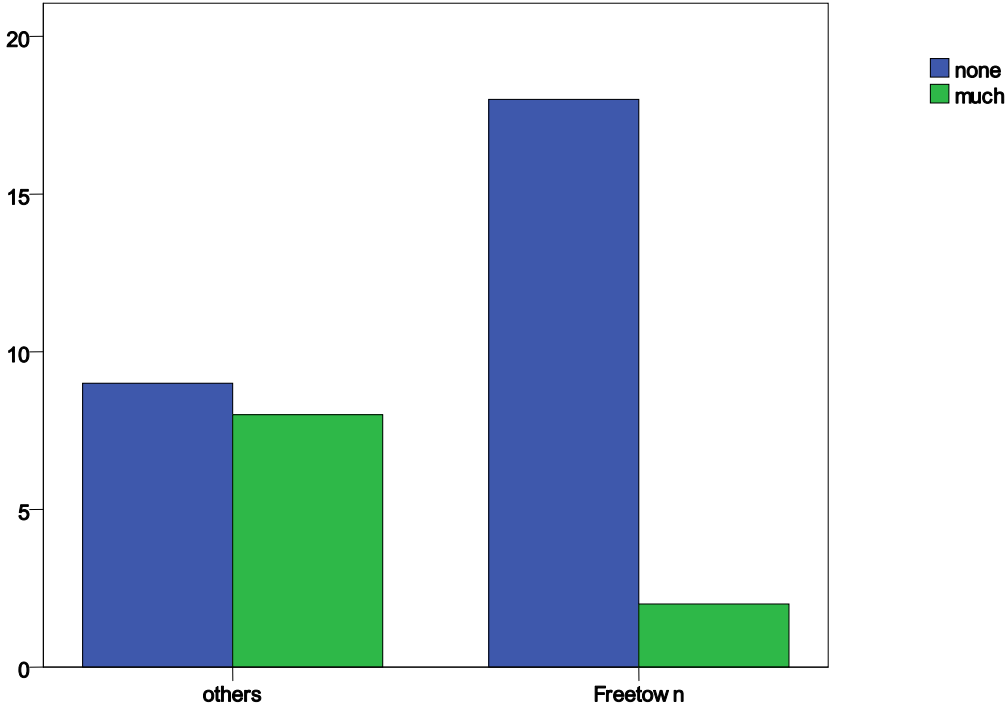
James was only eight years old when he became a soldier, and in 2002 he was ten. He was not a participant in the DDR program because a commander had told him that if he did, he would be arrested and punished for what he had done during the war. The commander also told him that he was too young to participate in the DDR program, so he did not disarm, but went straight to Freetown after the war.

There is a significant difference in time spent in the DDR – program, and it varies from three weeks – to over two years. But there is nothing that indicates that more time spent in the DDR- programs have had any outcome on current life situation. On the contrary, it is respondents who have spent the shortest time in the DDR which now respond that they have

used what they have learned through the DDR.

Most respondents, and especially those from Freetown, express great dissatisfaction with the program.

Figure 7: Outcome of the DDR-Program?¹⁰



Almost all the informants in the Freetown-group complained about the DDR. They felt betrayed by the international community and by their own country, and believed that the DDR had broken its promises to them.

Informants from Freetown expressed bitterness toward the program and its contents there was a broad consensus about its failings.

¹⁰ This question is linked to the informants' perception of the DDR program, and whether they believed that they could benefit from the program.

- i. They were promised more money than they received.
- ii. The program was too short.
- iii. The system was corrupt.
- iv. There was no follow up.
- v. They were not given the tools they needed to use the skills they had learned.
- vi. There were no jobs after the DDR.

Dissatisfaction with the DDR program was also pronounced among informants from the other-group, but the findings show that many respondents from this group have a life today that can be related to the DDR-program, and made their life better. This is most apparent among the oldest respondents, whose jobs can be attributed to their participation in the DDR program. Despite the obvious dissatisfaction of these respondents, it appears that they took advantage of and benefited from the DDR program.

“Sidu”, 35, is an apprentice for a tailor in Makeni. He received three months of training from the DDR since then he has worked for a tailor. He hopes to start his own business in the future.

Among the youngest of the other-group, the DDR program has apparently had an effect. These respondents praised the DDR, and most of them experienced some form of safeguarding through the DDR. The DDR program has contributed to a better life for them.

The bitterness of the members of the Freetown group can be seen in relation to their lives. Most of these respondents have no job, no connection to the Freetown, and no contact with their family. Their outlook is very pessimistic and despairing. The youngest members of the Other-group have jobs or education, they have contact with relatives, and they report feeling a sense of belonging. Most of them also have an optimistic view of the future.

In Sierra Leone, I asked people for their opinions of the DDR program. In the towns and villages that may be associated with respondents from the other-group, the opinions were positive. People described the DDR as a necessary element in the post-war work, and there was no stigma attached to it. This was different in Freetown, where people who had taken advantage of the DDR were referred to as “the DDR Gang” and “the DDR-rebels”.

The members of the Freetown City Council claimed that the former soldiers had received good follow-up through the DDR, and that their behavior could not be associated with the lack of assistance after the war.

Representatives of the West African Youth Leaders Centre and Interpol opined that soldiers who had gone through DDR had been neglected, and that this could explain why many former soldiers did not work or did not have a decent life in Freetown. Both organizations remarked that there had been many problems with the implementation of the DDR, especially in relation to corruption and lack of follow-up. This may have meant that many participants had not received much benefit from the program.

According to Interpol, many young former soldiers were hiding in Freetown because they had been driven out of their hometowns. This contradicts what my respondents said. The members of the Freetown-group feel stigmatized; while many of the respondents from the other-group believe that they have been reintegrated and have a sense of belonging in their town.

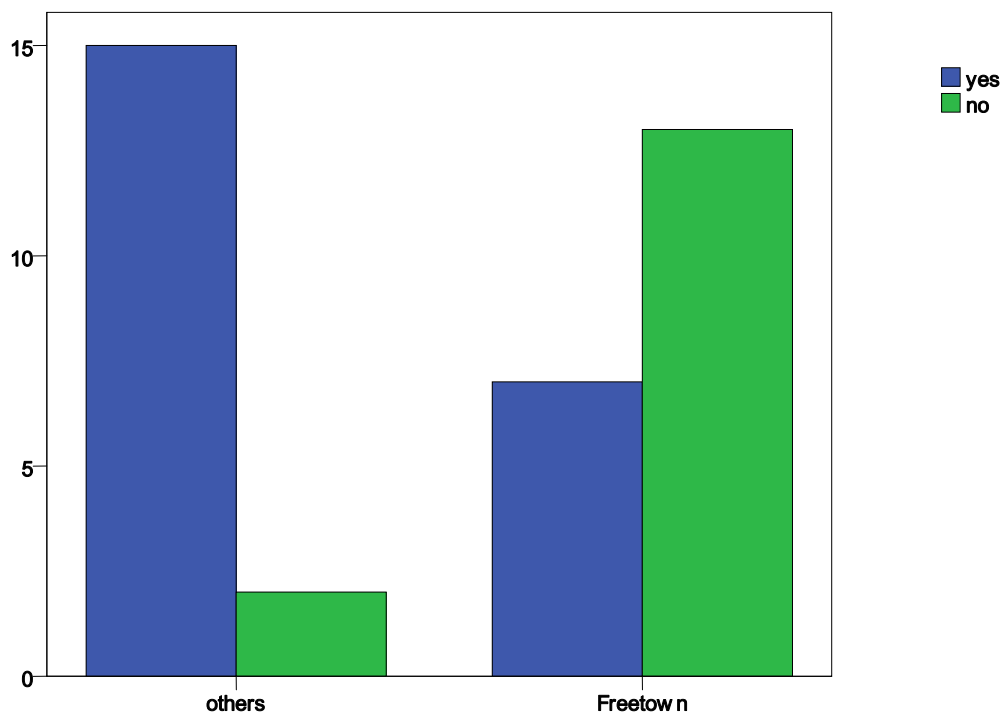
Police in Freetown have observed former soldiers wandering aimlessly through the streets of Freetown. The police claim that the DDR project had not worked for everyone. Many soldiers had received training and equipment, but then sold the equipment to make quick money, and had no interest in finding a job in which they could apply their new skills. The type of jobs for which they had been trained did not provide enough money, quickly enough. Therefore, they sold junk, drove a taxi or engaged in criminal activity. The police described a very passive life style among the young ex-soldiers and saw that this led to destructive behavior

This observation was confirmed in a meeting with the Freetown Housing Association. The Freetown Housing Association had hired soldiers from the DDR program as construction workers. The soldiers had done well during training period, but most disappeared as soon as it was over, and had not returned to construction work. The representative of the Freetown Housing Association was under the impression that most of the trainees were either married, had other jobs, or were just hanging around in the streets.

6.3.2 Current Situation and Reconciliation

There were major differences in the age of the respondents were before they were soldiers and their postwar lives. Their age accounted for differences between members of the two groups. If we see this in a pre-and post-war perspective, we see that the choice of residence is not random. It is important to see the choice of residence in the context of reconciliation in order to identify the correlation.

Figure 8: Do you think that the reconciliation process has been good? ¹¹



¹¹ Reconciliation was explained to the informants as: How has the process been regarding family, hometown, local community and coming “home” after the war?

Most of the informants from the Freetown-group, who had no roots in the city or contact with their families, did not think that reconciliation has worked well for them.

