Mano River Union Conflict Assessment and Peacebuilding Results Framework

BEPS

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity

CREATIVE ASSOCIATES INTERNATIONAL

In collaboration with

CARE, THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY, AND GROUNDWORK

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PREFACE

The purpose of this assessment is to develop a comprehensive framework for future interventions by USAID's West African Regional Program (WARP) in the areas of cross-border/sub-regional conflict prevention and peacebuilding in the Mano River Union (MRU) countries of Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia.

The fieldwork for the assessment was undertaken between May 5 and 26, 2003, a complete SOW is provided as Appendix A. The team consisted of two experts in conflict assessment and assistance. The Team Leader was Sue Nelson, former Director a.i. of USAID/Cambodia's Office of Democracy and Governance, with experience in peacekeeping and post-conflict assistance in Mozambique, Haiti, and Cambodia. The conflict expert on the team was Mathias Bassene, the Conflict Prevention Advisor for WARP. Mr. Bassene is responsible for designing and managing WARP's peacebuilding and conflict prevention activities in West Africa including the MRU and the Senegambia sub-regions.

The field assessment was assisted with information and logistical support by the three USAID country programs in the MRU: USAID/Guinea, USAID/Sierra Leone, and USAID/Liberia. The assessment team originally intended to visit all three countries along with the forest regions of Guinea on the Liberian and Sierra Leone borders. Due to the security situation, however, the team was not given clearance for Liberia or southern Guinea. Interviews were conducted in Conakry, Guinea and in Freetown, Sierra Leone. The USAID/Liberia Mission Director met the team in Sierra Leone for discussions on the Liberian situation and assistance programs. USAID/Liberia also collected information from NGOs and CSOs working in Liberia. The team was able to visit the border areas of Guinea and Liberia with the USAID/Liberia Mission Director and the USAID/Sierra Leone Country Program Manager. This was organized by USAID/Sierra Leone and assisted by the UN peacekeeping forces (UNAMSIL) on the border.

During the field work, the team interviewed USAID staff from Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia, U.S. Embassy officials, other donors, USAID grantees, NGOs, CSOs, government officials and others involved in monitoring and assisting peacebuilding in the MRU (Appendix B). The team also collected and reviewed the available documentation (Appendix D).

The findings of the assessment team and the subsequent design of a peacebuilding framework for WARP for the MRU sub-region reflects the information provided by those working in the region. These dedicated individuals and organizations are working for peace and stability, and we appreciate their taking the time to share their insight, information, and knowledge.

In particular, the team wishes to thank the bilateral USAID missions in the MRU, which provided the logistical and informational backbone for the assessment. Their bilateral experiences and best practices in conflict prevention and peacebuilding form the foundation for this sub-regional design. A special thanks goes to the USAID/Liberia Mission Director Edward Birgells who traveled to Sierra Leone to meet with the team and ensured that information from Liberia was provided. We also thank Julie Koenen-Grant of USAID/Sierra Leone for organizing the visit to the border regions, and to Julie Scofield and Julie Nenon at Creative Associates International, Inc. for their administrative and programmatic support.

ABBREVIATIONS

AFL	Armed Forces of Liberia
AFR	Africa Bureau (USAID)
AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
ALPO	Association of Liberian Professional Organizations
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CDF	Civil Defense Force
CIVPOL	Civilian Police (UN)
CLUSA	Cooperative League of the United States
CPBD	Community Peacebuilding Program
CSO	Civil Society Organization
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
FFP	Food for Peace
GNCCSO	Guinean National Council of Civil Society Organizations
GOG	Government of Guinea
GOL	Government of Liberia
GOSL	Government of Sierra Leone
ICG	International Contact Group
ICRC	International Committee of the Red Cross
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IHRLG	International Human Rights Law Group
IMAT	International Military Assistance Training Program
IR	Intermediate Result
IRC	International Refugee Committee
LURD	Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy
MJP	Mouvement pour la Justice et la Paix
MODEL	Mouvement for Democracy in Liberia
MPCI	Mouvement Patriotique de la Côte d'Ivoire
MPIGO	Mouvement Patriotique du Grand Ouest
MRU	Mano River Union
MRU-CSM	Mano River Union Civil Society Movement
MRUWPN	Mano River Union Women Peace Network
NED	National Endowment for Democracy
NDI	National Democratic Institute
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OGDH	Organisation Guinéene de Défense des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen
OFDA	Office of Foreign Disaster Assistance
OTI	Office of Transition Initiatives (USAID)
RSLA	New army in Sierra Leone
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SLA	Sierra Leone Army

SLP	Sierra Leone Police
SO	Strategic Objective
SpO	Special Objective
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
UNAMSIL	UN Mission in Sierra Leone
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNHCR	United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNMINUCI	UN Mission in Côte d'Ivoire
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
USAID	U.S. Agency for International Development
WANEP	West African Network for Peacebuilding
WARP	West Africa Regional Program (USAID)
WCRP	World Conference on Religion and Peace
WFP	World Food Programme

CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION

The Mano River Union[1] (MRU) comprised of Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia has suffered from almost two decades of civil and political strife. Since the 1990s, the conflict has taken an overt sub-regional dimension as armed conflict spread across borders engulfing both Liberia and Sierra Leone in civil wars. So far, Guinea has been able to maintain its internal peace, but remains vulnerable.

Despite significant international interventions, including an ongoing UN peacekeeping mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) and UN sanctions against Liberia, there is still armed conflict within the MRU. During the fieldwork for this assessment, the fighting in Liberia was so close to the capital of Monrovia that the U.S. Embassy urged its citizens to leave. The situation within the MRU is complicated by the conflict in the Côte d'Ivoire, which borders on both Guinea and Liberia. That conflict generated substantial population flows into and through the MRU as well as provided a base for splinter Liberian rebel groups.

Guinea, the largest member of the MRU, has been able to preserve its internal equilibrium despite the massive influx of refugees, the presence of armed elements in its border regions, and continued fighting along its borders. In 2000/2001, towns along its border with Sierra Leone were attacked, resulting in widespread devastation and the internal displacement of 250,000 residents. But Guinea's peaceful equilibrium is shaky at best and it remains vulnerable to political instability and turmoil as the health of its elderly president deteriorates along with the living conditions of its residents. Continued peace within Sierra Leone is still dependent upon the presence of the UN peacekeeping force, and the planned withdrawal of UNAMSIL troops by the end of 2004 will leave Sierra Leone vulnerable to a resumption of its cycle of violence.

The conflict within the MRU is complex and involves a multitude of actors and different factors. There is no easy fix for the problems within the MRU, yet donors, faced with many crises in the world and limited resources, are forced to focus on immediate needs: restoration of peace; demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants; and healing the worst of the pyscho-social and economic trauma of war. But a lasting peace will also require a change of political will within all three countries for better governance, genuine power sharing, and the creation of real economic opportunities for all sectors of society.

A lasting peace will also require the root causes of conflict to be addressed. Some of these date back to the arbitrary delineation of national borders that separated ethnic groupings and instituted different formal governments, educational systems, and languages. Others are found within the political culture of the West African region and the way in which traditional power and resources were distributed. Changing the political culture of a sub-region accustomed to political exclusion, repression, and the use of violence will take time and significant effort.

During the interviews, there was a striking difference between the answers given by the Africans and the non-Africans to the questions about the root causes for the conflict. The Africans

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[1] The Mano River Union (MRU) is a formal political union between the three countries of Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia. In the assessment, MRU is used to denote both the subregion comprised of these three countries and the political union, depending on the context. The official body that governs the MRU is the Mano River Union Secretariat.

consistently dated the root causes far back in history—back to events such as the Malian empire and the arrival of the "strangers" in the sub-region hundreds of years ago. They stated that these strangers from other ethnic groups took over commerce and positions of power and excluded the indigenous groups. To them, this was and still is the root of conflict in the region. In contrast, the non-Africans cited the roots of the conflict in current terms—bad governance, corruption, unemployed youth, and issues such as poverty and a lack of information.

The international communities working in the three countries of the MRU are addressing the root causes of the conflict primarily from their current-day perspective. Addressing the historical roots and the problems created from the arbitrary drawing of political borders almost 50 years ago is beyond the scope of any one donor intervention. However, these are issues that the African nations and nationals are starting to tackle for themselves through regional institutions such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).[2] These are also issues that can be examined by regional programs such as USAID's West African Regional Program (WARP). WARP's goal is to help build political stability and economic prosperity in the region. This regional program enables USAID to take a regional perspective of the conflict issues facing the MRU and provides it with the ability to address the issues that transcend national political boundaries.

The objective of this assessment is to design a framework for future assistance by WARP in conflict prevention and peacebuilding in the MRU sub-region. The framework detailed in Part Four, the Mano River Union Peacebuilding Results Framework, complements the three bilateral USAID programs in the MRU and builds on their synergies. Each of the bilateral missions has well designed conflict prevention and mitigation strategies with active programs underway. WARP can help to reinforce these programs by addressing the sub-regional issues and working to improve the relations and the conflict resolution mechanisms within the MRU.

The proposed Mano River Union Peacebuilding Initiative would do the following:

- Address cross-border and sub-regional issues such as the proliferation of small arms and the illegal exports of natural resources to fund conflicts.

- Build the sub-regional networks of the national civil society organization (CSO) networks that are being assisted by the USAID bilateral programs, and provide small grants to these networks for their cross-border and sub-regional peacebuilding activities.

- Strengthen the official efforts between the MRU nations to reduce sub-regional tensions by supporting a) sub-regional CSO network efforts for dialogue, and b) the work of the Secretariat of the MRU to implement its 15th Protocol[3] and rebuild sub-regional trade at the cross-border levels.

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[2] (ECOWAS) is Economic Community of West African States, a regional group of fifteen countries that was founded by treaty in 1975. Its focus is economic integration and development, but it has undertaken multilateral peacekeeping missions in West Africa, including missions in Sierra Leone and Côte d'Ivoire.

[3] The 15th Protocol was adopted by the MRU in 2000 to work for the maintenance of peace, security and stability of its three member states.

II. MRU POLITICAL STABILITY AND CONFLICT ASSESSMENT

A.   OVERVIEW

The three countries of the MRU reflect their different colonial pasts and their common African heritage. Historically they are tied to three different international powers. This has resulted in different governmental structures, different official languages and different socialization through different formal educational systems. Guinea is a product of French colonialism and its bitter post-independence relations with France. It is also a product of twenty years of socialism and dictatorial repression under its first president, Ahmed Sekou Touré. Sierra Leone is a product of British colonialism with a history of serving as the educational center of Anglophone West Africa and of Krio (returned slaves) dominating over its indigenous populations. Liberia is the result of freed American slaves returning to Africa and assuming power and control of the resources over the local ethnic groups for more than two hundred years.

Yet, despite their differences, the three countries share many of the same characteristics and conditions. They were all part of the same territory before the current political boundaries were established. They are comprised of many of the same ethnic groups, and their communities and families extend across the political borders. The governments tend to be authoritarian and dominated by one group and its affiliates—primarily on an ethnic basis.   The three countries have bountiful natural resources: fresh water, gold, timber, and diamonds. All have access to the sea. Yet all three remain poor countries with a small group of rich elite. All three are politically vulnerable with a history of military coups and armed interventions. Their current conditions cover the conflict spectrum from pre-conflict (Guinea) to peacekeeping (Sierra Leone) to civil war (Liberia).

These three countries form the MRU. The Union was created in 1973 by an agreement between Liberia and Sierra Leone whose presidents were close friends at the time. Guinea joined in 1980. Its purpose was to improve the socio-economic conditions within the Union and it has a Secretariat based in Freetown, Sierra Leone, with liaison offices located in Conakry, Guinea and Monrovia, Liberia. In 2000, the MRU adopted its 15th Protocol for joint cooperation on defense, security, internal and foreign affairs. The 15th Protocol calls for the creation of a joint security committee and other MRU mechanisms to monitor border security and related issues.