There were many similarities in the way that they described their lives situation;

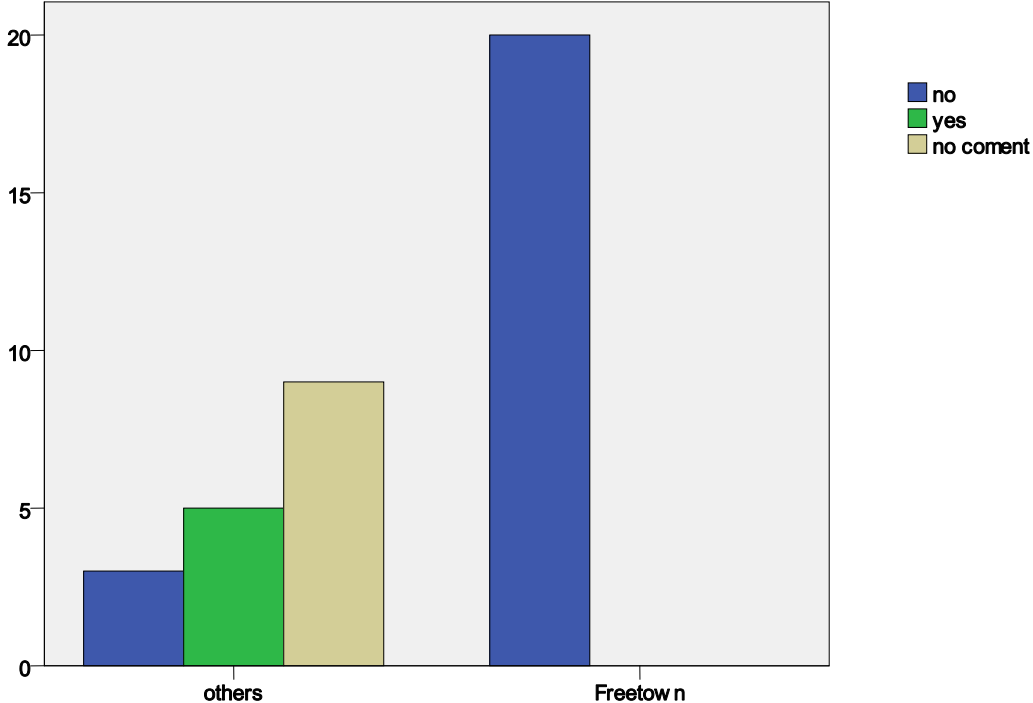
- 1) They are addicted to drugs.
- 2) They will become soldiers again.
- 3) Many of them have children that they can't provide for, or have no contact with.
- 4) Most of them have no steady employment apart from selling junk.
- 5) They are all displeased with the DDR program.

Most of these people were homeless, and lived in Freetown's ghettos. I saw groups of them roaming around Freetown. They spent much time with other people their age. One respondent told me that former child soldiers often find each other, and created a sense of community. They had returned home after the war, hoping for a new start and to reunite with their parents. The reunion was disappointing. The school had not been rebuilt, there were no jobs, other students looked down on them, they were blamed for everything that had happened, and they were still considered rebels. As a result, they thought that they had no choice but to move. Others found that their parents had been killed in the war, or had disappeared. Some are still hoping to hear that their families are still alive. The informants in the Freetown group who did not think that the reconciliation process had been good for them all hope that eventually they will re-establish contact with surviving members of their families.

6.4 Other Impacts on the Current Situation

6.4.1 Satisfaction with the government

Figure 9: Are you satisfied with the Government?¹²



The Freetown-group is not satisfied with Sierra Leone’s government and accuses it of having neglected them.

They felt unfairly treated and wanted the government to do more for former child soldiers. The government was blamed for their poverty, homelessness and stigmatization. They are pleading for a new life and want a government that can give them a job, education, health facilities, and a place to sleep. All of them feel neglected by the government and the Sierra

¹² This question was asked to elicit the respondents’ perception about the sitting government. Dissatisfaction with the sitting government can be a pull-factor for a new conflict

Leonean people, because they are former child soldiers, and all they want is to be accepted. They have few reflections on the situation in Sierra Leone in general, but their dissatisfaction and concern revolves around the conditions in which they are living.

Dissatisfaction with the current government is also pronounced in the other-group, but those respondents are more wide-ranging in their reflections about Sierra Leone and the government.

The tendency of the Freetown-group was to say "I need"; members of the other-group tended to say "We need", or "Sierra Leone needs".

I asked respondents in both groups what they think the Government should do to improve the situation in Sierra Leone.

Freetown:

*"They must give **me** a job and a place to live. I have nothing"*

Other:

*"They must give **the youths** work, the youths are our future"*

Members of both groups were extremely unhappy with the government, and even those who claimed that they were satisfied, or chose not to comment, used non-verbal cues to express their dissatisfaction. Respondents, who said they were satisfied with the current government, later admitted that their responses were based on the fact that the president was from their city, and they dared not be critical of him.

In meetings with NGO's, stakeholders and political organizations, I heard great dissatisfaction with the government, and worries about the future. Corruption and broken promises were the main criticisms. This dissatisfaction was also pervasive among members of government agencies.

7.0 Discussion

My research revealed the informants from Freetown were younger than members of the other-group when they became soldiers. This difference has a safety dimension that can tell us something about the risk situation in a postwar country like Sierra Leone.

7.1 Effect of being a child soldier

All of my informants are now adults, so this discussion cannot be a question of child soldiers vs. older soldiers. It pertains to whether having been child soldiers have affected their postwar lives.

Brett and Specht (2004) examined the risk factors that could lead to voluntary recruitment. Although they describe risk factors associated with the recruitment of child soldiers, these factors could lead to the recruitment of a new generation of soldiers in Sierra Leone.

These factors are very strong in the Freetown-group, who are estranged from their families and alienated from the rest of society. They hang out with people like themselves, and are gathering in defined areas in Freetown. Most of these people are uneducated and unemployed. They feel embittered and hopeless. None of the informants in Freetown had been born or raised there, so they have no roots in or ties to the city.

These factors are not so prominent in the Other-group. There is poverty and despair in this group as well, but the presence of family and significant others are much stronger. Some members of the Other-group have lived in the same city their entire life, and have a sense of connection with it.

Given that the informants from Freetown was much younger when they became soldiers, it may appear that the age at which someone became a soldier affects the ability to handle the factors that Brett and Specht (2004) mention.

Wessels discusses extreme push factors that arise when children have been separated from parents or caretakers. Orphans and separated children frequently join armed groups (Wessels, 2002).

7.1.1 Acceptance by Families and Communities

Colletta and colleagues (1996) pointed out the importance of long-term reintegration, and noted that a failed reintegration can have fatal consequences.

The majority of respondents from Freetown answer that reintegration had not worked well for them, since most of them are alone in Freetown. None of the informants from Freetown consider Freetown their hometown. Boothby (2006) argues that apprenticeships, community sensitization campaigns and the outward support of traditional community rituals were critical to the rehabilitation of many former child soldiers. He concludes that the crucial element was the need to be accepted by their families and communities (Boothby 2006).

Many studies (Boothby, 2006; Jareg, 2005; Kingma, 2004; Veale & Stavrou, 2007; Wessel, 2005, 2006; Wessels & Jonah, 2006) have pointed out what is needed for successful reintegration, and what this means for the individual and society. These factors apply to the Other-group, whose members believe that they have been reintegrated. The discussion in this context is not what is needed to achieve a good reintegration, but why the members of the group from Freetown do not believe that they have been reintegrated.

According to Betancourt the informants from Freetown will have difficulty in adjusting themselves psychosocial. The informants from Freetown didn't feel acceptance at all, they felt neglected and left to themselves, which Betancourt (2008) believe can be symptomatic with negative psychosocial adjustment.

Emotional distress and social functioning have not been measured in this study, but the informants from Freetown said that they didn't interact with the "normal" youths, and the

spent time with people who were like themselves. This may indicate that the social function has not been fully recovered and their interaction is based on their association with other former child soldiers. If this social interaction continues it may result in a permanent subgroup of former child soldiers who will never be reintegrated. Annan (2009) stated that the child who has gone through a good reintegration was likely to have less emotional distress and better social functioning.

The informants from Freetown might or might not be emotionally distressed, but there is one important indicator of emotional distress: drug addiction

Wessels and Jonah (2006) have claimed that a former soldier must go through many processes in order to trust again, and reverse the violent behavior that they had learned in wartime. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) note that the resilience of the soldier coming back from the war in Sierra Leone, depends on the reaction from the community, the family and the extent to which the local community "threatens" the former soldier's well-being. The informants in the Freetown-group never received a welcome from their community and family, so they moved. Wessel and Jonah (2006) also suggest that the Freetown-group has undergone a difficult process of de-brutalization.

7.1.2 Lack of Educational and Economic Opportunities

None of the informants from the Freetown-group have a contract-based job, and this is a source of stigmatization. Wessel (year) claims that having a job is important to building an economy and to being a part of society. This is confirmed by the informants from the Freetown-group who feel vulnerable and looked down.

According to Wessel (2006) support to the local community is essential in reconciliation. Although it was important to get the community to forgive and show empathy with the soldiers, this is not enough. Local community needs to see people at work, and that the community is rebuilt. To see former soldiers in the work and that they earn a living may be important for change.

The other-group experienced a much greater sense of belonging at their current home. Wessel (2006) may indicate that there is a better follow-up from the local community and more livelihood support for the reintegration of these informants.

Wessels (2006) pointed out that many of the soldiers had not attended school before they entered the war. By giving them educational opportunities it may compensate the learning and the illiteracy they lost while being soldiers. This is supported by the informants from the "Other-group" who had been educated after the war. They felt that this was essential to their life situations today, and gave hope for a better future.

7.1.3 "Forgetting" the Past and Re-establishment of identity

Erikson (1968) talked about the teenage years and its importance in creating an identity. Erikson (1968) is of the opinion that the testing of roles in the teens, is shaping the identity you have as an adult.

All the informants from Freetown-group still identify as former child soldiers, and complain that they have been neglected by the government.

Erikson (1968) can explain their clinging to their identity as child soldiers. The informants from Freetown were soldiers, in a period of life when they were trying to form an identity. They have never been anything but soldiers, and this has become a permanent part of their identity. Many of the informants from Freetown said that being a soldier is a thing I can and are being trained to do.

The informants who were older when they entered the war had already formed an identity. The findings show that the oldest informants came back from the war, and resumed the role in the community, that they had had before the war started. Wessel (2006) said that having a positive social role is essential for being reintegrated in the community and the oldest informants went back to playing a positive social role

Role taking and identity shows that the informants from Freetown are a vulnerable group that created an identity that is difficult to change.

Erikson does not mention the importance of culture and what it means for identity and its redefinition.

The members of the Freetown are homeless, criminals and drug addicts. Freetown is overpopulated and the ex-combatants are a marginalized group that is difficult to keep track of. They are left to themselves, and the only attention that they receive is negative. Wessel (2006) points out the importance of possessing a positive social role in society. Wessel (2006) also says that having a positive role also means that it is associated with positive expectations for you, which can lead to a change of social identity

Many the informants in the others-group may have a greater sense of belonging, and positive expectations in their way of acting. They are students, carpenters, electricians, farmers, and have a role that may help them change their identity.

7.1.4 Attitudes and political foundation

Humphrey and Weinstein (2004) said that people with poor economy people who are excluded from political decision making, and people who are politically alienated are most likely to take up arms.

On the basis of class distinction is all the informants in this study, potential risk factors in relation to new recruitment. There is a pervasive hopelessness and resignation among the informants, and these results in an attack on the how the society is. They are economically deprived, excluded from political decision making, and from mainstream political processes.

There is a high distrust of the government, which is seen as corrupt.

Some factors indicate that both groups can be the recruited as soldiers again.

The group from Freetown wants change, and its members are willing to become soldiers again if it will improve their situation. Richards (1996) says that violence must be considered with

the lack of political influence and political power. Richards (1996) adds that both people who want change and people who want the status quo may be willing to take up arms.

Olson (1965) does not consider social sanctions as a reason for participation. The findings show a greater sense of affiliation within the others- group. This belonging can be a push factor if the community wants change. Humphrey and Weinstein said that “Strong communities that can monitor individual behavior and bring to bear a variety of social sanctions are essential when it comes to recruitment and participation in war” (2008 page 443). Strong communities can start collective action, if it is in the community’s interests.

Both are linked to the risk group from Freetown and Others group when it comes to political attitudes and political foundation, and without having any strong correlation to age.

7.1.5 Summary: Effect of being a Child Soldier

The findings and the theory show that the former child soldiers in this study, and especially those in Freetown are at risk for new recruitment. They have no connection to their family or local community, they are struggling in relation to employment and education, and they show they have not managed to redefine their identity since the war. These trigger factors create vulnerability and may pose a threat to society. The youngest is also a threat when it comes to political attitudes, and it can be associated with a large question mark on how long the former child soldiers can cope with the way their lives are at the present.

This is also supported by the theory of "the lost generation". The informants from Freetown group fall into this category.

Boothby’s (year) study of children in Mozambique found that not all former child soldiers developed mental problems. The findings related to the Freetown-group establish a good basis for a similar study, and see how the risk factors informants have makes affects their mental health.

7.2 Effect of Faction and War Experience

My findings do not suggest that the risk of new-recruitment depends on whether someone was RUF or CDF, but former RUF child soldiers have formed their own community in Freetown. The Freetown group fits the description that Humphrey and Weinstein (2004) gave of the typical RUF soldier. The Freetown group also possesses all the factors that Richards (1996) found explained recruitment to the RUF.

Lack of educational opportunities, dissatisfaction with the government, bad living conditions, and a feeling of abandonment have been mentioned by Richards(1996). These describe the situation of the informants from Freetown; should another conflict break out, there is nothing to suggest that these factors will prevent this group from returning to battle.

The Coalition to Stop the Use of Child Soldiers (2008) says that age of the soldier and length of the war will be decisive factors in the lives of soldiers in the postwar period.

There is nothing in the findings that suggest that the length of soldiering has had any impact on how life is today for any of my informants. In the findings we see that the informants have been soldiers from three months to eleven years without that having any impact on their social process. The findings indicate that the way they identify themselves is of importance. The members of the Freetown group identify as child soldiers regardless of their experiences in that role.

Annan (2009), Lomo and Hovil (2004), Lazarus and Folkman (1984), and Dohrenwend and Dohrenwend (1974), indicate that ex-combatants' resilience after the war will be affected by what happened during the war and what happens afterwards.

People affected by war and fighting forces will differ with regard to the frequency, duration and severity of their experiences, as well as the accumulation of war related stressors. And regarding to the post war situation both Boothby (2006), Kingma (2004), Wessels (2006)(2005), Betancourt(2008) all points out that their life depends on the family and community support, and on the resources that are available in their communities.

My findings suggest that what happened during the war is of no significance, but the age at which someone became a soldier and what happened after the war is of great significance on a person's current situation and whether or not he or she poses a risk to society.

7.2.1 Summary: Effect of Faction and war experience

Faction and the war experience have no direct effect on whether former soldiers are a threat to their society, but their faction has helped to create a lasting identity for young men

7.3 Effect of the DDR.

There has evidently been a positive effect of the DDR program. Many of the informants who completed the program have found jobs, acquired an education, and have good relationships with their families and communities. These were the objectives of the DDR program.

However, it is difficult to say how important the DDR program has been in Sierra Leone, and how much is due to unrelated changes, or to the person. What is clear from the findings is that informants from the "Other-Group" tend to believe that the program has worked, and that the group from Freetown is clear that it has not.

Boothby (2006), Kingma (2004), Wessels (2006)(2005), and Betancourt (2008) claim that the issue of reintegration is based on how social acceptance. Erikson (1968) and Wessel (2006) state that identity is a vital factor in change.

Because of the large differences in findings, the design of the program might be less decisive than the person in the program.

The findings indicate that it was easier for someone to get a good reintegration, and that this can be tied to how external factors such as job opportunity, education, families and communities has helped to facilitate reintegration. It is also clear that the facilities in the

hometown were easier accessible to the oldest informants and that this may be attributed to having a role in the community even before the war.

Age in itself can create difficulties, and regardless of which physical measures to be initiated, age will be a challenge. This has been supported by Erikson (1968) and Wessel (2006). My informants from Freetown, who were very young when they entered the war, confirm these views.

On this basis, it is difficult to blame the DDR program for the vulnerability of many of the informants, but it is nevertheless important to point out that the program should have a goal of change for the soldier, and that it has failed the informants from Freetown. Document analysis in this study also indicates that some of this vulnerability could have been avoided if the lessons learned had been taken more seriously.

7.3.1 The DDR-program's responsibility

As Colletta (1996) mentions, long-term reintegration make a big difference. The documents presented earlier in this paper show that organizations that carried out the DDR program had learned some lessons.

For and assess on whether the DDR program may say something about the threat picture anno 2010, we must look at the R in DDR; the Reintegration.

The document analysis showed that those implicated in the exercise of DDR has prepared Lesson Learned. These evaluations showed that there were a number of challenges in the continuing work related to reintegration. If we compare Lesson Learned with the informants' lives, we see that many of the same challenges are present today, and the question is whether this could have been prevented by a greater effort toward long-term goals.

- i. Economic opportunities for former soldiers are the basis for stability. The government must take this into consideration and make plans for this so it will have a long term effect.
- ii. Education should be the highest priority in a child's reintegration.

The members of the Freetown group feel neglected and unrecognized. This has embittered them

iii. Reintegration means that the child soldier must acknowledge and commit that he / she will be a part of society, and society has to accept him / her as a member. This obligation must be implemented in the reintegration.

It is possible that the DDR program could have prevented some of this bitterness. The findings show that many former soldiers found a place in their communities and found a sense of belonging. Findings also show that the people who have re-integrated best had been in their twenties when they became soldiers. Those who have redefined their roles are those that have fared better. This is clearly among the younger ones in the Other-group.

iiii. Reintegration of former soldiers is a long process. We need to move the focus from the label as soon as possible, to get them into the locally-based reintegration

v. Long term thinking related to reintegration should be given priority, and it must be viewed in the context of demobilization and disarmament. Donors should be encouraged to think long term in their efforts

This is a contrast to how informants in the Freetown-group describe their situation. The members of the Freetown group want their role as former child soldiers placed on the political agenda. Freetown group saw themselves as victims in a war that adults had started.

At the same time, some former soldiers have shed their wartime identity and moved on with their lives.

The redefinition of identity and role are important factors in reintegration. This is a combination of how the community facilitator for the new role-taking and how willing the former soldier is to assume new roles.

The informants who still associate themselves in the role of former child soldier, was at an age during the war where testing of the status and role-taking may have a vital impact on the formation of identity, which may be very difficult to re-define later in life, if they don't get a supplement that give them new positive roles. This is supported by Erikson (1968).

vi. Family reunification is essential for good reintegration.

It is difficult to say what DDR could have done differently in relation to family reunification, but there is consensus both in theory and in the findings that family reunification is essential for reintegration and that it is the people which isn't in contact with family, that struggles the most.

vii. Sierra Leone is comprised of over 50% Youths. When a former child soldier is finished with the DDR programs they become part of this group.. It means that he / she enters into a majority group which may have a large power. Youths are defined as the greatest threat to society, because they are a majority. This must be taken into account in future planning for the country, Sierra Leone, both nationally and internationally.

56 % of Sierra Leone's population is under age 25. All of the representatives from NGOs, stakeholders and governmental organizations believed that the country was vulnerable because of its enormous youth population and the lack of opportunities.

Young people are a vulnerable group, and this makes them a risk to society. The informants from Freetown are trying link their youth culture with their identity as former child soldiers. This has been difficult for them.

The Freetown-group tried to play many roles, and to create its own youth. This culture contained many of the factors that lay in the role they took being soldiers, partying, fighting, and a hunger for respect and money. This mix of roles does not create a knowledge that the informants from Freetown is about to re establish itself, but is rather a warning, and which constitute a threat.

7.3.3 Summary: DDR

DDR have had a positive effect, but not for everyone, and it must be of interest to those who carried out this program to continue working with those who have not experienced effect, as it turns out clearly in the theory that a good long-term reintegration can have a profound effect on Sierra Leone.

It is not possible to say that the informants is a risk in the community because of DDR, but the DDR is responsible for development, and the program must take into account their own

evaluations of the program to prevent new crisis. The current situation could have been predicted, and the challenges shown in Lesson Learned should be on the agenda at all times.

Not everyone will benefit from the DDR program; success depends on a person's qualities, maturity and ability to learn.

8.0 Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to assess whether ex-combatants pose a threat in a post war country. This is important because post war countries have challenges and the society has to be aware of all the components which could threaten peace.

This research has focused on the threat picture in Sierra Leone, which is struggling with the after-effects of war. Sierra Leone has scheduled elections for 2012, and many international voices have said that this will be the final test of the peace in Sierra Leone. It was therefore necessary to ascertain whether the soldiers; who fought throughout the eleven-year civil war are troublemakers or peacemakers in the run-up to the elections.