The MRU has been a casualty of the conflict within its union. Although Sierra Leone and Guinea still make token payments for the functioning of the Secretariat, the fighting in Liberia has effectively stopped the work of the Secretariat for more than a decade. It has yet to create any of the committees or mechanisms foreseen in the 15th Protocol, and its continued stagnation is perpetuated by the antagonistic personal relationship between two of its three Heads of State (Guinea and Liberia).

Despite the recent improvements in the peace and security situation in Sierra Leone and continued stability within Guinea, the situation in Liberia deteriorated daily during the fieldwork for this assessment. A continuing civil war in Liberia has the potential to destabilize both Guinea and a post-UNAMSIL Sierra Leone. When the effects of the conflict in the Côte d'Ivoire

and the vulnerability of Guinea on the issue of presidential succession are factored in, the fragility of the MRU sub-region is sobering.

According to a 2002 conflict risk assessment on the MRU done for the Country Indicators for Foreign Policy,[4] Guinea and Liberia were at a medium risk for conflict while Sierra Leone remained a high risk. Although most of the data used for the assessment was dated (1995-2000), and Liberia has subsequently erupted into open conflict, the areas of vulnerability identified by the assessment still appear to be valid as detailed on the following table.

Table 1: MRU: Risk Potential for Conflict[5]

Area of Concern	**Guinea**	**Sierra Leone**	**Liberia**
History of Armed Conflict	Low Risk (3.7)	High Risk (9.3)	High Risk (7.1)
Weak Governance and Political Instability	High Risk (7.7)	High Risk (8.3)	High Risk (7.5)
Low Levels of Human Development	High Risk (7.7)	High Risk (7.9)	High Risk (7.3)
Unstable Economic Performance	Medium Risk (6.8)	High Risk (9.6)	No Data
Militarization	Low Risk (2.6)	Low Risk (3.8)	Medium Risk (4.5)
Population Heterogeneity	Medium Risk (5.3)	Medium Risk (6.7)	Medium Risk (6.0)
Demographic Stress	Medium Risk (5.1)	Medium Risk (5.6)	Medium Risk (5.8)
Environmental Stress	Medium Risk (5.3)	Medium Risk (6.3)	No data
International Linkages	Medium Risk (5.6)	Medium Risk (5.4)	Medium Risk (6.2)
Risk Index[6]	**Medium Risk (5.4)**	**High Risk (7.2)**	**Medium Risk (6.4)**

The surrounding areas to the MRU sub-region are vulnerable to conflict as well. Fighting in West Africa began in the Cassamance region in Senegal in the 1980s and spread to Guinea Bissau. Both of these countries border on Guinea. The Côte d'Ivoire, which borders on both Guinea and Liberia, broke into open conflict in 2002.   Through this turbulent time, Guinea remained stable and was able to absorb the influx of refugees and the repercussions of the conflict along its borders.   In this way, Guinea has acted as a buffer, keeping the conflict from spreading to neighboring countries, such as Mali.

The general consensus in the interviews, both in Guinea and in Sierra Leone, was that if Guinea was destabilized, conflict could easily spread to other countries in West Africa. Thus ensuring stability and building a durable peace within the MRU sub-region is of critical importance--not only for the three MRU nations, but for the larger West African region as well.

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[4] *Conflict Risk Assessment Report, West Africa: Mano River Union and Senegambia.* April 2002. Most of the data dates from 2000 or before, with a lack of data for Liberia in the 1990s due to the absence of state capacity.

[5] Ibid

[6] Countries are rated in nine risk areas.   Composite issue area risk ratings are an average of the risk scores in each issue area. 0-3 indicates low risk, 4-6 indicates medium risk, and 7-12 indicate high risk.

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This chapter includes profiles of the three countries that comprise the MRU—Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia—as well as a profile of Cote d'Ivoire. Each profile includes an assessment of the country's political stability, security, and other related issues.

B.   GUINEA

Guinea was frequently referred to as the "last man standing" as it has been able to maintain its equilibrium despite the turmoil of its neighbors. Two of Guinea's international borders currently open onto areas of armed conflict (Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire) and another three have been in conflict in the recent past (Sierra Leone, Guinea Bissau, and Senegal). It has survived cross-border attacks that created widespread destruction and the dislocation of it citizens as well as hosting hundreds of thousands of refugees from the wars of its neighbors.

However, Guinea's equilibrium is shaky and its quiet exterior is said to cover a boiling interior. It has a highly centralized government headed by an elderly president with significant health problems. Rumors of his imminent demise in early 2003 raised fears throughout the region of a political vacuum. Its economic situation was characterized as "dire" with unmet IMF targets and inflation creating real hardships for its citizens. Bad management has resulted in widespread shortages of water and electricity. Even the taxi drivers grumbled to the team about the chronic power outages, attributing the problems to "bad governance." Corruption is endemic, and inter-ethnic tensions are rising.

One of the unique characteristics of Guinea was its evolution under Sekou Touré. His bitter relations with France and Guinea's resulting isolation led to the development of a strong national identity. This national identity is said to be what brings Guineans together when their national territory is attacked, rather than dividing them along ethnic or religious lines. Another is the legacy of his repressive regime, which attempted to destroy the roles of traditional society and replace them with loyalty to his regime. There is still a lingering fear and acceptance by the citizens of the state apparatus and its actions.

1. Political Stability

Guinea has a history of authoritarian, one-man regimes supported by the military. The current president, Lansana Conte, came into power through a military takeover in 1984 following the death of Sekou Touré. He was subsequently elected as president in 1993 and re-elected in 1998 in multiparty elections. President Conte is now in his late 60s and in ill health. The condition of his health is followed closely, and his illness creates an undercurrent of instability as people wonder whether he will survive to run in the next presidential election, scheduled for December 2003, or if there will be a political vacuum or a military coup.

The importance of this one man and of his continued good health to the stability of Guinea is indicative of several critical vulnerabilities. These include:

- *The lack of commitment to a democratic system of government and its constitutional rules for presidential succession.* The fear of a power vacuum and rumors of a military coup were rife as were the names of the military generals that Conte was allegedly selecting as his

successor. This lack of commitment to a democratic system was also visible at the average citizen level; when many appeared to welcome the idea of a military takeover as a means to restore basic services and ensure security. The opposition parties also were also said to want a military takeover to ensure a peaceful transition to a post-Conte government.

- *The political and economic role of the military.* Being in the military appears to be one of the primary means to achieve political power and economic gain in Guinea. Having military support also appears to be a prerequisite to being president. Reports from the Forest Region indicate that military personnel fill key positions in the civil administration in the region (prefet and subprefet). This is understandable from a border security point of view, but it also facilitates any move the military might make to take over control of the central government.

- *The lack of power sharing and the lack of an equitable distribution of resources.* The president's ethnic group (Sousous) and its affiliates are said to dominate the positions of power within the government and within the military. They are also said to be one of the primary beneficiaries of the resources of the country through access and corruption.[7] This is seen in contrast to Sekou Touré who consolidated power within his own ethnic group (Malinke) yet used patronage widely throughout the country.

Conte's presidential term expires in 2004 and presidential elections are scheduled for December 2003. The constitution was amended by referendum in 2001 to remove the presidential term limits to enable Conte to run again. During the field work for this assessment Conte's health appeared to improve and his participation in the elections seemed more likely. If he runs, it is probable that he will win another term given the Ministry of Interior control of the electoral administration and its past practices.

The role the military will play in presidential succession is also a fundamental question. Whether it will wait for the elections or act before them remains to be seen. If it decides to take over the government, stability will depend in great part on which faction of the military has taken the action. If it is one of Conte's hand-picked successors or senior officers, there could be a continuation of the status quo. However, if it is some of the younger and better-trained junior and mid-level officers from other ethnic groups, the situation could rapidly degenerate.

Other factors that could affect the political stability in Guinea:

- *General unrest and the environment of dissatisfaction.* Citizens are angry over the lack of basic services and the deterioration of the economy. The increase in the price of gasoline in February sparked four days of demonstrations. These problems are attributed to bad governance, bad management, and structural corruption. There was widespread mention of a "take while you can" atmosphere where those with access to resources were helping themselves before the president dies or the elections are held. This is creating bitter resentment among those not benefiting and a divisive and "explosive" situation. The restraining factor is said to be fear. According to most of those interviewed, it would only

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[7] USAID/Guinea, *Sources of Conflict and Instability,* 1998.

take some "stupid" intervention for the situation to explode. Several of those thought the Government of Guinea (GOG) was aware of the critical nature of the situation as evidenced in their relative soft handling of recent student demonstrations.

- *Election tensions.* Elections are flash points for political and other tensions. The International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) noted an increase in political tensions since 2002 as the political parties started to prepare for the presidential elections. Already opposition parties are charging that the Government party, Parti de l'Unité et du Progrès (PUP), has started campaigning. By election law, this is prohibited until the start of the official campaign period 21 days before polling. Some of the opposition parties are threatening to boycott the elections citing the lack of an independent election commission and other electoral process issues. The opposition is divided by internal differences and has not yet capitalized on citizen discontent or demonstrations.

2. Security

The situation within Guinea is peaceful, but there is widespread fear that the situation will not remain quiet. This is especially true in the Forest Region where armed elements from the Liberian conflict are said to roam freely. Criticism stemming from the cross-border attacks by RUF and Guinean dissidents in 2001 and 2002, some of which were not far from the capital city of Conakry, focused on the military and its inability to defend Guinea's borders. Before the attacks, the army was characterized as a type of "retirement home," but since then, Guinea's rangers who patrol the borders have received training from the U.S. Department of Defense (DOD) and have increased their presence in troubled areas. There is also a new Minister of Security and a new Minister of Justice, both of whom were said in the interviews to have good records in standing up to do what is right.

Vulnerabilities of Guinea in terms of its current security include:

- *The remaining pool of civil defense volunteers.* The cross-border incursions in 2000/2001 led to the creation of vigilante groups of about 7,000 – 9,000 young men and women who banded together to protect their communities. They were subsequently drafted and armed by the military. Many of these "civil defense volunteers" were under the impression that they would be integrated into the regular army and become career military. In reality, the army could only afford to absorb a few of these volunteers. Once the incursions were over, the remainder was disarmed of the weapons provided to them by the government and allowed to leave. About 2,000 volunteers still remain and are housed and fed by the military—the fear being that this group will resort to criminal activity if their basic needs are not met until they find something productive to do. International assistance programs are providing reintegration assistance to only a small fraction of the remaining volunteers.

  Whether this group of unemployed youths with combat experience poses a serious security threat depends on who you talk to. Most of those interviewed dismissed this group as a serious security threat saying they were only young people who had helped to defend their own communities against outside attacks and who now wanted to find productive work. Others thought they were a "time bomb" who were still armed with either the hunting-type

weapons they had brought with them when they were drafted or with weapons they had captured from the enemy.

- *The presence of armed elements from Liberian rebel groups within its national territory.* Several of those interviewed said the Liberian rebel group LURD (Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy) controlled villages near the Liberian border areas. LURD's use of refugee camps within Guinea for shelter, supplies, and recruits led UNHCR to start moving Liberian refugees to camps further in the interior—in order to make it more difficult for the rebels to use the camps. UNHCR characterizes the situation posed by armed elements along the border areas of Gueckedou, Macenta, and N'Zerekore as "precarious" and restricted its activities in these areas. [8]

- *Increased levels of crime.* Low or no income combined with a proliferation of arms has resulted in deterioration in the security situation. At night, armed bands, which are said to include police, roam the cities. There is an increasing tendency to blame the increase in crime, drug use, and prostitution on the continuing influx of refugees.