If former soldiers pose a threat to society in Sierra Leone, this study wanted to reveal how this could happen. This knowledge can be used to develop and improve efforts in countries that are in danger renewed conflicts.

If former soldiers in Sierra Leone do not pose a threat to society, this is also useful knowledge. By analyzing the processes that led to the present situation, it is possible to obtain new knowledge about what has been done correctly.

It is evident in this study that some groups of former soldiers may pose a threat to society. This may be caused by their age entering the war. It is clear in this study that most of those who were very young when they became soldiers, are struggling to reintegrate in society.

Their life contains components which, according to the theory and findings, make them a threat to society.

They have no connection to their family or local community, they are struggling in relation to employment and education, and they show they have not managed to redefine their identity since the war. These trigger factors create vulnerability and may pose a threat to society.

It appears through this study that those who have contact with his family, education, and, or the job has managed to reintegrate into society in a positive way and cannot be seen as a threat. It is evident that this is those which were the oldest ones when they became soldiers.

It is evident in this study that faction and the war experience have no direct effect on whether former soldiers are a threat to their society, but their faction has helped to create a lasting identity for young men. It is evident in this study that former soldiers that are struggling after the war find a sense of belonging among other former soldiers from the same faction.

It is evident in this study that DDR have had a positive effect, but not for everyone. It appears through the study that it is those which were oldest when entering the war, which had most value from the DDR-program.

On this foundation, I believe it is important to look at the entrance age becoming a soldier in the preparation of measures in a post war country. I also believe that it is important to take in consideration that not everyone will benefit from the DDR program; success depends on a person's identity, qualities, maturity and ability to learn, and this must be taken into consideration when the program will be evaluated and renewed.

Based on the findings from this study, I am of the belief that Sierra Leone must take seriously the situation of those who were child soldiers throughout the war, and steer them in directions that can help them redefine their identity. This paper started with saying that post-conflict societies are confronted with overwhelming challenges, and the challenge concerning former child soldiers is just one of the challenges Sierra Leone faces. Based on this study I am still of the opinion that this group must be given priority .If this group is not being taken seriously, they can pose a threat towards the election in 2012.

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11.0 Appendix

1: DDR IN SIERRA LEONE

2: CHILDSOLDIERS

3: THE WAR IN SIERRA LEONE

APPENDIX 1

DDR IN SIERRA LEONE

Sierra Leone



Background

Situation Analysis/Context

Sierra Leone’s internal conflict reached troubling heights in the early 1990s. After being ruled by one President (Siaka Stevens) and having one sole political party (“All People’s Party”) from 1971-1985, Sierra Leoneans were ready for multi-party politics. However, Major General Joseph Momoh, elected in 1985, opposed multi-party expression, which led to the start of unrest in Sierra Leone. In early 1991, 100 Sierra Leonean and Liberian fighters attempted to overthrow Momoh. The Sierra Leonean dissidents were part of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) led by Foday Sankoh, a photographer and an ex-army corporal. Tensions escalated and full-fledged civil war broke out on March 23, 1991. The Liberian fighters joined Foday Sankoh in retaliation for Momoh’s support for ECOMOG (Economic Community of West Africa States’ Monitoring Group) which had prevented of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) from capturing of Monrovia during the conflict in neighbouring Liberia. In 1992, Momoh fled the country and Captain Valentine Strassy assumed the presidency, committing to multi-party politics and establishing the National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC). However in the background of Strassy’s political promises, discontent among the Sierra Leone Army (SLA) rose over continued poor conditions and some SLA members decided to join the RUF. They became known as “rebel soldiers” or “SOBELS,” claiming to be part of the SLA by day, but fighting for RUF by night. Throughout the conflict diplomatic efforts were made to resolve the crisis. Among them were negotiations that led to the signing of the Abidjan Peace Agreement on November 30, 1996 and the Conakry Peace Plan on October 23, 1997. However these efforts for peace were hampered when on 25 May 1997 Major J.P. Koroma led a coup which ousted the newly elected government of President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah. The coup confirmed the collaboration between the option parties of the (SLA) and the (RUF). To add to the mix, Koroma created the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and asked the RUF to collaborate in the Junta government, forcing President Kabbah into exile in Conakry, Guinea. Realizing the growing strength of the rebels and in order to protect themselves against the "SOBELS", the local population formed local armed militia known as the Civil Defense Force (CDF), exacerbating the conflict.

In 1998, exiled President Kabbah took decisive action and re-assumed power with the help of ECOMOG troops assisted by the Komajors (mostly made up of village hunters) and a British company called Sandline. Following Kabbah's return to Freetown in February 1998, the Government of Sierra Leone (GoSL) backed by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the United Nations, embarked on a policy framework to end the conflict, pursue peace and reconciliation, and undertake the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of combatants of the SLA, RUF, CDF and AFRC. In July of 1998 the GoSL established the National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (NCDDR). As this is a national policy and programme guidance policy, the body is chaired by the President and incorporates national sentiments into the process while working in coordination with international and regional organizations. An Executive Secretariat was also established, responsible for the overall programme planning and implementation. Prior to the resolution of the conflict in Sierra Leone there were three peace agreements signed: the Abidjan Peace Accord of November 30, 1996; the Conakry Peace Plan of October 23, 1997; and the Lome Peace Accord of July 7, 1999. The Lome Peace Agreement eventually became the operational document for the peace process in Sierra Leone. Included in the text was a provision for a comprehensive disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programme that was based on the GoSL developing a programme framework in close collaboration with relevant stakeholders.

In 1999, the UN Security Council established UNAMSIL and under Chapter 6 of the UN charter contributed a force of 6,000 peacekeepers. This force was later increased to 17,500 peacekeepers when it replaced the ECOWAS troops in an effort to maintain the peace accords. The RUF, which at the time was backed by Charles Taylor, the President of Liberia, took 500 members of UNAMSIL hostage, effectively breaking the Lomé agreements. This led to increased international mediation efforts and in May of 2001 the Second Abuja agreement was signed which, during its implementation in January of 2002, effectively ended Sierra Leone's 11-year civil war. With the end of the civil war, elections were held, and Kabbah was re-elected as President. Additionally, a Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established and the interim forces withdrew, leaving a monitoring force to assist with DDR and to observe the peace agreement.

DDR Strategy and Approach

The Sierra Leone Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration program (DDRP) was officially completed in February of 2004. The successful DDR program in Sierra Leone helped to finalize and create an environment conducive for sustainable peace and development. The Sierra Leone DDR programme, as is seen in DDR programs in other post conflict countries, underwent a series of turbulent periods in which early peace agreements were derailed before the final negotiated agreement. The DDR program was an initiative of the Government of Sierra Leone designed to help consolidate peace and begin the process of rebuilding the country after a decade of civil conflict, this helped to put the concern for civil society and the rehabilitation of the nation at the forefront of peace. Throughout the period between September 1998 and January 2002, the Disarmament and Demobilization of the combatants in Sierra Leone went through three (3) distinct phases and an interim phase which are mentioned below.

Mandate and DDR provision in the CPA

Security Council resolution **1181 (1998)** of 13 July 1998 stated that UNAMSIL was to:

- Monitor the military and security situation in the country as a whole, as security conditions permit, and provide the Special Representative of the Secretary-General with regular information thereon, allowing him/her to determine when conditions were sufficiently secure to allow subsequent deployments of military observers beyond the first phase;
- Monitor the disarmament and demobilization of former combatants concentrated in secure areas of the country, including monitoring of the role of the Military Observer Group (ECOMOG) of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in the provision of security and in the collection and destruction of arms in those secure areas;
- Assist in monitoring respect for international humanitarian law, including at disarmament and demobilization sites, where security conditions permit;
- Monitor the voluntary disarmament and demobilization of members of the Civil Defense Forces (CDF), as security conditions permit.”

In the aftermath of the rebel attack, Special Representative Francis Okelo, in consultation with West African states, initiated a series of diplomatic efforts aimed at opening up dialogue with the rebels. Negotiations between the Government and the rebels began in May 1999 and on 7 July all parties to the conflict signed **an agreement in** Lome to end hostilities and form a government of national unity.

The Lome Peace Agreement included numerous requests for international involvement, specifically that of the United Nations, in implementing provisions contained therein, and required a substantial increase in the role of UNOMSIL and, accordingly, in its human and administrative resources. **Reporting** to the Security Council on 30 July 1999, the Secretary-General outlined a number of measures to maintain momentum in the peace process, and recommended that the Council approve, as an immediate first step, the provisional expansion of UNOMSIL. The Secretary-General indicated that following discussions with all interested parties, he would submit additional recommendations on the overall activities of the United Nations in Sierra Leone, including the mandate and structure of a United Nations peacekeeping presence in the country.

On 20 August, Security Council resolution **1260 (1999)**, authorized the provisional expansion of UNOMSIL up to 210 military observers along with the necessary equipment and administrative and medical support to perform the tasks set out in the report of the Secretary-General. It also authorized the strengthening of the political, civil affairs, information, human rights and child protection elements of the Mission.

Aim and Objectives

The main aim of the DDR program was to assist the government in stabilizing the region and ensuring peace within the nation. The objective was to disarm combatants and reintegrate them back into society to ensure peace and development of the nation.

Eligibility and Criteria

In order to participate in the DDR programme in Sierra Leone, every combatant was required to demonstrate participation as an adult or child as a combatant member of the following fighting forces:

- Revolutionary United Front/ Paramilitary Groups
- Armed Forces of Sierra Leone
- Civil Defense Force

AND

- Present acceptable proof of participation in the armed conflict as a combatant member of at least one of the above mentioned groups, including :
- Presentation of a serviceable weapon by each combatant
- Presentation of a group weapon and munitions, an acceptable ratio of 2/3 persons to weapons with appropriate rounds of munitions, TBD (i.e. valid SLA number)

OR

- Be an underage combatant, accompanying minor, unaccompanied minor or any other participant under the age of 18, presenting themselves at the Reception Centre with any of the above mentioned groups.

Approach

The DDR programme in Sierra Leone adopted a phased approach. It was carried out in three phases:

Phase 1 (September to December 1998)

Phase 2 (October 1999 to April 2000)

Phase 3 (18 May 2001 to 6 January 2002)

Phase 1 (September to December 1998)

The initial DDR programme, which was prepared in April 1998, was to be implemented by the Government with the assistance of the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), targeting all persons who belonged to any of the armed groups that participated in the civil war following the coup of May 25, 1997 i.e. a total of about 75,000 combatants (10,000 ex-SLA/AFRC; 55,000 CDF; 7,000 RUF and 3000 child combatants as well as 300 disabled).

This programme was reviewed in July 1998 with the assistance of the World Bank, soon after the establishment of the NCDDR (recommended by the World Bank based on the Ugandan model). It targeted about 45,000 combatants (6,000 SLA; 15,000 RUF, 15,000 CDF, 7,000 AFRC and 2,000 paramilitary elements). During this phase, about 3,200 combatants were disarmed, mostly ex-SLA/AFRC who surrendered to ECOMOG. This phase was interrupted following the deterioration of the security situation and a rebel attack on Freetown on 6 January 1999.

Phase 2 (October 1999 to April 2000)

The second phase was implemented based on the framework of the Lomé Peace Agreement signed on 7 July 1999, which, in its Article XVI, called for the disarmament of all the combatants of the RUF/SL, CDF, SLA and paramilitary groups. This Agreement came as a result of the talks that took place between the Government and the RUF following the signing of the Ceasefire Agreement on 19 May 1999, which also requested the United Nations to deploy Military Observers to monitor the ceasefire. During this phase, UN presence in Sierra Leone was strengthened with the establishment of the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) by Security Council's resolution 1270 (22 October 1999), which succeeded ECOMOG, with a mandate to carry out the disarmament of combatants.

Accordingly, the DDR programme was further reviewed and redesigned to represent a multi-agency effort, through an agreed Joint Operation Plan involving the Government of Sierra Leone, ECOMOG, UNAMSIL, UNICEF (United Nations Children's Fund), the World Food Programme (WFP) and other agencies and donors. During this phase, a total of 18,898 were disarmed. This phase was also interrupted by the resumption of hostilities in May 2000, which also resulted in the hostage-taking of over 500 peacekeepers by the RUF.

This interruption had serious implications on both the political situation (exclusion of RUF members from government, arrest and detention of Foday Sankoh and other senior RUF members, as well as Sankoh's replacement by Issa Sesay) and on the DDR programme, including the re-arming of many ex-combatants and the suspension of the Transitional Safety Allowance (TSA). A low-key disarmament continued sporadically, which brought about the disarmament of 2,600 combatants in what is referred to as an Interim phase (May 2000 to 17 May 2001).

Phase 3 (18 May 2001 to 6 January 2002)

The third and most significant phase came as a result of intensive concerted efforts by ECOWAS and the United Nations to bring the peace process back on track. Subsequently a ceasefire was signed in Abuja on 10 November 2000, and an agreement was reached on 2 May 2001 between The Government of Sierra Leone and the RUF to resume the disarmament. Accordingly, the disarmament was simultaneously re-launched in Port Loko (CDF) and Kambia (RUF) on 18 May 2001.

The third and final phase of the DDR process, which got underway in May 2001, was successful largely because the parties to the conflict had all realized that, for a variety of reasons, military victory was not within grasp. The government of Sierra Leone came to fully understand that it could not eliminate the insurgency and could not rely on the allegiance of its own army. For their part, the rebels factored in British military intervention and regional development, particularly the embargo on Liberia and the precarious position of the government there. These considerations, together with the change in the leadership of the RUF, resulted in a more robust commitment to the peaceful resolution of the conflict. The commitment of all parties to the peace process deepened, and DDR became a means to achieving peace rather than a tactical maneuver aimed at buying time.

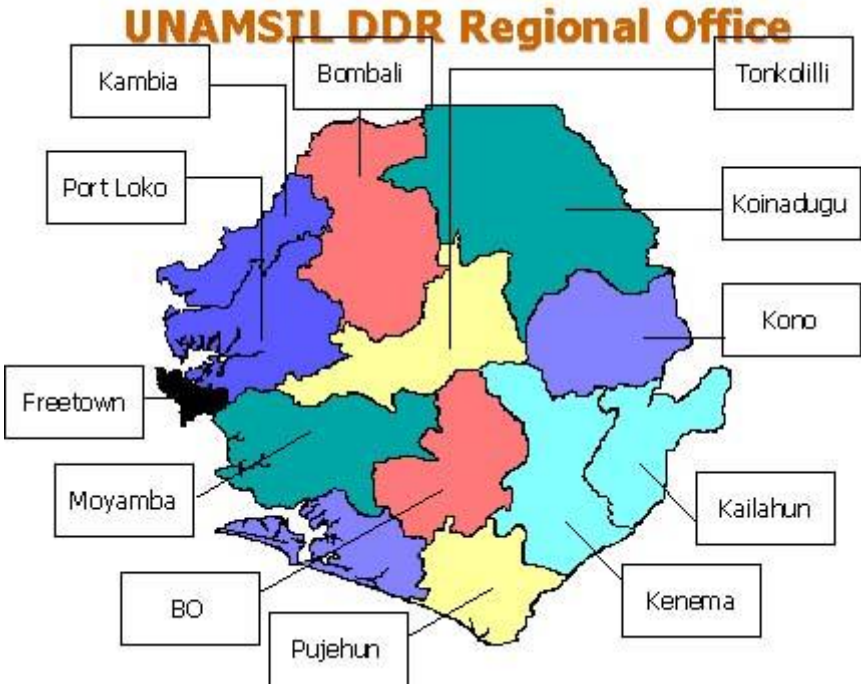
On 18 January 2002, President Alhaji Dr. Ahmad Tejan-Kabbah declared the decade-old civil war ended with the completion of disarmament and demobilization of former RUF and CDF combatants in all 12 districts of the country. Based on the conclusions from numerous studies commissioned by NCDDR and World Bank, as well as studies by independent consultants, institutions and other international organizations, it can be stated that most ex-combatants have now returned to their families and communities and, like all other Sierra Leoneans, are making some contribution to national recovery.

Operational Structure and Framework

The National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (NCDDR) is responsible for all policy decision on issues identified by TCC or due to political considerations.

The Executive Secretariat headed by the Executive Secretary was responsible for programme design, co-ordinating and management and monitoring the activities of the implementation partners.

The UNAMSIL DDR Cell was responsible for assisting the implementation of the disarmament and demobilization phases. UNAMSIL’s assistance included providing internal and external security in all DDR facilities; establishment of disarmament/reception centers and weapons storage centers and weapons verification at the reception centers and screening and registration of ex-combatants at the demobilization centers. UNICEF conducted screening of child combatants at demobilization centers and family unification for abducted and/or separated children.



Area of Activity

Disarmament

Disarmament entailed the collection, registration, disabling and destruction of all conventional weapons and munitions retrieved from the combatants during the period. This took place in designated reception center centers. About 72,490 people were disarmed. Over 30,000 weapons were collected.

Target Ex-combatant Beneficiary Groups and Actual Program Participation at Disarmament stage

| Target Beneficiary Group | Original Estimated Population | Actual Numbers | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------|-------------|
| Revolutionary United Front | 15,000 | 24,352 | 162% |

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|---------------|---------------|-------------|
| Civil Defense Forces | 15,000 | 37,377 | 249% |
| AFRC/ex-SLA | 13,000 | 8,527 | 66% |
| Other Paramilitary Groups | 2,000 | 2,234 | 112% |
| Program Total | 45,000 | 72,490 | 161% |

Subsidiary Disarmament: Community Arms Collection & Development (CACD)

Upon completion of the disarmament of the factions, it was expected that some weapons (Small Arms Light Weapons – SALW) may remain hidden in the bush or among the community. These included licensable weapons such as shotguns. In order to sustain the momentum associated with the peace process and the desire to develop capacity of the Sierra Leone Police (SLP), UNDP supported by UNAMSIL, led the Community Arms Collection and Destruction Program (CACD) in mid 2002. This particular program occurred in parallel with the development and processing of appropriate licensing legislation. More than 9,000 weapons, predominantly shot guns, were collected.

The program has been expanded and extended to different districts of the country and is now called Arms for Development (AFD). It aims at certifying each chiefdom as “Arms Free” and developing a mindset towards a weapons free society. Specifically, AFD provides development incentives valued at \$20,000 to each chiefdom which achieves the "Arms Free" rating. The appropriate licensing legislation is now at an advanced stage of processing.

Between 2003 and January 2005, over 1,487 weapons have been collected. The UNAMSIL DDR Co-ordination Section UNAMSIL was the focal point in collaboration with UNDP for communications in relation to psychosocial aspects of the program and for supporting the communities in all aspects of the utilization of the development incentives.

Demobilization

Demobilization entailed the reception and re-orientation of ex-combatants for the re-entry into civil society, which took place in designated centers. At the point, all command structures were dismantled to prevent a regrouping. The children were also separated from the adults and sent to care centers for reunification with their families. About 71,043 people went through this process and were duly registered.