- *Fighting on the Liberian side of the border that could spill over into Guinea.* There were allegations that the LURD held the town of Ganta, and during the assessment there was speculation that the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) could attempt to cross into Guinean territory in order to launch a two-sided counterattack on the town. Intensified fighting along the border had placed the Guinean military on maximum alert, and the GOG had declared the area around Diecke a "no-go zone." The border crossing was closed, and all civilians were ordered to evacuate the area. The civilian Prefect of the Lola Prefecture, which is on the border with both Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, was replaced by a high-ranking military officer.[9]

The situation along the border with Sierra Leone is stable, primarily due to the UNAMSIL presence in Sierra Leone. Guinea still occupies a small portion of the territory of Sierra Leone taken during the 2000/2001 fighting. Discussions are underway to resolve this border dispute and it appears this will be resolved peacefully through negotiations within the next few months.

3. Other Issues

There are several other issues with the potential to generate or exacerbate conflict within Guinea. These include:

- *Population movements and their repercussions.*

- *Refugees.* Guinea bore the brunt of the influx of refugees from Liberia and Sierra Leone as well as from Guinea Bissau. It is now hosting a new influx from fighting in Liberia and the Côte d'Ivoire. This creates a burden on Guinea's resources as well as its environment. The MRU Women Peace Network says more than two-thirds of Guinea's forests have been devastated. They also say that although some of the refugees are welcomed as extended

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[8] UNHCR, *Global Appeal, 2003*, 131.
[9] *UN OCHA Guinea Humanitarian Situation Report, March-April 2003*, 2.

family, others are not. In particular, the Liberian refugees who spoke English and had different social habits are not welcomed. The Liberian refugees from the 1990s also created a residual of hostility in Guinea when they destroyed their camps and farms before being repatriated—allegedly so the local populations could not have them. The local residents were also resentful that the refugees received services (health and education) in the camps that were not only better than those available to them but that were also free. UN agencies and international NGOs are now including local communities in their refugee assistance plans to minimize these types of problems.

- *Internally displaced persons (IDPs).* The cross-border attacks in 2000/2001 resulted in the widespread displacement of Guinean residents: 100 percent in Gueckedou commune and subprefects; 65 percent in Macenta communes; and the populations in two subprefects in Kissidougou.[10] In a February 2003 mission to the region, USAID/Guinea found that significant numbers of IDPs had not yet returned. Specifically:

  - 30 percent of the IDPs to Gueckedou Commune (although all had returned to rural Gueckedou)
  - 50 percent of the IDPs to Macenta Commune and 18 percent to rural Macenta
  - 50 percent of the IDPs to Kissidougou Prefecture

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[10] All figures from USAID/Guinea, *Ground Truthing the Special Objective to Facilitate Post-Conflict Transition in the Forest Region.* 2003

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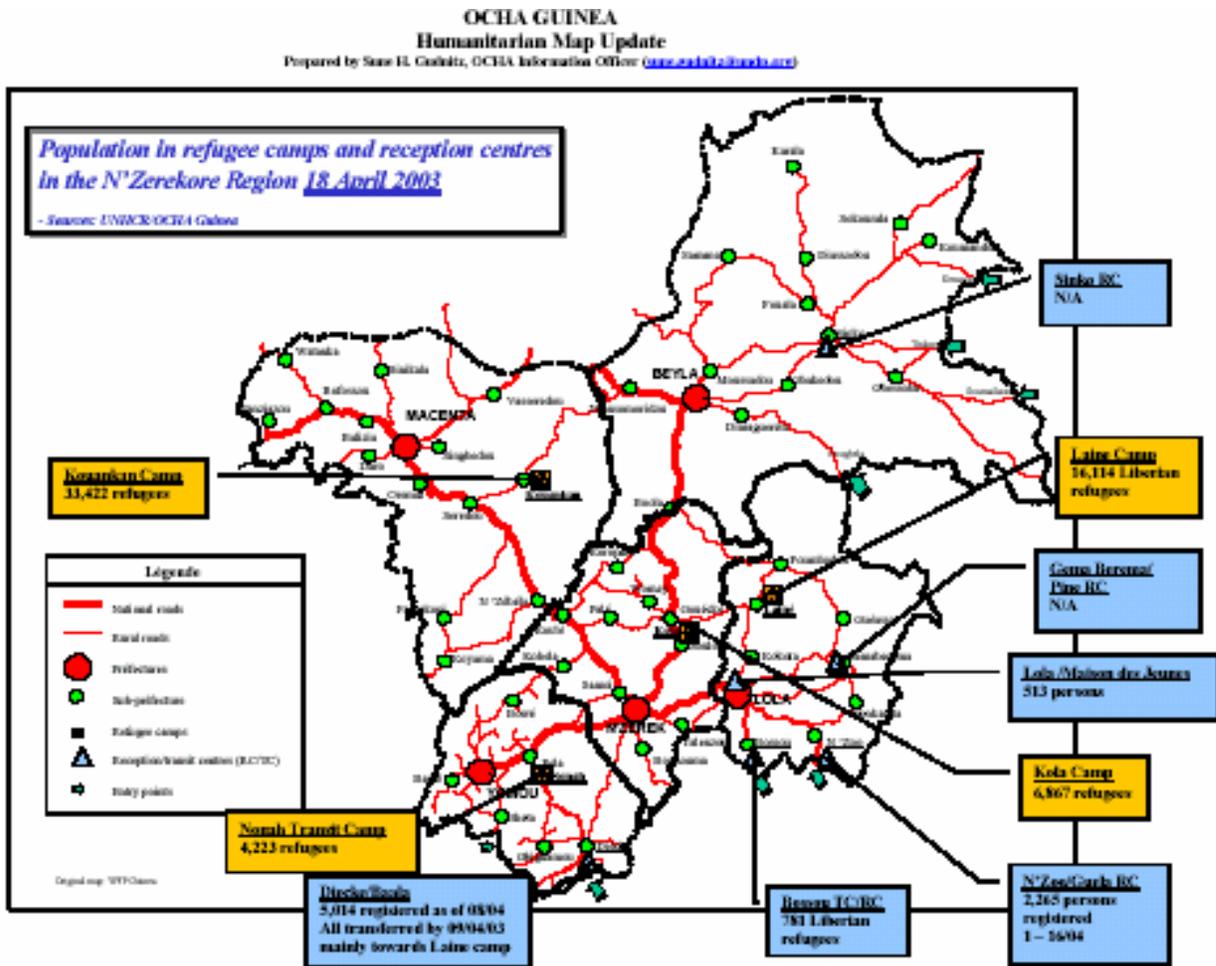
- *Residual effects of the cross-border incursions.* Before the fighting, the Forest Region contributed 40 percent of Guinea's agricultural output and 20 percent of Guinea's GDP. It was home to one quarter of Guinea's population and was known as the "grain basket" of Guinea. According to USAID/Guinea, the diversion of GOG resources to respond militarily to the conflict and then to rebuild the region has been done at the expense of Guinea's long-term development priorities and its poverty alleviation strategy. The loss of the economic contribution from the region has adversely affected Guinea's economic growth. USAID/Guinea found that agricultural production of perennial crops in 2003 in the affected areas was less than half what it was before the fighting and the amount of land planted in annual crops was down by two-thirds.

C.   SIERRA LEONE

Sierra Leone is recovering from a devastating eleven-year civil war. An estimated 3,000 villages and towns were destroyed, and more than half its population was internally displaced or became refugees. The effects of the war are clear—on the 2002 UN Human Development Index, Sierra Leone ranked last out of the 173 countries ranked.

Peace in Sierra Leone was brought about only by armed international intervention—first by a Nigerian-led ECOMOG mission in 1998 that restored the democratically elected president ousted in a military coup in 1997 and then by its replacement, UNAMSIL, a UN peacekeeping mission with 17,500 troops, created as part of the Lomé Peace Agreement in 1999.

Peacemaking and peacekeeping in Sierra Leone have not been easy. Violations of the Lomé Agreement required a cease-fire agreement in Abjua in 2000. Continued action by the rebel group, the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), and the government-allied Civil Defense Force (CDF) eventually resulted in intervention by British troops who used deadly force against RUF to rescue a group of UNAMSIL hostages. The subsequent Abjua II Agreement (2001) enabled the resumption of the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR).

With the assistance of UNAMSIL and the international community, Sierra Leone has re-instituted its central government and is working to consolidate its control over its national territory. RUF was turned into a political party (RUFP- Revolutionary United Front Party), which unsuccessfully contested the internationally-accepted presidential and parliamentary elections held in May 2002. In January 2002, when the last of the 56,000 combatants registered for DDR was demobilized, President Kabbah declared peace in Sierra Leone.

Sierra Leone is coming back to life. During its field work, the assessment team was struck by the amount of rebuilding that has gone on. New buildings and construction were everywhere, with returnees and war-affected populations starting the work of resurrecting their lives. There is also a large international presence with UNAMSIL, international donors, UN agencies, and international NGOs.

Despite its outward appearance of recovery and relative security, the situation in Sierra Leone remains fragile. Those living there characterized it as "post-violence" rather than "post-conflict." They say the root causes of the conflict have not been addressed and there is an almost universal belief that violence will return when UNAMSIL pulls out. There is also widespread agreement that there can be no durable peace for Sierra Leone without an end to the civil war in Liberia.

1. Political Stability

Since the peace process first began, Sierra Leone has had two multiparty democratic elections (1998 and 2002), both which were won by President Ahmed Tejan Kabbah. Although President Kabbah appears committed to a democratic form of governance and decentralization, his government faces many challenges. Some of the current issues affecting political stability are as follows:

- *Legacy of bad governance, mismanagement, and structural corruption.* Sierra Leone is in the process of rebuilding its governmental and political institutions. However, it is rebuilding with many of the same actors, attitudes, and practices that contributed to the conflict in the first place. According to the Common Ground Representative, Sierra Leone has a history of the winner trying to convince the other political elite to come to his side, so power remains within that small group of elite. The government was seen as a "cash cow,"

and public interest was never a factor. Sierra Leone says it has learned from its mistakes and talks of decentralization, participation, and more equal opportunities, but implementing structural changes and breaking entrenched patterns will not be easy.

- *Ability to rebuild governmental institutions and to rebuild Sierra Leone as a nation.* Sierra Leone faces the daunting task of reconstruction and rehabilitation. It needs to address both the physical and psychological trauma of war. Technical tasks such as rebuilding the physical infrastructure is much easier than rebuilding equitable political processes that involves issues of power and the distribution of governmental resources. Moreover, it will take time and effort to heal the psychological and social effects of a decade of brutal war so its citizens will be able to lead productive lives and raise well adjusted children.

- *Ability of the current president to remain in power through the duration of his term.* President Kabbah's government has already survived one coup attempt. In a country with a history of armed takeovers and with a sizeable portion of the military vote going to Kabbah's opponents in the last presidential elections, there is the likelihood of other attempts. According to the experts attached to the retraining of the new army in Sierra Leone (RSLA) there are still about 10-12 officers with presidential ambitions biding their time until the U.S. and UK International Military Assistance Training (IMAT) mission leaves.

- *Lack of control over the diamond sector.* The diamond fields in Sierra Leone are the source of great wealth, and controlling the diamond fields has been one of the critical elements in the conflict in Sierra Leone. Management Systems International (MSI), which is working on diamond sector policy estimates illegal exports of diamonds at up to 90 percent of the value of legal exports, and legal exports in 2002 were over $40 million. The illegal export of diamonds not only limits the amount of export taxes that the Government of Sierra Leone can collect (3%) but also fuels criminal activity and corruption.