Assistant to Children and Female Combatants

Of the number disarmed and demobilized, 4,751 were women while 6845 were children below the age of 18years. Within the context of the DDR program children of armed conflict were targeted with the assistance of UNICEF for the removal of children as combatants and the reintegration of them back into society. This entailed social and trauma counseling as well as life skills training. Women were also targeted and given counseling and were demobilized and their specific needs were addressed throughout the programs. **For more information, please see the UNICEF DDR Lessons Learned on Sierra Leone.**

Disarmament Statistics

| Category Disarmed | Phase I (Sept.- Dec.1998) | Phase II (Oct.1999- April 2000) | Interim Phase (May 2000- 17 May | Phase III (18 May 2001- Jan.2002) | Total |
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--|--|--|--------------|
|--------------------------|----------------------------------|--|--|--|--------------|

| | | | 2001 | | |
|--|-------|--------|-------|--------|--------|
| RUF | 187 | 4,130 | 768 | 19,267 | 24,352 |
| AFRC | 0 | 2,129 | 445 | 0 | 2,574 |
| Discharged/Ex-SLA | 2,994 | 2,366 | 593 | 0 | 5,953 |
| CDF | 2 | 8,800 | 524 | 28,051 | 37,377 |
| Others (including paramilitary) | 0 | 1,473 | 298 | 463 | 2,234 |
| Total | 3,183 | 18,898 | 2,628 | 47,781 | 72,490 |

Total Disarmed Children and Adults

| Category Disarmed | Phase I | Phase II | Interim Phase | Phase III | Total |
|-------------------|---------|----------|---------------|-----------|--------|
| Children | 189 | 1,982 | 402 | 4,272 | 6,845 |
| ADULTS | 2,994 | 16,916 | 2,226 | 43,509 | 65,645 |
| Total | 3,183 | 18,898 | 2,628 | 47,781 | 72,490 |

Total Demobilized Children and Adults

| Category Demobilized | Phase I | Phase II | Interim Phase | Phase III | Total |
|----------------------|---------|----------|---------------|-----------|--------|
| Children | 189 | 1,982 | 402 | 4,272 | 6,845 |
| ADULTS | 2,994 | 15,469 | 2,226 | 43,509 | 64,198 |
| Total | 3,183 | 17,451 | 2,628 | 47,781 | 71,043 |

Total Discharged Children and Adults

| Category Discharged | Phase I | Phase II | Interim Phase | Phase III | Total |
|---------------------|---------|----------|---------------|-----------|--------|
| Children | 189 | 1,982 | 402 | 4,272 | 6,845 |
| ADULTS | 1,414 | 15,469 | 2,226 | 43,509 | 62,618 |
| Total | 1,603 | 17,451 | 2,628 | 47,781 | 69,463 |

Number of combatants Disarmed and Demobilized

| | Disarmament | Demobilization |
|--------------|---------------|----------------|
| Men | 60,894 | 59,447 |
| Women | 4,751 | 4,751 |
| Children | 6,845 | 6,845 |
| Total | 72,490 | 71,043 |

Note: Discrepancies between disarmament and demobilization are the result of “lost” combatants during the January 1999 Freetown attack and May 2000 resumption of hostilities following RUF hostage-taking of UNAMSIL troops.

Reintegration

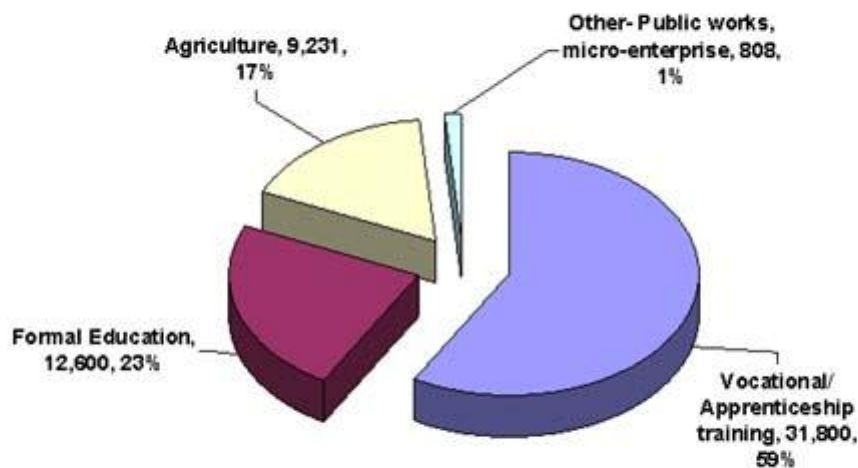
The Reintegration program in Sierra Leone started in 2000/2001 and was completed in January 2004. 56,700 former combatants registered for reintegration support by December 2002 (almost one year after the completion of disarmament and demobilization). By 31 January 2004, a total of 51,122 had been supported in the following categories:

- Vocational/Apprenticeship (28,901)
- Formal Education (12,182)
- Agriculture (9,231)
- Job placement (444)
- Others (364)

About 2,800 out of the 3,500 remaining caseload that could not take advantage of the Reintegration Opportunity Program (ROP) for various reasons were given a one-time payment package, equivalent to USD150. As most ex-combatants had no skills, the ROPs provided them with the opportunity to learn some skills. This was an incentive for them to return to their towns of origin. About 54,439 people participated. Various skills were taught such as carpentry, masonry, and tailoring in order to assist ex-combatants in returning to society and to provide them with skills that could be used in entrepreneurship.

Below is chart showing participation in the Reintegration program.

Ex-combatants that benefitted from Reintegration Support.



Under a joint operational plan in cooperation with OCHA, FAO, UNICEF, WHO and UNOPS, WFP provided food aid support to the national DDR program in Sierra Leone from April 2000 to October 2001. 45,000 former combatants received food benefits, condiments and utensils. Additionally, some dependents who accompanied former combatants to the camps received benefits. WFP also provided food support to parallel rehabilitation programs for children affiliated with the armed forces and groups in Interim Child Care centers (ICCs) established by UNICEF. WFP partnered with Oxfam, Save the Children and the International Rescue Committee in the implementing the program.

As part of a comprehensive HIV strategy which targets various groups and communities, UNFPA is supporting reintegration programs for ex combatants by using HIV prevention and promotion of Reproductive Health as a tool of social cohesion and reconstruction in the country. In addition, UNFPA is also providing psychosocial support and counseling, occupational training and skills development which have given hundreds of abused and traumatized boys and girls hope for their future. Many of these girls are no more coerced into survival sex work as they learn alternate skills to generate income.

Resource Mobilization

Voluntary Contributions (2002-2005)

Estimated cost of DDR activities: US\$80 million

Amount committed US\$80 million

Assessed Contributions

2001/02 Approved appropriation of US\$587, 000 in staff costs;

2002/03 Approved appropriation of US \$596,400 in staff costs for 3 posts;

2003/04 Approved appropriation of US \$ 606, 000 in staff costs for 3 posts;

2004/05 Approved appropriation of US \$ 84, 200 in staff costs for 2 posts

Current Challenges and Updates

During the initial meeting of the United Nations Peace building Commission on Sierra Leone held in New York on 19 July 2006, the Foreign Minister of Sierra Leone stressed that the problem of youth unemployment was compounded by large numbers of ex-combatants and school dropouts who could be a source of threat to security.

The volatile security and political situation in Sierra Leone's immediate neighborhood remains a concern, which can be expected to continue to present serious security challenges for the country. While Sierra Leone is making commendable efforts to rebuild good-

neighborly relations, those efforts should be underpinned by the revitalization of the Mano River Union and the construction of new mechanisms for security cooperation among Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Liberia.

In the meantime, it is hoped that continued peacekeeping engagement in Liberia in the post-election period will remain a key stabilizing factor for both Sierra Leone and the wider Mano River basin. Concerted efforts to resolve the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire will also be important for Sierra Leone, as the presence of armed combatants in any country in the West Africa sub region does not bode well for the stability of all.

The following lessons learned were identified from the DDR program in Sierra Leone:

- The duration of the 6 months skills training was insufficient and did not provide the recipients with the required experience to favorably compete in the labor market.
- Monitoring at the community level for social trends during the DDR process could have helped in identifying combatants and other individuals who were genuinely left out as these particular groups feel disgruntled and marginalized. Foreign fighters, especially from within the sub-region, and Women associated with fighting forces (WAFF) fall under this category.
- There was remnant discrimination against ex-combatants in the labor market because of their background.
- People generally attribute public wrongdoing in the community to ex-combatants.
- The slow pace of revamping and re-invigorating the private sector activity is a major setback in addressing youth unemployment and poverty reduction.
- The loose linkages between the DDR program other longer-term reintegration and recovery programs in the country have affected the smooth transition to longer-term recovery.

Appendix 2

CHILDSOLDIERS

In relation to the role of children in armed conflict, the above perception of children as vulnerable is strongly emphasized. In May 2000, an Optional Protocol to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict raised the minimum age for soldiering from fifteen to eighteen years. However, in armed forces, sixteen is still the minimum age for voluntary recruitment, whereas armed non-governmental groups “should not, under any circumstances, recruit or use in hostilities persons under the age of eighteen”. This suggests that recruitment of children is increasingly condemned by the international community and that forced recruitment of children is widely accepted as a violation of international law. Thus, despite the uneven and much criticized distinctions within the law, the overall raise in age shows a paradigm shift in the perception of the role of children in war.

The Optional Protocol came out three years after the Cape Town principles had further specified the definition by claiming that a child soldier is:

“Any person under 18 years of age who is part of any kind of regular or irregular armed force or armed group in any capacity, including but not limited to cooks, porters, messengers, and those accompanying such groups, other than purely as family members. It includes girls recruited for sexual purposes and forced marriage. It does not, therefore, only refer to a child who is carrying or has carried arms.”

Thus, the principles include a broad specter of different functions that child soldiers can have in combat, and which are not only related to direct participation. This shows that views of the role of children in armed conflict have changed from an acknowledgement of the phenomenon as a problem in 1977, when the age of intersection was set at fifteen, to 2000,

when this age was raised to eighteen and the definition became based on the inclusive and detailed Cape Town principles.

**Adopted and opened for signature, ratification and
accession by General Assembly resolution A/RES/54/263**

of 25 May 2000

entry into force 12 February 2002

The States Parties to the present Protocol,

Encouraged by the overwhelming support for the Convention on the Rights of the Child, demonstrating the widespread commitment that exists to strive for the promotion and protection of the rights of the child,

Reaffirming that the rights of children require special protection, and calling for continuous improvement of the situation of children without distinction, as well as for their development and education in conditions of peace and security,

Disturbed by the harmful and widespread impact of armed conflict on children and the long-term consequences it has for durable peace, security and development,

Condemning the targeting of children in situations of armed conflict and direct attacks on objects protected under international law, including places that generally have a significant presence of children, such as schools and hospitals,

Noting the adoption of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, in particular, the inclusion therein as a war crime, of conscripting or enlisting children under the age of 15 years or using them to participate actively in hostilities in both international and non-international armed conflict,

Considering therefore that to strengthen further the implementation of rights recognized in the Convention on the Rights of the Child there is a need to increase the protection of children from involvement in armed conflict,

Noting that article 1 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child specifies that, for the purposes of that Convention, a child means every human being below the age of 18 years unless, under the law applicable to the child, majority is attained earlier,

Convinced that an optional protocol to the Convention that raises the age of possible recruitment of persons into armed forces and their participation in hostilities will contribute effectively to the implementation of the principle that the best interests of the child are to be a primary consideration in all actions concerning children,

Noting that the twenty-sixth International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent in December 1995 recommended, inter alia, that parties to conflict take every feasible step to ensure that children below the age of 18 years do not take part in hostilities,

Welcoming the unanimous adoption, in June 1999, of International Labour Organization Convention No. 182 on the Prohibition and Immediate Action for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labour, which prohibits, inter alia, forced or compulsory recruitment of children for use in armed conflict?