In the short term, the longevity of the Kabbah government is dependent on the presence of UNAMSIL and the commitment of the UK to ensure peace in Sierra Leone. However, a lasting peace in Sierra Leone depends on what is done now in the rebuilding of its political processes— establishing governmental systems that are representative and responsive and reestablishing a functioning court system that ensures accountability and an effective channel for the peaceful resolution of conflict.

2. Security

The security situation within Sierra Leone remains quiet due to the presence of UNAMSIL troops placed strategically at areas of risk throughout the country. The DDR program has disarmed and demobilized more than 56,000 ex-combatants. The last six-month re-integration class for ex-combatants starts in June, and the DDR program will end in December 2003.

The most serious immediate threat to peace is the continuing conflict in Liberia. Several groups of RUF rebels who did not want to be demobilized relocated to Liberia, including the RUF field commander, Sam Bockarie. He was recently killed in Liberia, but his followers still pose a risk. There have also been a few incidents along the border with Liberia, although the Pakistani

commander in charge of the UNAMSIL troops in that area believes the incidents were not meant as attacks on Sierra Leone but were more raiding parties for food and porters.

Some of Sierra Leone's other vulnerabilities include:

- *A security vacuum created upon the departure of UNAMSIL.* There are two main areas of concern-border security and internal security.

    -For border security, the new army is being trained and reorganized by embedded U.S. and UK officers (IMAT). The new 15,000 strong RSLA army is made up of recycled old army members. Much of the old guard is said to be unhappy with IMAT and its changes and is biding its time, waiting for IMAT and UNAMSIL to leave. IMAT hopes to reduce the army's size down to about 9,000 - 10,000 through forced retirements. An incident in January 2003 raised widespread fears about the RSLA's ability to ensure border security. Then a platoon of about 20 RSLA dropped their weapons and fled when tested by about 70 Liberian rebels.

    -For internal security, the new Sierra Leone Police Force (SLP) is receiving training from UNAMSIL (CIVPOL) and the Commonwealth. There are about 7,000 police officers and the intention is to bring them up to their pre-war levels of 9,500. They still require significant upgrading, especially in the eastern portions of the country where mining operations are on going.

- *Continued fighting in Liberia.* Liberia was a main factor in the civil war in Sierra Leone. With the remnants of RUF working as mercenaries in Liberia and the Côte D'Ivoire, fighting could easily spill over again into Sierra Leone if armed conflict continues in Liberia or the Côte D'Ivoire.

- *Un- and under-employed ex-combatants.* Finding productive work for the demobilized and "reintegrated" ex-combatants is an imperative. The official reintegration program will be completed shortly, but it has not solved the long-term problem of finding regular work for the ex-combatants. This large group of combat veterans is volatile and, according to the UN, becoming increasingly restless.

3. Other Issues

Sierra Leone faces a myriad of other problems and issues with the potential for conflict. A few of these include:

- *Successful reintegration of returnees.* With peace being declared in Sierra Leone, UNHCR moved from "facilitating" the return of Sierra Leonean refugees in Guinea and Liberia to a "promoted" repatriation in 2003. More than 225,000 refugees have returned voluntarily to Sierra Leone (165,000 from Guinea and 63,000 from Liberia), with another 100,000 still

remaining in the region (47,000 in Guinea, 41,000 in Liberia and 7,000 in the Gambia).[11] 80 percent of the returnees come from the districts of Kailahun, Kono, and Kambia--the areas most impacted during the civil war.

- *Dealing with the influx of new refugees from Liberia.* According to UNHCR/Sierra Leone, about 75,000 Liberian refugees are now in Sierra Leone. About 55,000 of these are in refugee camps. There is a 1990s residual caseload of about 7,500 refugees in the urban areas. Sierra Leone has kept an open border policy for refugees but for security reasons requires refugees to be moved from the border areas into UNHCR-funded refugee camps inland. According to UNHCR, due to an initial lack of funds, living conditions in the camps were sub-standard and resulted in riots, hostage taking, and other security incidents.

- *Youths.* Youth is a critical issue in Sierra Leone. More than 40 percent of its population is under the age of 15 and has known nothing but war or the displacement caused by war. In Sierra Leone, there is also an issue of not becoming a man and remaining a youth until one's father dies. This means men in their 40s can be "youths" without the same respect as "men." The youth is another volatile group in need of productive employment. RUF rebels were under the age of 25 and one of their recruiting slogans was "the total neglect of youth."

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[11] UNHCR Sierra Leone, *Operations Briefing Paper.* May 2003. Note: From UNHCR Guinea, as of May 6, 2003, 27,708 refugees from Sierra Leone remained in Guinea. They hope to have this down to 10,000 by the end of 2003.

Sub-Regional Overview of Sierra Leonean Displacement — Updated February 03, 2003
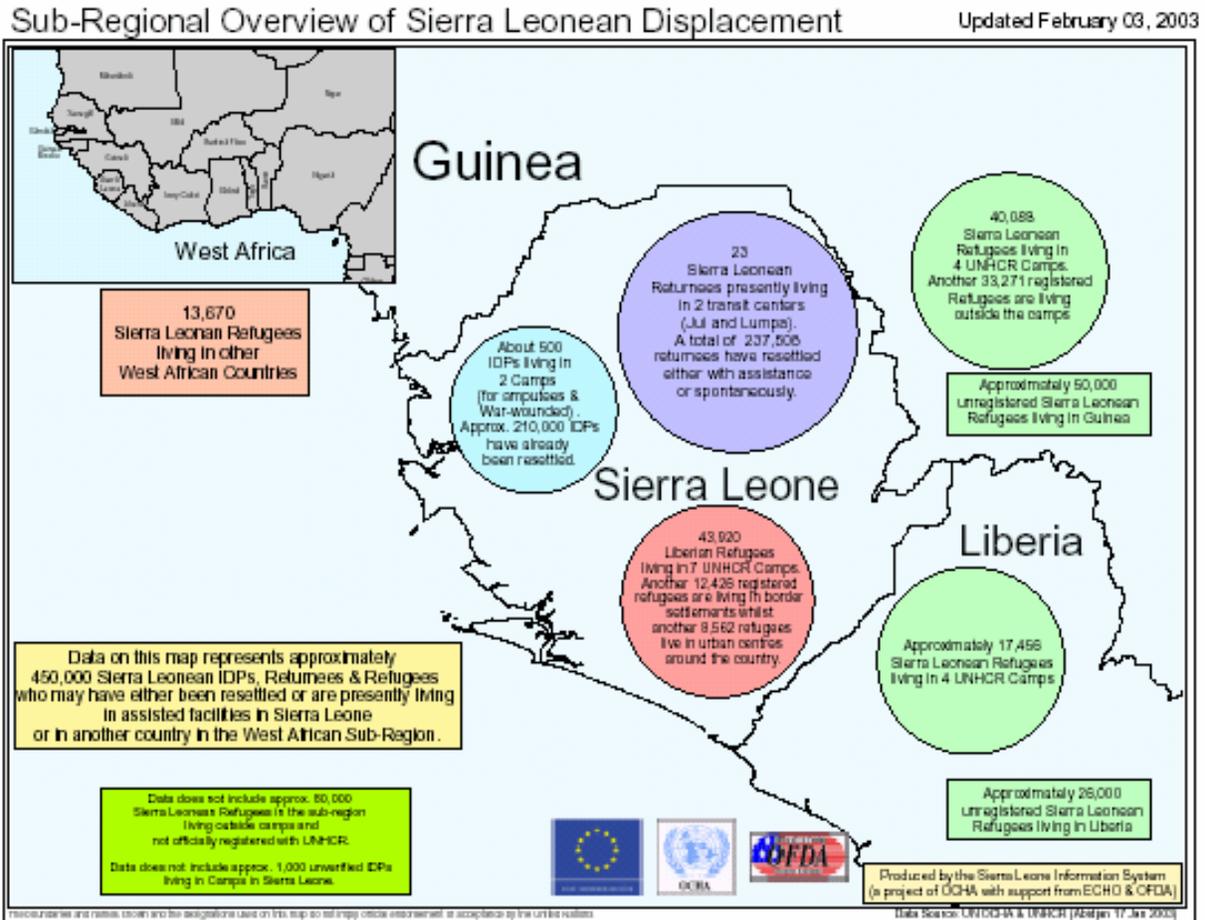
- *Diamond rush.* The entire diamond sector was characterized as a "free for all." In addition to the conflict aspect of diamonds, peace has spawned an enormous diamond rush. Many of the youths and ex-combatants have gone to the diamond districts hoping to strike it rich. This has diverted some of the immediate pressure from finding them jobs and keeping them constructively occupied. But it has not resolved any of the long-term problems as the wealth does not come to the miner, but to the intermediaries. These primarily Lebanese middlemen have created a type of indentured servitude where miners are extended credit for food and supplies that they are to pay off with diamonds found. As the value of any diamonds found rarely equals the amount owed, the miner is trapped in a cycle of debt. The Government of Sierra Leone is attempting to bring this sector under control with the assistance of USAID and other donors, but still has much work to accomplish.

- *Repercussions from the Special Court and Truth and Reconciliation Commission.* The Truth and Reconciliation Commission was established based on the South African model. The Special Court was created through an international agreement between the UN and Sierra Leone with the mandate to try those with the "greatest responsibility" for war crimes committed during the civil war. There is a built-in conflict between the need to ensure accountability for crimes committed during the war and the desire by many for reconciliation. Some fear that opening up old wounds will rekindle violence and the desire for revenge. For others, one side's war criminal is another side's hero. There was a general

amnesty for all acts undertaken in pursuit of the conflict included in the Lomé Peace Accord. This has been passed into national law, but it is not a bar to prosecution by the Special Court. One of those indicted, Johnny Paul Koroma, ran against Kabbah for president in 2002. Koroma is allegedly fighting now for Liberia in the Côte d'Ivoire. The court also indicted the President of Liberia, Charles Taylor, for his involvement in the Sierra Leonean war and issued an international warrant for his arrest.

D.   LIBERIA

Liberia has been in a state of almost continual conflict since Sgt. Samuel Doe took over the government in a military coup in 1984. The current President of Liberia, Charles Taylor, started fighting for power in 1989, marking the start of Liberia's first civil war. International intervention has helped to broker interim governments and a multiparty election that brought Taylor into power in 1996. But the quiet did not last, and civil war resumed.

At the time of this assessment, fighting in Liberia had consumed more than 60 percent of the country. Fighting by the rebel group of LURD had reached the outskirts of Monrovia. A splinter group called Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) emerged in 2003 near the border with the Côte d'Ivoire. This opened a second front against government forces. MODEL developed its own set of demands for a cease-fire, and it is widely believed that the longer the conflict goes on the more groups will emerge, and the harder it will be to negotiate a peace.[12]

In 2001 the UN placed sanctions on Liberia because of Taylor's support to the rebels in Sierra Leone. These were recently extended to May 2004. Sanctions include an arms embargo, a ban on logging (which was seen to fuel the arms trade), and a ban on international travel by top officials of the regime. This situation is monitored by a Panel of Experts on Sanctions on Liberia.

The international community is actively seeking a political solution to end the war. An International Contact Group (ICG) of the UK, France, U.S., Morocco, Nigeria, Ghana, the African Union, ECOWAS, EU, and UN, was created in September 2002. It has been working to facilitate a cease-fire with the LURD and chose the former Nigerian president Abduslami Abubakar as mediator.

Peace talks started on June 4, 2003 in Ghana. Although initially MODEL did not attend, it included all three parties (Government of Liberia, LURD, and MODEL). To coincide with the opening of the peace talks, the Special Court in Sierra Leone unsealed its indictment for war crimes against Charles Taylor and issued an international warrant for his arrest. A spokesman for the UN Secretary General said "the coincidence … of the indictment of President Taylor by the Special Court as a high-level political effort was under way in Ghana was unfortunate, but illustrates the tension sometimes between the imperatives of justice and peace."[13]

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[12] After the assessment and before this report went to printing, LURD advanced into parts of the city of Monrovia and a cease-fire was negotiated at the peace talks. However, reports continue of fighting near the borders with Guinea and the Côte d'Ivoire.
[13] IRIN, *Sierra Leone: Prosecutor of UN backed court disappointed Taylor evades arrest,*. 6 June 2003.

The peace talks resulted in a cease-fire and international discussions on sending an international peacekeeping force into Liberia. Taylor agreed to step down and accept temporary asylum in Nigeria but was refusing to leave before the arrival of the international peacekeepers. As this report went to print, LURD was threatening to attack any peacekeepers that arrived before Taylor departed and the U.S. had not yet decided on its participation in an international peacekeeping mission

1. Political Stability

As the country was engulfed in a civil war that threatened the capital itself and as talks were still ongoing to find a political solution that does not include Taylor, discussing the political stability of Taylor's regime seems irrelevant. However, as Liberia started a democratic process in 1996 with internationally accepted elections that brought the government of Charles Taylor into power and as the status quo could continue if peace talks are stalemated, there are several issues to note with critical importance for the stability of the current government. These include:

- *The term of President Taylor.* Taylor's seven-year term as president ends in January 2004. Elections were scheduled for October 2003, and despite international recognition that it is not possible to hold credible elections with the current security conditions, at the time of the assessment the official calendar was still for October. Taylor says he agrees to leave office before the end of his term, but at the time this report went to print, he was still in office in Monrovia.

- *Vulnerability to a coup.* Taylor accused his Vice President of leading a coup against him while he was at the Peace Talks in Ghana in order to prevent him from returning. He claimed it involved some of his senior officials, top military commanders, and an un-named foreign mission in Monrovia. Taylor said the Vice President subsequently resigned and that he would request the resignation of his entire cabinet once he returned.

- *Indictment of Taylor.* The Special Court in Sierra Leone indicted Taylor for war-crimes and issued an international warrant for his arrest. The Chief Prosecutor, David Crane, said the announcement was timed so the attendees at the peace talks would know they were dealing with an indicted war criminal. Taylor left Ghana without being arrested as Ghana said it did not have an official request for his detention. As Taylor currently controls the government of Liberia, he can be expected to ignore the indictment, but it will be a factor in Liberia's international relations from now on.

- *Continuing human rights abuses and threats to government opponents.* These were noted by an ECOWAS mission to Liberia in April 2003 and, according to Amnesty International: "Both government and armed opposition groups are committing human rights abuses. Civilians are being killed, either deliberately or caught in cross-fire, raped, forced to leave their homes, abducted, and forced to fight or carry looted goods. Forcible recruitment, including of children under the age of 18, has become rampant, particularly among displaced people. Those resisting recruitment have been killed by government forces."[14]

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[14] Amnesty International, "International Contact Group Must Focus on Ending Human Rights Abuses." 12 May 2003.

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2. Security

The security situation is detailed on the following map provided by UN OCHA. The conflict escalated in recent months and became more complicated with the emergence of the splinter group MODEL. According to the Inter-Religious Council of Liberia, which met with the rebel groups in anticipation of the June 4 peace talks in Accra, MODEL is a separate group from LURD with its own demands for peace. This group is composed mainly of members from the Krahn ethnic group. According to the UN, the emergence of MODEL "may be a defining stage in the Liberian conflict. While it may add to the ground to be covered in the event of a peace process, it may also introduce ethnic dimensions, which will impact the ability to attain consensus among the warring parties."[15]

According to the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the war in Liberia involves a battle for control over diamonds, gold, and timber as well deep seated tribal hatreds that were aggravated by the first civil war that killed 200,000 people. For the ICRC, the fighting in Liberia has no political agenda other than the gain of power and control over resources. It has also triggered panicked population movements within the region and complicated the peace process in the Côte d'Ivoire.[16]

Taylor's militia forces are another security issue. Among other things are their forced recruitment of child soldiers and their chronic lack of pay that fosters looting.

3. Other Issues

There are many issues that will need to be addressed by Liberia to ensure its long term stability. However, most of these can not be addressed before the political solution is negotiated. These include:

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[15] UN OCHA Liberia Monthly Humanitarian Situation Report April 2003, .2
[16] ICRC. *Appeal No. 34/02 Revised*. 20 April 2003.

OVERVIEW OF LIBERIAN CONFLICT
May 2003
Prepared by OCHA - LIBERIA

LIBERIA

LEGEND

◎	IDP camps
▲	Refugee camp
	Inaccessible area
→	Pop movements
	Areas of conflict
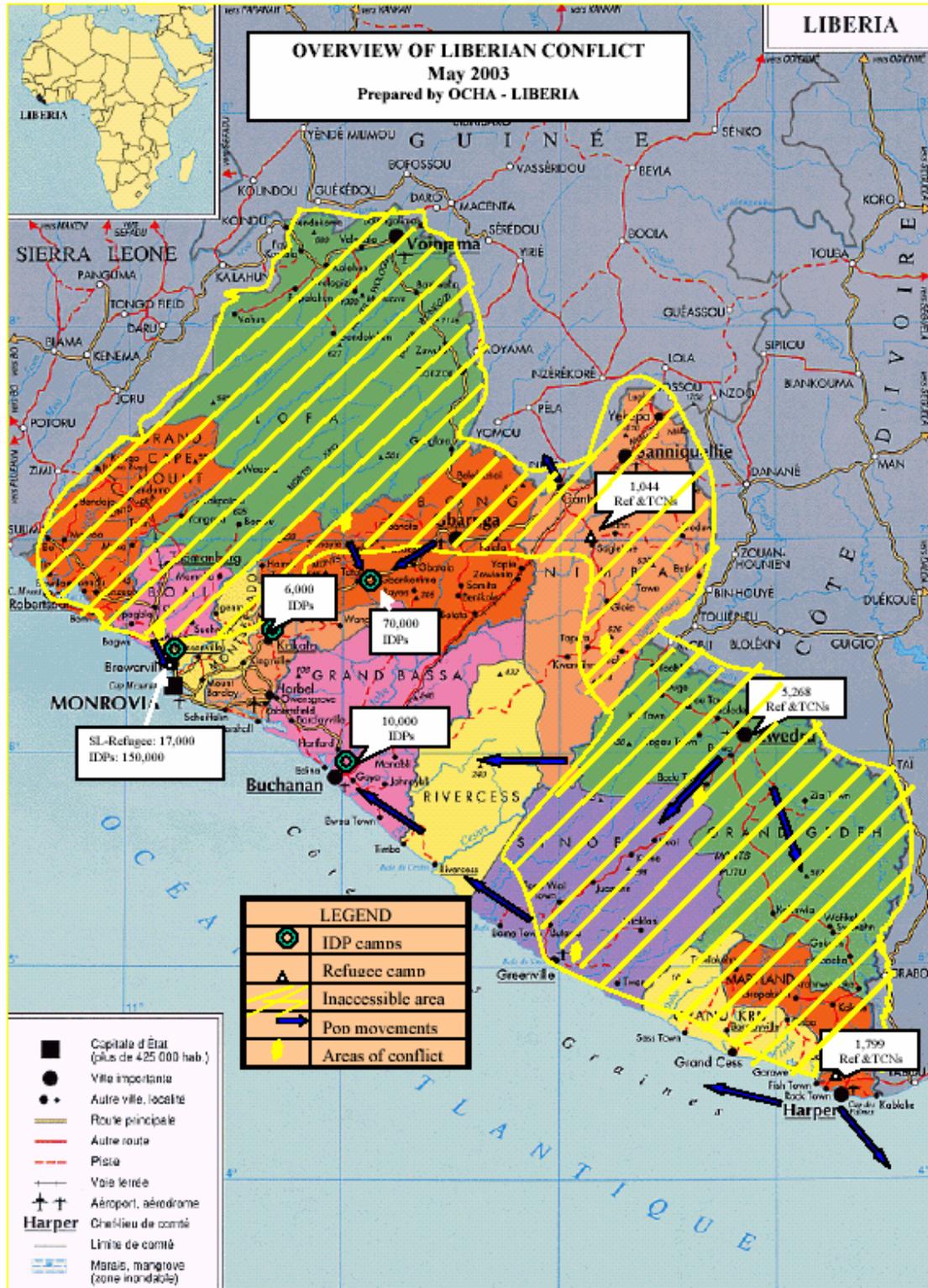
- *Powersharing and reducing the ethnic tensions and rivalry between the Americo-Liberians and the indigenous populations.* Until Sgt. Doe seized power in 1984, Liberia was ruled by the descendants of returned American slaves who also tightly controlled the natural resources and economic power in the country. Ethnic tensions and tribal identities still remain a critical issue.

- *Better governance, accountability and an end to structural corruption.* Liberia also needs to decentralize political power and decision making and to rebuild its justice system.

- *Disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of combatants.*

- *Provision of jobs or other economic opportunities for ex-combatants and the unemployed.*

- *Rehabilitation of infrastructure and the economy.*

- *Reintegration of returnees and the psycho-social rehabilitation of the war-affected.*

E.   CÔTE D'IVOIRE

Although the Côte d'Ivoire is not a part of the MRU, it is both affecting, and is affected by, the situation in the MRU. As a result, it must be considered in any MRU conflict prevention program.

The western part of the Côte d'Ivoire, which borders on both Liberia and Guinea, rapidly destabilized into rebel group fighting after a 2002 coup attempt. Rapid armed French intervention contained the rebels in the northern sections of the country and a cease-fire was put into place in October 2002.

Liberian troops and former RUF rebels from Sierra Leone are allegedly helping the Ivorian rebel groups in the western portions of the country. According to the analysis done the International Crisis Group, this area is rich in timber resources and was a traditional arms route for Charles Taylor. Because of Taylor's involvement in the Côte d'Ivoire, the Ivorian president reportedly armed the Liberian rebels MODEL and allowed them to use Ivorian territory to open a western front against Taylor.

The UN OHCA reports that the Côte d'Ivoire has been effectively partitioned into three parts[17] and is facing a humanitarian emergency with immediate repercussions for its closet neighbors— Liberia, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Mali, and Ghana. According to the UNHCR, a wave of xenophobia followed accusations that the rebels were supported by foreigners, and immigrants and their property were targeted. The result was significant population movements back to country of origin with large numbers transiting through Liberia, Guinea, and Ghana.

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[17] Movement Patriotique pour la Côte d'Ivoire (MPCI), which launched the rebellion consolidated its base in the northern half and parts of the central country, while other rebel groups, Mouvement pour la Justice et la Paix (MJP) and Mouvement Populaire Ivoiraine pour le Grand Ouest (MPIGO), which surfaced in November 2002, took control of the western part. Only the south and part of central territory of the country were under government control (April 29, 2003.).

The UN estimates that approximately 750,000 persons have become internally displaced and says the conflict has brought the Côte d'Ivoire to an economic standstill. These problems have also drastically reduced neighboring countries' access to markets and sharply decreased the flow of revenue that used to come from migrant workers in the Côte d'Ivoire back to their countries of origin.