Condemning with the gravest concern the recruitment, training and use within and across national borders of children in hostilities by armed groups distinct from the armed forces of a State, and recognizing the responsibility of those who recruit, train and use children in this regard,

Recalling the obligation of each party to an armed conflict to abide by the provisions of international humanitarian law,

Stressing that the present Protocol is without prejudice to the purposes and principles contained in the Charter of the United Nations, including Article 51, and relevant norms of humanitarian law,

Bearing in mind that conditions of peace and security based on full respect of the purposes and principles contained in the Charter and observance of applicable human rights

instruments are indispensable for the full protection of children, in particular during armed conflict and foreign occupation,

Recognizing the special needs of those children who are particularly vulnerable to recruitment or use in hostilities contrary to the present Protocol owing to their economic or social status or gender,

Mindful of the necessity of taking into consideration the economic, social and political root causes of the involvement of children in armed conflict,

Convinced of the need to strengthen international cooperation in the implementation of the present Protocol, as well as the physical and psychosocial rehabilitation and social reintegration of children who are victims of armed conflict,

Encouraging the participation of the community and, in particular, children and child victims in the dissemination of informational and educational programmes concerning the implementation of the Protocol,

Have agreed as follows:

Article 1

States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that members of their armed forces who have not attained the age of 18 years do not take a direct part in hostilities.

Article 2

States Parties shall ensure that persons who have not attained the age of 18 years are not compulsorily recruited into their armed forces.

Article 3

1. States Parties shall raise the minimum age for the voluntary recruitment of persons into their national armed forces from that set out in article 38, paragraph 3, of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, taking account of the principles contained in that article and recognizing that under the Convention persons under the age of 18 years are entitled to special protection.

2. Each State Party shall deposit a binding declaration upon ratification of or accession to the present Protocol that sets forth the minimum age at which it will permit voluntary recruitment into its national armed forces and a description of the safeguards it has adopted to ensure that such recruitment is not forced or coerced.

3. States Parties that permit voluntary recruitment into their national armed forces under the age of 18 years shall maintain safeguards to ensure, as a minimum, that:

(a) Such recruitment is genuinely voluntary;

(b) Such recruitment is carried out with the informed consent of the person's parents or legal guardians;

(c) Such persons are fully informed of the duties involved in such military service;

(d) Such persons provide reliable proof of age prior to acceptance into national military service.

4. Each State Party may strengthen its declaration at any time by notification to that effect addressed to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall inform all States Parties. Such notification shall take effect on the date on which it is received by the Secretary-General.

5. The requirement to raise the age in paragraph 1 of the present article does not apply to schools operated by or under the control of the armed forces of the States Parties, in keeping with articles 28 and 29 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Article 4

1. Armed groups that are distinct from the armed forces of a State should not, under any circumstances, recruit or use in hostilities persons under the age of 18 years.

2. States Parties shall take all feasible measures to prevent such recruitment and use, including the adoption of legal measures necessary to prohibit and criminalize such practices.

3. The application of the present article shall not affect the legal status of any party to an armed conflict.

Article 5

Nothing in the present Protocol shall be construed as precluding provisions in the law of a State Party or in international instruments and international humanitarian law that are more conducive to the realization of the rights of the child.

Article 6

1. Each State Party shall take all necessary legal, administrative and other measures to ensure the effective implementation and enforcement of the provisions of the present Protocol within its jurisdiction.

2. States Parties undertake to make the principles and provisions of the present Protocol widely known and promoted by appropriate means, to adults and children alike.

3. States Parties shall take all feasible measures to ensure that persons within their jurisdiction recruited or used in hostilities contrary to the present Protocol are demobilized or otherwise released from service. States Parties shall, when necessary, accord to such persons all appropriate assistance for their physical and psychological recovery and their social reintegration.

Article 7

1. States Parties shall cooperate in the implementation of the present Protocol, including in the prevention of any activity contrary thereto and in the rehabilitation and social reintegration of persons who are victims of acts contrary thereto, including through technical cooperation and financial assistance. Such assistance and cooperation will be undertaken in consultation with the States Parties concerned and the relevant international organizations.

2. States Parties in a position to do so shall provide such assistance through existing multilateral, bilateral or other programmes or, inter alia, through a voluntary fund established in accordance with the rules of the General Assembly.

Article 8

1. Each State Party shall, within two years following the entry into force of the present Protocol for that State Party, submit a report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child

providing comprehensive information on the measures it has taken to implement the provisions of the Protocol, including the measures taken to implement the provisions on participation and recruitment.

2. Following the submission of the comprehensive report, each State Party shall include in the reports it submits to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, in accordance with article 44 of the Convention, any further information with respect to the implementation of the Protocol. Other States Parties to the Protocol shall submit a report every five years.

3. The Committee on the Rights of the Child may request from States Parties further information relevant to the implementation of the present Protocol.

Article 9

1. The present Protocol is open for signature by any State that is a party to the Convention or has signed it.

2. The present Protocol is subject to ratification and is open to accession by any State. Instruments of ratification or accession shall be deposited with the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

3. The Secretary-General, in his capacity as depositary of the Convention and the Protocol, shall inform all States Parties to the Convention and all States that have signed the Convention of each instrument of declaration pursuant to article 3.

Article 10

1. The present Protocol shall enter into force three months after the deposit of the tenth instrument of ratification or accession.

2. For each State ratifying the present Protocol or acceding to it after its entry into force, the Protocol shall enter into force one month after the date of the deposit of its own instrument of ratification or accession.

Article 11

1. Any State Party may denounce the present Protocol at any time by written notification to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, who shall thereafter inform the other States Parties to the Convention and all States that have signed the Convention. The denunciation shall take effect one year after the date of receipt of the notification by the Secretary-General. If, however, on the expiry of that year the denouncing State Party is engaged in armed conflict, the denunciation shall not take effect before the end of the armed conflict.

2. Such a denunciation shall not have the effect of releasing the State Party from its obligations under the present Protocol in regard to any act that occurs prior to the date on which the denunciation becomes effective. Nor shall such a denunciation prejudice in any way the continued consideration of any matter that is already under consideration by the Committee on the Rights of the Child prior to the date on which the denunciation becomes effective.

Article 12

1. Any State Party may propose an amendment and file it with the Secretary-General of the United Nations. The Secretary-General shall thereupon communicate the proposed amendment to States Parties with a request that they indicate whether they favour a conference of States Parties for the purpose of considering and voting upon the proposals. In the event that, within four months from the date of such communication, at least one third of the States Parties favour such a conference, the Secretary-General shall convene the conference under the auspices of the United Nations. Any amendment adopted by a majority of States Parties present and voting at the conference shall be submitted to the General Assembly of the United Nations for approval.

2. An amendment adopted in accordance with paragraph 1 of the present article shall enter into force when it has been approved by the General Assembly and accepted by a two-thirds majority of States Parties.

3. When an amendment enters into force, it shall be binding on those States Parties that have accepted it, other States Parties still being bound by the provisions of the present Protocol and any earlier amendments they have accepted.

Article 13

1. The present Protocol, of which the Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish texts are equally authentic, shall be deposited in the archives of the United Nations.

2. The Secretary-General of the United Nations shall transmit certified copies of the present Protocol to all States Parties to the Convention and all States that have signed the Convention.

APPENDIX 3

The war in Sierra Leone

1991

- 23 March, RUF enters Sierra Leone at Bomaru, Kailahun district
- A second group enters Sierra Leone a few days later at Bo Waterside, Pujehun district.
- 27 March, 300 RUF fighters capture the town of Buedu, Kailahun district
- April, supported by 1200 Nigerian and 300 Guinean forces the RSLMF still fails to contain the insurgents
- April, Guinean troops successfully defend the bridge at Daru
- April, Anti-Taylor Liberians in Sierra Leone form ULIMO to fight the RUF and advance to the mining and timber areas of Eastern Sierra Leone. One contingent bases itself afterwards at Matruon-the-Rails, near Bo
- June/July, the RUF controls a fifth of the country in southern and eastern SL
- July/August, a small Nigerian detachment is deployed to protect the bridge over the Sewa river, at Gondama, south of Bo
- August, President Momoh revises constitution to reintroduce a multi-party system, backed by 60% of voters in a referendum

1992

- March, according to the RUF, the Liberian special forces are sent back to Liberia
- 29 April, successful military coup by young officers from Daru
- April, RUF declares a unilateral ceasefire
- May, NPRC declares a state of emergency
- May, RUF calls a halt to ambushes and proposes peace-negotiations but the NPRC does not respond. Several key RUF figures are killed by the army and peace plans are off the agenda
- May, the RUF claims all Liberian Special Forces have left their side of the border.
- May, according to the RUF, NPRC representatives travel to Nigeria and Ghana seeking military aid
- An American Red Cross worker is taken hostage by the RUF
- September/October RUF enters Kono but is pushed out of Koidu in October
- November 1992 to January 1993: RUF controls Kono's diamond mining areas.