At the time of the field work for this assessment, open hostilities within the Côte d'Ivoire had stopped, although sporadic fighting continued particularly along the Liberian/Ivorian border. Three thousand French troops have been handing over security to an ECOMOG mission of 1,300 peacekeeping troops. The UN has created a small mission for Côte d'Ivoire (UNMINUCI) to help efforts to implement the Linas-Marcoussis Agreement. This French-brokered peace accord was reached in early 2003 and calls on the government, rebels, and political opposition to share power in a transitional government until elections in 2005. Rebel groups continue to express dissatisfaction with the process, and the International Red Cross fears the volatility in the Côte d'Ivoire and the region will require much more than a power sharing arrangement for a return to real order and stability. [18] In its interviews, the assessment heard repeated fears that the conflict in the Côte d'Ivoire had only just begun and would go through many more rounds before it was done.

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[18] Red Cross, "Revision of Humanitarian Appeal No 34/02." April 2003.

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Refugee and IDP situation (source OCHA)
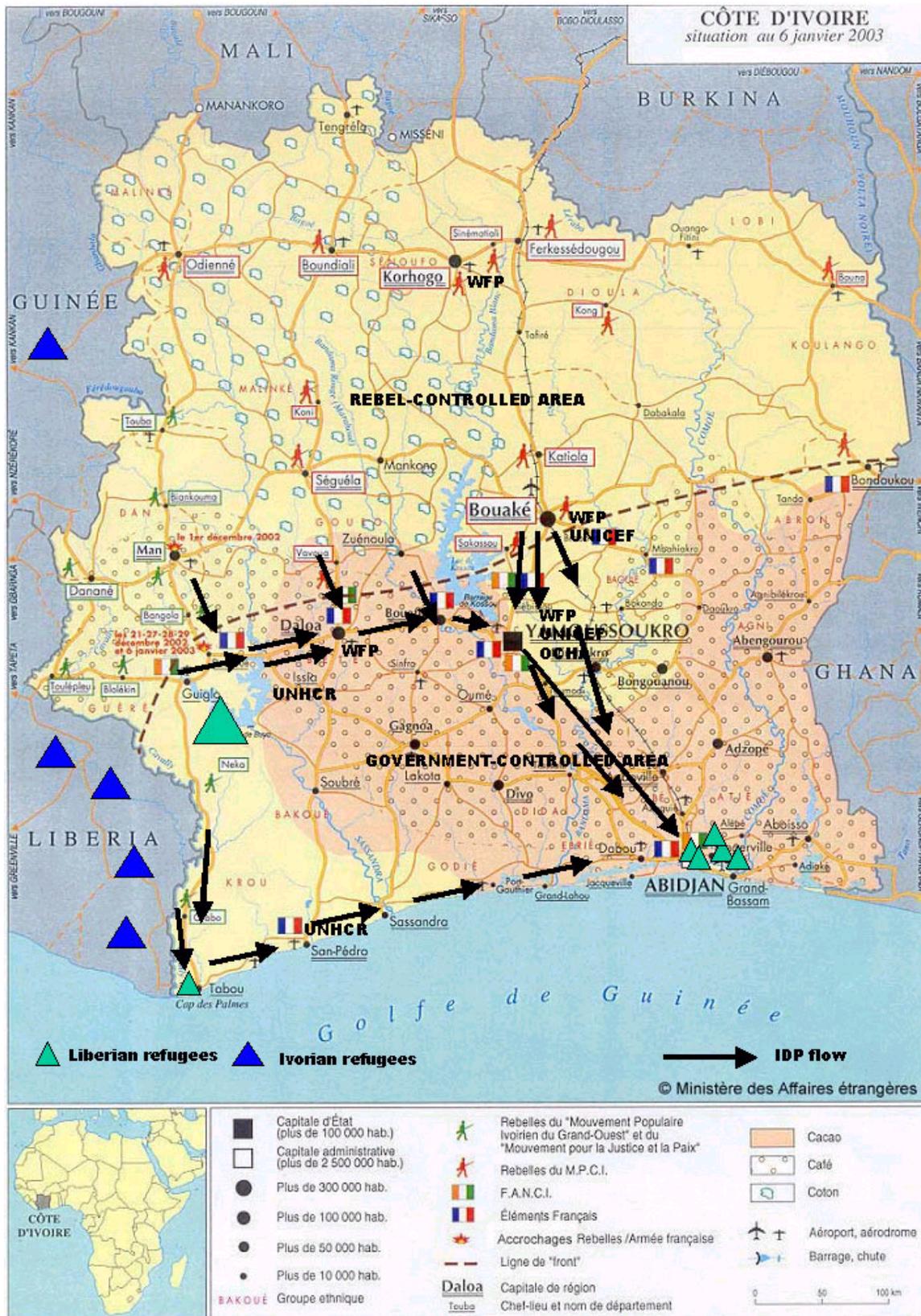
F. MANO RIVER UNION CRITICAL ISSUES

Many of the issues discussed at the country level transcend their national boundaries and affect other countries in the sub-region. As has been seen, violence can spread rapidly and bring neighboring countries into conflict. Conflicts also become personal with informal alliances between rebel groups and neighboring heads of states. The indictment of Charles Taylor for war crimes in Sierra Leone is a very visible indication of the role played by one head of state in the destabilization and conflict of another. The sub-regional and regional dimensions of conflict in the MRU must be addressed in order to have a durable peace.

Some of the MRU critical issues are desired below:

1. Intra-regional Support of Internal Conflicts

The indictment of Charles Taylor for the role he played in the war in Sierra Leone illustrates the inter-connected nature of the wars in the MRU. Liberia, for its part, accuses Guinea of supporting the Liberian rebel group LURD that started the current civil war in Liberia by attacking the provincial capital of northern Lofa County near the Guinean border in 1999. Liberia, in fact, submitted an official complaint of Guinea's involvement in its civil war, not only to the MRU Secretariat but also to the Security Council of the United Nations. From all reports, LURD appears to be operating freely in the border areas of Guinea. Some speculated that LURD provides Conte, who has an intense personal dislike for Taylor, with the means to secure his own border against attacks from Liberia. There is also speculation that this is Conte's payback for the Liberian-sponsored attacks on Guinean territory in 2000 and 2001.

According to the International Crisis Group and their in-depth analysis of the situation in Liberia[19] the Liberians are using the Ivorian crisis as a proxy battleground. President Taylor is employing the Ivorian rebel troops in western Côte d'Ivoire to protect his timber resources and arms route and to fight a second front against the LURD. President Laurent Gbagbo of the Côte d'Ivoire is allegedly paying and arming anyone who will act as a balance against Taylor, including the new LURD splinter group—MODEL. The UN Security Council has also called upon Liberia to expel former RUF rebels from Sierra Leone. The RUF commander Sam Bockarie was recently killed in Liberia, allegedly during his arrest attempt. The fighting in the Côte d'Ivoire and Liberia has also provided employment opportunities to many mercenaries from other conflicts in West Africa including another Sierra Leonean indicted for war crimes, Johnny Paul Koroma who is said to be fighting in Côte d'Ivoire for Taylor.

Table 2 shows the insurgencies and their supporters according to the International Crisis Group analysis.

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[19] International Crisis Group, *Tackling Liberia: The Eye of the Regional Storm.* 20 April 2003.

Table II: Insurgencies and Their Regional Supporters[20]

Rebel Group	Country of Origin	Country Support Base
LURD (Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy)	Liberia	Guinea, Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire
LURD-MODEL (Movement for Democracy in Liberia	Liberia	Côte d'Ivoire
Guinean dissidents	Guinea	Liberia
RUF (Revolutionary United Front)	Sierra Leone	Liberia, Côte d'Ivoire, Burkina Faso
MPIGO (Mouvement Patriotique du Grand Ouest)	Côte d'Ivoire	Liberia
MJP (Mouvement pour la Justice et la Paix)	Côte d'Ivoire	Liberia
MPCI (Mouvement Patriotique de la Côte d'Ivoire)	Côte d'Ivoire	Burkina Faso

2. Conflict Resolution

The most critical immediate issue for the MRU is to obtain a sustainable cease-fire in Liberia. The longer the conflict continues, the more likely it is that it will expand as rebels and governments seek new allies and bases of support. The OCHA Representative in Guinea commented that the rebel groups were better integrated than ECOWAS and that they shared information and formed alliances. The remnants of RUF are now fighting in Liberia and the spillover of the Liberian crisis into the Côte d'Ivoire has added an aspect of ethnic and religious violence that "scares everyone witless."[21]

The international community is attempting to broker a political settlement for both Liberia and the Côte d'Ivoire. The other countries in the MRU sub-region should be playing a positive role in the attempts to negotiate peace. However, sub-regional efforts for conflict resolution have been almost nonexistent. Their efforts have been limited for a number of reasons, including:

- *The alleged involvement by MRU heads of states in the conflicts of their neighbors as discussed above.*

- *The acrimonious personal relationship between President Conte and President Taylor.* At the last summit of the MRU heads of state, only Conte and Kabbah attended.

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[20] International Crisis Group, 2003, Appendix D.

[21] Quote from the NDI Representative in Guinea.

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- *The international legal situation of Taylor, which complicates any participation he might have in a sub-regional process.* As part of their sanctions against Liberia, the UN placed restrictions on his international travel, and he is now an indicted war criminal with an outstanding international arrest warrant.

- *Their neglect of the MRU Secretariat, which is supposed to play a sub-regional conflict resolution role through its 15th Protocol.* This protocol calls for the creation of joint committees on security and related issues, but the Secretariat has been almost completely inoperative since the fighting started in Liberia in the early 1990s. This situation has not been helped by the hostile relationship between Conte and Taylor.

Despite these problems, attempts have been made to improve the relations between the three countries, reduce tension, and promote a sub-regional dialogue. Guinea reportedly acted as a constructive force for securing peace in Sierra Leone. Several sub-regional CSO networks, including the Mano River Union Women Peace Network and the Mano River Union Inter-Religious Coordination Committee, actively lobbied the three leaders of the MRU nations to hold periodic meetings and to start a dialogue on peace and stability. This resulted in a meeting of the three heads of state in Morocco. In early 2003, President Kabbah also paid a working visit on President Conte as part of the sub-regional peace efforts.

3. Cross-border Movements

- *Despite the fighting and insecurity, which has locked down the borders in a few places, the borders are long and porous.* People and goods, both legal and illegal, move easily between them. There are several critical issues involved in these cross-border movements:

- *The mass movement of populations between countries can tax the host country's resources and create conflict with the local population.* In the past decade, Guinea has been saturated with refugees, and although the refugees from Sierra Leone are being repatriated, the current conflicts are creating new waves of Liberian and Ivorian refugees, along with transits by third country nationals trying to return to their countries of origin. Large population movements are inherently destabilizing, and refugees have the potential to bring the problems they are trying to escape with them to their new location.

- *The mass movement of populations creates security issues.* Among those thousands *of persons could be criminals or rebels.* They could be carrying arms or other illegal items. This can lead to crime and protection issues within the host country, the militarization of civilian refugee camps, and the use of the host area as a resupply base or for illegal activities.

- *Continuing movements of populations across the borders makes what should be an extra-ordinary event routine for border guards and immigration officials.* They might not bother to make the same checks. This can be exploited by those involved in illegal actions such as the smuggling of arms, drugs, or natural resources such as diamonds.

- *The diamond and timber for arms trade moves easily across the borders of the MRU.* This trade feeds the conflict and is still continuing despite international sanctions and actions such as the Kimberly Process.

4. Governance

Many of the problems within the MRU sub-region stem from the shared problem of bad governance. This description provided by the Development Education Network-Liberia, provides a good indication of the state of governance in the region:

> The absence of good governance in the MRU countries has been a major contributing factor to conflict, instability, and civil war. The governments in the sub-region failed to protect their citizens. Instead, these governments, except for Sierra Leone, which under international supervision at the moment, violate human rights with impunity. . . Bad governance in the MRU countries (except Sierra Leone, which has an international war crime tribunal) do not have an independent judicial system. Even legislatures are not independent. The governments in the sub-region show no respect for the rule of law; instead, they put too many guns in the hands of too many untrained and unconstitutional armed groups. … All the governments in the MRU failed to deliver basic social services and to create the environment conducive for the people themselves to organize and fulfill these needs. Instead, MRU governments suppressed the opposition, rigged elections, and suppressed freedom of speech, freedom of movement, and the freedom to organize. … The absence of good governance in the MRU is also indicated by the unequal distribution of power and the unequal distribution of benefits of the exploitation of the nation's wealth. [22]

5. Proliferation of Small Arms

The proliferation of arms in the MRU sub-region is a critical issue. UNDP estimates that there are over 7 million small arms in West Africa. Their proliferation and easy availability raises the level of violence and increases the duration of fighting. It also encourages the use of violence rather than the peaceful resolution of conflict, contributing to a culture of violence. Small arms are used not only by rebel groups in the MRU region, but end up in the hands of criminals as well.

The porous borders facilitate the illegal trade of small arms and weapons. The UN estimates about 60 percent of the small arms and light weapons in the MRU came across the borders illegally. This is 10 percent higher than the West African average of 50 percent.[23]

Finding a solution at the national level for the proliferation of arms is not possible without a solution at the sub-regional level. ECOWAS adopted a Moratorium on the Importation, Exportation, and Manufacture of Small Arms and Light Weapons in 1998. This is renewed every three years, but it is a voluntary moratorium without enforceable sanctions and does not include nonstate actors, such as the rebel group LURD.

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[22] Development Education Network-Liberia. *Response to Questions from the USAID Regional Office for West Africa.* May 2003.

[23] UN ECA, *Mano River Union Joint Security Arrangement and Small Arms Control Project, Draft Project Proposal.* 2002.

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6. Natural Resources and Conflict

The diamonds and timber resources in the sub-region fueled the armed conflicts in the regions. One of RUF's first moves in Sierra Leone was to occupy the diamond areas. Liberia provided them with a route to export the diamonds and import weapons. Smuggling diamonds out through Liberia has been profitable. One has estimated that Charles Taylor has accumulated $3.8 billion from the illegal diamond and timber trades.[24] Some of the clients reportedly included al Qaeda.

In its study on the economics of conflict in the MRU, the Partnership Africa Canada found that "Marketing channels are increasingly influenced by organized crime and by the transcontinental smuggling not just of diamonds, but of guns and drugs, and by vast sums of money in search of a laundry. Violence in such cases is central to the advancement of those with vested interests." [25]

Diamonds are valuable resources. In Sierra Leone, with the largest diamond reserves in the MRU, estimates place the illegal exports of rough diamonds at about 90 percent of the value of legal exports. This equates to about $400 million in 2002.[26] The cross-border attacks into Guinea in 2000/2001 were also explained by some as an effort to take over the diamond fields in Guinea. Timber is another valuable resource and has helped fund the arms and ammunition needed in Liberia. The problems in Côte d'Ivoire are blamed, in part, on Charles Taylor's efforts to keep his timber and arms route open.

The international community has started to regulate the trade of rough diamonds through the Kimberly Process. This was initiated by the Government of South Africa in 2000 in an effort to control the "conflict diamonds" and their adverse effects on the legal diamond trade. It is also an effort to control its money laundering aspects. The Process developed an international certification system that came into effect on January 1, 2003 and which requires a Kimberly Process certificate of origin for the transfer of funds for the payment of diamonds.

The Government of Sierra Leone is attempting to bring the diamond sector under control and joined the Kimberly Process. These efforts have resulted in a measurable increase in the value of its official exports of diamonds, which rose from $1.5 million (1999) to $42 million (2002).[27] Liberia is not a member although it has designed a certificate. The UN sanctions on Liberia include an embargo on the exports of diamonds and timber. The UN Security Council says Liberia is still importing uncertified rough diamonds from Sierra Leone, but Liberia says that this is beyond its control as LURD is in control of the diamond-producing areas.

Despite international efforts and assistance, most diamond trade in the sub-region remains uncertified. This is an issue that was looked at in-depth by the May 2003 evaluation of the USAID program in Sierra Leone that provides assistance in the diamond sector. The evaluation felt strongly that the certification scheme needed sanctions and a system of independent monitoring. It also thought that the international policy level needed to be addressed as they

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[24] Gberie, 2003. Not all diamonds smuggled through Liberia came from Sierra Leone. Many also came from the conflict in Angola.

[25] Country Indicators for Foreign Policy, *Conflict Risk Assessment Report, Mano River Union and Senegambia,* 2.

[26] According to Management Services International (MSI), which is working on diamond policy assistance.

[27] Gberie, 2003, Opcit.

thought the illegal trafficking of diamonds could only be stopped from the top down—by removing the international buyers. They felt that as long as no sanctions were taken against the bankers and the international center of diamond buyers in Belgium and elsewhere, the illegal trade in diamonds would continue.

7. Lack of Opportunities for Youth and Ex-combatants

The MRU countries are poor and face serious economic challenges. All three rank at the bottom of the 2002 UNDP Human Development Index. Sierra Leone was last—173 out of the 173 countries ranked. Guinea came in at 159, and Liberia was un-rankable because of a lack of data.

Almost every sector of society suffers in a country that is at the bottom of the development ladder. But from a conflict prevention perspective, young men who have become accustomed to violence, and with taking instead of earning, are a critical vulnerability for the entire region. Each country has large pools of potentially volatile youth and ex-combatants that need productive employment. The Mano River Union Women Peace Network in Sierra Leone said their youth were still fertile grounds for those recruiting a rebel army and thought anyone could recruit 2,000 youths to fight within a couple of days.

The porous borders also mean they are easily recycled from one conflict to another. According to the UN, "the RUF had little trouble swelling its ranks to over 24,000 shortly after launching its offensive against the government of Sierra Leone in March 1991 with a force of only 100 men. Within three months, the Civil Defense Forces in Sierra Leone hit the 37,000 mark. Starting off with only 500 troops in July 2000, LURD rebels in Liberia claimed to have between 14,000 to 15,000 soldiers in arms by June 2002."[28]

8. Culture of Violence

The conflict in the MRU has created a culture of violence. Human rights abuses were prevalent in the civil wars and are still going on in Liberia. Everyone suffered, including women and children. Women suffered sexual abuse and slavery and children were used as porters or soldiers for the combatants. More than 40% of Liberians and Sierra Leoneans are under the age of 15. This means they have known only war and its brutal effects. Many of these youths and ex-combatants have no idea of normal values such as sharing, helping one's community, or the peacefully resolving disputes.

A whole generation of children has lost out on school and the socializing effects of education. There were an estimated 10,000 child soldiers in the war in Sierra Leone and another 15,000 - 20,000 in Liberia. These youths, some of who were recruited as young as age 6, were trained to kill, loot, and vandalize. The Mano River Union Women Peace Network say many children no longer respect their parents, and teachers say they are afraid of their students who brag that they are rebels.

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[28] UN ECA, *Mano River Union Joint Security Arrangement and Small Arms Control Project,* 2002.

The situation is aggravated by courts that do not function and laws that are not respected or enforced. The lessons of crime and impunity are everywhere. Not only does this enable a culture of violence among the citizens, it can permeate the security forces, resulting in abusive tactics and human rights abuses by the police and military.

III. MANO RIVER UNION ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

The MRU countries are recipients of international assistance, and all three have bilateral USAID programs. The type of assistance provided closely follows the development assistance continuum based on the situation found within each country:

- Rehabilitation leading to development assistance in the forest region of Guinea (The remainder of Guinea benefits primarily from development assistance);
- Humanitarian to reintegration and rehabilitation assistance in Sierra Leone; and
- Emergency and humanitarian assistance in Liberia.

International assistance to the MRU sub-region is principally country specific, with programs designed and implemented in each individual country. This is also the case for most programs dealing with cross-border issues such as refugees and returnees. Country-specific programs are developed, but they are all closely coordinated to standardize related activities between the three countries--especially those implemented by the UN specialized agencies such as UNHCR, UNICEF, and WFP.

The team found very few programs designed to address peacebuilding and conflict prevention at the sub-regional level. The conflict prevention and peacebuilding assistance currently being provided to the MRU can be organized into three groups: National assistance; cross-border assistance, and subregional assistance. Existing efforts focus primarily on bringing a cease-fire to Liberia.

A. NATIONAL CONFLICT PREVENTION AND PEACEBUILDING ASSISTANCE

Most conflict prevention programs at the national level focus on the demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants, avoiding problems from the influx of refugees and IDPs and from their return and reintegration back into their communities of origin. The specific types of assistance and the focus of activities depended on where each country, and geographic area within the country, falls on the conflict spectrum. Factors included the duration and intensity of the conflict, its nature, and effects.

1. Guinea

The conflict prevention and peacebuilding work in Guinea is done at two different levels. One is to assist the areas in Guinea directly affected by the fighting in Sierra Leone and Liberia. This is the Forest Region that was also the target of cross-border attacks in 2000-2001. The other is to prevent conflict within Guinea by addressing issues such as governance and building a constructive civil society-governmental dialogue.

Most international donors are present in Guinea along with many of the international NGOs. France and Japan are the largest bilateral donors, followed by the United States, Germany, and Canada. Multilateral donors include the World Bank, the EU, and the UN agencies. Some donors have conditioned their assistance to the GOG to include a free and fair electoral process

(an independent National Elections Commission) and liberalization of the TV and radio airwaves so Guineans have a more diverse source of information.

a. Conflict Prevention and Mitigation in the Forest Region

The international community works in several sectors in the Forest Region. These include:

- *Rehabilitation of damaged infrastructure and assistance to persons directly affected by the conflict.* GTZ, with UNICEF funding, is demobilizing and providing vocational training to 350 of the 2,000-3000 remaining Civil Defense Volunteers. This is a 9-month program, but funds are limited so it may limit the amount of time for training.

- *Assisting with the influx of refugees and mitigating the impact of their presence.* The main international actors are the UN agencies (UNHCR, UNICEF, and WFP) and the international NGOs funded by these agencies and other donors.

- *Protecting the security of the border and preventing any more cross-border attacks.* The U.S. Department of Defense provided nine months of training to 800 rangers from the Guinean Ranger Battalion which is responsible for border security. Training of trainers was done by U.S. special forces, and training incorporated a human rights component on a daily basis.

- *Building a culture of peace in the districts adjacent to the borders with Liberia and Sierra Leone.* This is primarily done by UNHCR and UNICEF and the international NGOs that they fund. Several Guinean CSOs also have peace activities along the borders funded by donors, including the Mano River Union Women Network for Peace.

USAID Assistance

USAID/Guinea has a two-year Special Objective (SpO) designed to address the post-conflict situation in three targeted prefectures within the Forest Region. These prefectures of Gueckedou, Kissidougou, and Macenta were the areas most affected by the 2000-2001 cross-border attacks. USAID-funded activities focus on stimulating economic activity, re-establishing key social services, and building a culture of peace to promote the return and reintegration of inhabitants who were displaced by the conflict. The purpose of this assistance is to support the resumption of essential social services and stimulate economic activities in affected communities so that USAID's regular development program can resume in these areas.

USAID/Guinea's approach is to address conflict prevention at the community level and to use a community driven approach to program delivery to help offset past and prevent future conflicts. It believes the chances for a sub-regional peace to prevail are greater if stability can be restored to their target districts and in the adjoining districts of Sierra Leone where USAID funds a transitional program of reintegration and reconstruction.[29]

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[29] The USAID/Guinea office covers the management and administration of USAID programs in Guinea and Sierra Leone. USAID has a small office and staff located in the US Embassy in Freetown for the day to day implementation of the program. This twinning arrangement enables a close collaboration and cooperation between the two country programs.