- December 29th, the execution of nine suspected coup plotters and seventeen other prisoners by the NPRC, makes the UK government cut 4 million pounds in aid

1993

- July, Chairman Strasser dismisses NPRC vice-chairman Solomon A. J. Musa, who is replaced by Lt. Julius Maada Bio. Musa is granted asylum in the UK.
- October, Strasser announces that elections will be held by the end of 1995
- Late 1993, RSLMF recapture Pendembu, Kailahun town and Koindu
- December, RUF retreat into the Gola forest

1994

- January, NPRC starts massive recruitment of youths in Freetown, army doubles in size to 6,000, later 15,000
- January, NPRC declares “total war”, but the RUF is executing lightning raids on the centre and north of the country
- February, 400 disgruntled troops from Teko Barracks in Makeni abscond and head east
- Ambushes on the Kenema-Bo and Makali-Masingbi highway increase
- October, an estimated 40% of new army recruits have defected and misbehave. Evidence of collusion with the RUF in attacks on civilians grows
- Irish priest (Fr. MacAlester) and Dutch medical missionary family (the Krijns) are killed in a RUF ambush at Panguma
- November, two UK volunteer aid workers taken hostage by the RUF in Kabala. Sankoh unsuccessfully demands recognition of the RUF and weapons in return for their release.
- RUF controls hills close to Freetown peninsula (Camp Four-Four, or Forfor, close to Bauya)
- 23 December, RUF attacks road junction at Mile 91 (from Camp Four-Four)
- 24 December, RUF attacks Kenema
- 27 December, RUF attacks Bo
- The camp of the Italian company resurfacing Bo-Taiama road, ten miles north-west of Bo, is destroyed by the RUF

1995

- January, Government sanctioned peace initiative is undertaken by local leaders in southern Pujehun but is unsuccessful. The RUF accuses the government of insincerity.

- January, the rutile mines at Mobimbi and bauxite mines at Mokanji in the south are attacked by the RUF, leading to their closure and more hostages taken
- 24 January, RUF attacks Kambia town, seizing weapons and new conscripts
- February-April, NPRC employs Gurkha mercenaries but these are ambushed by RUF and withdraw. (Their American commander, McKenzie, is killed on c. 24 February)
- March-July, after intervention by International Alert (a NGO) and the support of Ghanaian NPFL publicist Addai-Sebo, a number of hostages is released to the ICRC, after a 17 days march through the bush to the Guinea border.
- South African Executive Outcomes (EO) mercenaries are hired for cash and diamond concessions
- May, EO deploys in Freetown and starts first operation, reaching Masingbi on the same day, accompanied by Tom Nyuma, reaching Yengema the next day (Hooper 2002).
- EO clears the RUF from hills near Freetown, retakes the rutile and bauxite mines and secures Kono diamond fields in the following months
- August, due to civilian, national and international pressure, NPRC reschedules elections for February, 1996 and pursues a negotiated settlement with RUF.
- September, the RUF is prepared for new peace-negotiations
- October, a RUF advance around Serabu is halted by RSLMF troops and EO claims to have dislodged the Malal Hills camps and Camp Lion, after which small groups of RUF fighters surrender. RUF atrocities, in particular between Bo and Moyamba, increase
- 13 November: RUF's Isatu Kallon and James Massallay are arrested in Guinea and brought to Freetown (and interrogated by EO), attempting to make their way to Abidjan for preliminary negotiations
- RUF's Agnes Jalloh, Philip Palmer, Fayia Musa and Dr. Mohamed Barrie reach Abidjan for peace negotiations and meet with three London-based Sierra Leoneans; Ambrose Ganda, Omrie Golley and Oluniyi Robin-Coker
- December, EO captures Kono mining area from RUF

1996

- 16 January, in a palace coup Strasser is replaced by Maada Bio
- Foday Sankoh is airlifted to the Ivory Coast by the ICRC to meet Bio
- A temporary cease-fire is agreed upon and both parties want peace before elections (since only then the RUF can take part in the electoral process), but Bio (under national and international pressure) then agrees for elections to be held on 26 February.

- Despite the boycott of the RUF and some army segments elections are held and after a run-off vote Kabbah is sworn in on 29 March. He establishes a multi-party, multi-ethnic cabinet and continues peace-negotiations with the RUF initiated by the NPRC.
- April, a ‘permanent’ ceasefire is agreed upon but is never effective.
- EO suggests implementing a weekly war council including EO, President Kabbah and senior commanders from the three ECOMOG contingents. EO and a Nigerian general persuade Kabbah to “neutralize” the RUF headquarters and its senior people. Kabbah authorizes this operation. (Hooper 2002)
- Five days after the start of the attack on the Zogoda by EO and Kamajor, Sankoh requests for a ceasefire.
- EO and the Nigerian general warn Kabbah that the RUF will not hold to the ceasefire
- Large numbers of soldiers are returned to the barracks while the government increasingly depends on Kamajors under the guidance of Deputy Minister of Defence, Hinga Norman
- Early May, three joint commissions start working on peace details
- 15 May, Ivoirian foreign minister reports that RUF has agreed to renounce the armed struggle.
- September/October, Kamajor with EO attacks several RUF camps, in the Kambui Hills, Soro- Gbema chiefdom and the Gola Forest, and surrounds Bokor camp in the Kagari Hills
- October, a vague coup attempt is unsuccessful and key players are arrested
- November, Sankoh visits several camps by helicopter to discuss draft peace deal
- 30 November, signing of the Abidjan peace-accord. This accord includes a cessation of hostilities, conversion of RUF into a political party, a general amnesty, DDR for the combatants, downsizing of the army and withdrawal of EO
- December, breaking of cease-fire by all sides
- RUF war council members Ibrahim Deen Jalloh, his wife, Agnes Jalloh, and Fayia Musa move to Freetown to prepare for the fuller incorporation of the RUF in the government
- Number of clashes between Kamajors and soldiers increase, apparently for control of diamonds and other resources.

1997

- February, EO withdraws from Sierra Leone
- February, Sankoh is arrested in Nigeria on weapons charges. RUF figures (Philip Palmer and Fayia Musa) claim to take over the leadership, and indicate that the peace process will continue, but they are arrested by Sankoh-loyalist Sam “Maskita” Bockarie. RUF attacks intensify as a reaction to Sankoh’s capture.
- Army starts an open revolt against the Kabbah government as a reaction to increased government support for civilian militias, including the planned downsizing of the army from 15,000 to 6,000 troops and the shipment, and purchase of 5000 automatic rifles intended for use by the Kamajo militia
- March, International Alert (at the request of the UN) attempts to intervene between the UN and the RUF after their relationship has broken down.
- 25 May, the military stages another successful coup and AFRC takes over, inviting the RUF to join. Sankoh, still in jail, accepts.
- Major Johnny Paul Koroma becomes the new AFRC leader and suspends the constitution and bans all political parties. The absent Sankoh becomes the vice-chairman of the junta and AFRC and RUF forces merge into a People’s Army.
- June, Nigerian and Guinean troops remain in position, shelling Freetown while civil defence units harass junta forces upcountry.
- July, junta calls for a national conference and new “truly democratic” elections
- August, ECOWAS imposes sanctions on the junta
- October, Junta representatives and Nigerian and Guinean foreign ministers for ECOWAS sign for a six-month peace plan, including the restoration of the constitutional government, effective from 22 April 1998.
- Skirmishes continue between ECOMOG and junta forces. CDF launch a campaign, “Black December”, to immobilize junta activities in the provinces.

1998

- February, ordered by General Sanni Abacha, Nigerian forces together with CDF units, launch an offensive against the AFRC and RUF alliance which is forced out of Freetown and several provincial towns and retreats to the north and east of the country (Buedu)
- March, Kabbah returns to Freetown
- Sankoh returns to Freetown in custody
- July, UN Security Council agrees to send a military observer group to Sierra Leone

- October 17th, 24 soldiers are executed by the government for their part in the coup and (in a separate treason trial) Sankoh is sentenced to death. This triggers more violence in the north and east of the country and regrouped junta forces push towards Freetown
- December, rebels are within fifty kilometres of Freetown
- ECOMOG flies in reinforcements, junta forces increase their grip on Kono diamond fields, Bockarie demands the “immediate and unconditional release” of Sankoh and peace through dialogue

1999

- 6 January, attack on Freetown. AFRC and RUF control east and centre of the town but after one week and 5000 deaths and numerous atrocities, they have to retreat. Sankoh remains a prisoner
- By the end of January, West African leaders push for a negotiated settlement. Both Nigeria’s military ruler Gen. Abdulsalami Abubakar and incoming (Feb. 1999) Nigerian president, Olusegun Obasanjo, hope to have all Nigerian troops out of the country by March.
- Late February, UN SGSR (Secretary General’s Special Representative) in Sierra Leone. Francis Okelo meets with RUF representatives in Abidjan. This leads to preliminary talks in Lome where Sankoh is now allowed to stay
- 25 May, detailed peace negotiations start after the promise of the release of Sankoh and a ceasefire
- 7 July, a peace-agreement is signed including power-sharing, a blanket amnesty and the establishment of a TRC. The UN attaches a disclaimer saying that the amnesty does not apply to international crimes against humanity. The ECOMOG troops are to be replaced by UN peacekeepers and military observers.
- Implementation of peace-accord is painfully slow, with limited access to RUF controlled areas and non-implementation of DDR.
- Sam Bockarie flies to Liberia

2000

- May, peacekeepers and observers are seized by the RUF in Makeni in a dispute over the return of disarmed fighters, leading to the capture of about 500 peacekeepers within days.

- A thousand British troops, initially based to protect the airport, are now deployed to protect Freetown
- Protests led by women in front of Sankoh's residence in Freetown results in 19 people killed, Sankoh flees to the hills above Freetown, but is captured
- Koroma calls on current and former soldiers to join with CDF units to fight the RUF.
- UN SG recommends immediate reinforcement of the peacekeepers from 9,250 to 13,000
- June, Liberian President Charles Taylor uses his influence to secure the release of hostages.
- August, British forces free hostages taken by the West Side Boys
- 14 August, an agreement between the United Nations and the Government of Sierra Leone pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1315 calls for a Special Court to prosecute war Criminals.
- 10th of November: signing of Abuja peace accords.
- End of 2000 UNAMSIL has deployed 17,500 troops

2001

- May 2001 – January 2002: a total of 42,551 fighters demobilize.

2002

- 18 January: Joint Declaration of End of War.
- May 2002: presidential elections won by SLPP candidate, Ahmad Tejan-Kabbah. RUF Political party only receives 2.3% of the vote. The Special Court is estimated to require a three year budget of \$60 million. In contrast, Sierra Leone's total judiciary payroll in 2001 amounted to only \$215,000 (Reno 2003).