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As of the time of the assessment, USAID/Guinea had just completed the competitive bid process for the SpO. The results framework for the $2 million, two-year SpO is as follows:

Special Objective: To facilitate post-conflict transition in targeted prefectures of the Forest Region in Guinea.
IR1   Livelihoods re-established in targeted prefectures. IR2   Key social services reestablished in targeted prefectures. (Health and education) IR3   Promote sustainable peace in targeted prefectures.

IR1 and IR2 will be undertaken by the NGOs Plan Guinea and Premier Urgence who won the competitive bids. IR3 was intended to be accomplished through a buy-in with the WARP Mano River Union Peacebuilding Initiative.   The activities initially discussed included supplying information across borders, strengthening the capacity of civil society organizations to prevent cross-border trafficking of women and children, and promoting reconciliation and peace in the affected zones.[30]   However, as the WARP activity for cross-border work is being implemented by a consortium in Sierra Leone (described in Section II), it is doubtful that USAID/Guinea will retain IR3.

b. Conflict Prevention Within Guinea

Most of the donor programs in national conflict prevention deal with the issues of governance, rule of law, the peaceful resolution of potentially divisive issues within Guinea. Many donors, including the United States and Canada, include components to strengthen civil society as a means to improve governance and prevent conflict.

USAID Assistance

The USAID/Guinea strategy is to incorporate enhanced capacity to constructively manage conflicts into all of their strategic objectives--whether it involves land disputes, common property resources, public revenues, or higher level issues in the political system. It also has a democracy objective that deals with issues directly relating to peacebuilding and conflict prevention.   The relevant indicators are as follows:

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[30] These were suggestions for the WARP MRU program that came out of discussions between the Africa Bureau and USAID missions in the region in 2001. WARP subsequently issued a grant which includes cross border activities such as information sharing for returning refugees. This program is discussed in Section II. Cross Border Prevention Assistance.

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> Strategic Objective 4: Improved local and national governance through active citizen participation.
>
> IR4.1   Effective citizen participation in local governance
> IR4.2   More responsive political processes
> IR4.3   Increased articulation of citizen interests by target civil society organizations.

Through a grant to IFES, USAID mobilized a network of civil society organizations to form a Guinean National Council of Civil Society Organizations (GNCCSO). This Council includes CSOs as well as private sector organizations such as chambers of commerce. Other activities include training for the GNCCSO and for CSOs in leadership, strategic planning, and institutional viability. Capacity building for CSOs is combined with the development of a nationwide CSO civic education campaign on the rights and responsibilities of citizens and the government as defined in the constitution and legal code. The IFES program also includes a subgrant component for CSOs to implement their own activities.

The Guinean CSOs have also worked on peacebuilding in the MRU by hosting meetings between MRU CSOs on improving interstate commerce and lobbying national leaders for peace. USAID also funds NDI to work on political party development and to help establish a dialogue between government, the parties, and the people.

USAID also funds CLUSA (the Cooperative League of the United States) which promotes the peaceful resolution of conflict by involving CSOs and CBOs (Community Based Organizations) in participatory decision making with local government units. This helps ensure that they have similar definitions and solutions to problems and builds accountability by assigning roles and responsibilities. This also helps increase the financial and managerial transparency in the local government entities. In FY2003, USAID/Guinea expects to start a new activity focusing on human rights that will further enhance its conflict resolution activities.

2. Sierra Leone

International assistance within Sierra Leone has been focused on national reconstruction, peace, and security. Donor assistance is provided within the context of the National Recovery Strategy developed by the Government of Sierra Leone for 2002-2003. This strategy focuses on the components of national recovery and identifies the following as priority areas for intervention: a) consolidation of state authority; b) rebuilding communities; c) peacebuilding and human rights; and d) the restoration of the economy.

The objective of all donor assistance in Sierra Leone would appear to be consistent with USAID's, namely, peace and stability. Most of the programs have interwoven elements of conflict prevention, peace, and reconciliation. There is a large international presence, the largest element being the UN peacekeeping force, UNAMSIL. The UK has taken the lead in rebuilding Sierra Leone's governance, and physical and military infrastructure. Major donors include DfID, USAID, the World Bank, European Union, UNDP, and the other UN agencies. Many international NGOs are present to help implement these programs.

U.S. assistance to Sierra Leone includes the USAID Sierra Leone program (AID/AFR, OFDA and FFP) and DOD humanitarian assistance, plus Self-Help, democracy and human rights.

USAID Assistance

The USAID/Sierra Leone 2001-2003 Transition Program supports activities that will accelerate post-war reintegration, curtail corruption, and strengthen local communities' access and ability to participate in democratic processes. The Transition Program is built on the foundations laid by the Office of Transition Initiatives (OTI) program in Sierra Leone by incorporating its most successful elements.

USAID's current strategy ends with FY 2003 funding. USAID/Sierra Leone will soon request an extension of this strategy (Phase II) for three years, to be implemented as a follow-on to the present phase of assistance summarized below.

The results framework for the Phase I strategy is as follows:

SO1: Advancement of reintegration process for war-torn populations in targeted communities

IR1.1 Foundations for viable communities established
IR1.2 War-torn populations in targeted communities constructively engaged
IR1.3 Public infrastructure rehabilitated

SO2: Democratic government strengthened

IR2.1 Broadened community based political participation
IR2.2 Participation in national dialogue facilitated
IR2.3 Broader public/private participation in improved diamond sector management
IR2.4 Increased community response to targeted human rights issues

SO1 activities focus on providing social, economic, and physical support to encourage resettlement and reintegration at the community level. They provide war-affected youth with job skills as well as income and employment opportunities. It trains a broader segment of war-affected communities in conflict management, peacebuilding, and nation building and sets out to rebuild vital public infrastructure in the devastated communities. USAID's implementing partners, Christian Children's Fund and World Vision International, work to strengthen life skills and promote social reintegration, create temporary employment, and stimulate cooperation between ex-combatants and community members working together in civic work projects. The goal is to increase trust and unity, decrease fear and stigmatization, and build mutual respect between ex-combatants and their communities.

SO2 works to break the vicious cycle of corruption, poverty, political exclusion, and violence that leads to conflict. Phase II will reflect an increased focus on strengthening governance,

particularly at the community level. This SO provided assistance to the 2002 elections through support to the National Election Commission and to political parties. It promotes dialogue through radio programs and on-air forums that discuss topical issues. It expands radio access to communities cut off from national communications. These activities are implemented through NDI, IFES, and Talking Drum Studio. USAID also works to rationalize diamond sector management, and with other donors assists the government of Sierra Leone to gain more control over its diamond resources. With its implementing partner, MSI, its Public/Private Alliance works to ensure that communities benefit financially from mining activities carried out within their chiefdoms.

USAID/Sierra Leone is currently working in the most war-affected districts in Sierra Leone— Koinadugu, Kono, and Kailahun. Kono is also the diamond mining district. These districts adjoin the war-affected districts in Guinea currently assisted by USAID/Guinea through its special objective for the Forest Region, and the part of Sierra Leone that borders with Liberia. These districts will continue to be targeted in Phase II assistance.

The Phase II Transition Program will help solidify the gains made over the past two years to help prevent Sierra Leone from backsliding into another conflict situation. Its focus will continue to be peace, security, and stability with more emphasis on redevelopment of the agricultural sector.

3. Liberia

The international assistance programs in Liberia have all been affected by the deteriorating security conditions within the country. Both the geographic scope and the type of activities have become more and more limited as more of the country becomes insecure. Most of the international donors are in Liberia along with many of the international NGOs. The EU is Liberia's biggest donor, followed by the United States, which provides one third of the total assistance to Liberia. Taiwan has also provided assistance along with the UK, Canada, Denmark, France, the Netherlands, Sweden, and the United Nations. Neither the World Bank nor the IMF is active in Liberia.

Political assistance to peacemaking is done through the International Contact Group which was created in 2002 and which the United States is a member. The international donor community in Liberia is also working to support the objectives of the ICG.

USAID Assistance

USAID/Liberia is working under a 2001-2003 Transition Strategy. This strategy assists in building the capacity of civil society to organize itself, to acquire skills, and experience in democratic governance at the local level and to increase its voice in a broader range of civic action. The sectoral elements of the strategy include the delivery of social services (health and agriculture) and efforts to instill and stimulate civic action and the practice of democratic governance.

The program goal is "civil society plays a greater role in the transition toward improved social, economic and political conditions in Liberia." Conflict resolution and peacebuilding activities fall under the CSO special objective as follows:

SpO 5: Civic-society role in democratic governance strengthened
IR5.1 Civic organizations strengthened
IR5.2 Civic action increased in target communities
IR5.3 Conflict management practices improved at community and cluster levels.

SpO 5 focuses on promoting a greater role for civil society in the transition toward improved social, economic, and political conditions in Liberia. Its intention is to keep an increasingly fragile civil society alive and functioning through civic education and public information programs. USAID/Liberia is working on governance, economic development, and peacebuilding. Most activities are implemented by a Community Peacebulding and Development Program (CPBD) done through a five-year, $12 million cooperative agreement with a consortium headed by the Academy for Educational Development, with Mercy Corps and the Search for Common Ground.

The CPBD program, which started in January 2003, focuses on increasing participation of individuals and community based organizations (CBOs) in governance and other activities through civic education and adult literacy programs provided by NGOs and independent media. It works through REFLECT[31] circle communities and links these communities to CBOs, social and economic livelihood, and conflict resolution. The capacity of Liberian NGOs to manage and implement social and economic development activities is being strengthened, and subgrants to NGOs are tied to progress in the building of their organizational capacity. Activities also assist local radio stations and production facilities in order to increase information to communities with limited access.

B.   CROSS-BORDER CONFLICT PREVENTION AND PEACEBUILDING ASSISTANCE

Most civilian cross-border conflict prevention assistance is focused on the movement of people-specifically the effects of refugees and the facilitation of their return. These are country-specific programs but are often closely coordinated with the programs in the adjoining country. Most of these programs involve the UN specialized agencies, such as UNHCR, UNICEF, and WFP.

UNHCR

UNHCR coordinates its programs in the three countries of the MRU and with neighboring countries (such as Côte d'Ivoire). It has a regional resettlement unit in the UNHCR/Ghana office to coordinate activities in West and Central Africa. UNHCR's main activities focus on

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[31] REFLECT is a structured participatory methodology created by ActionAid that is being used in Liberia by several international NGOs. It is an approach to adult literacy that blends the practices of Participatory Rural Appraisal with the theories of Paulo Freire on the positive links between literacy and social change. REFLECT's premise is that literacy and empowerment are parallel and interwoven processes that can become mutually reinforcing when based on people-centered grassroots development.

protecting refugees and it believes that repatriation and reintegration is the best solution for most refugees in the sub-region.   Since peace was declared in Sierra Leone in 2002, the UNHCR has been promoting their return from camps throughout the region.   These repatriation efforts are coordinated closely between the different UNHCR country offices.

Peace and reconciliation programs tended to be country specific although UNHCR and UNICEF have developed common programs for things such as raising awareness among refugees and the host country nationals on issues such as tolerance and preventing sexual violence against women and children.   The issue of child soldiers also is dealt with at the country-level, but using a common UNICEF approach.

WARP

WARP has a $1 million, one-year program to establish a multi-sectoral, interagency collaboration to raise awareness of gender-based violence and torture issues, including issues of sexual violence and trafficking, while giving a traumatized population access to quality mental health care. It is being implemented in Sierra Leone by a consortium headed by the International Rescue Committee (IRC), Center for the Victims of Torture, and Search for Common Ground/Talking Drum Studio.

The program will provide psycho-social care to victims of torture and promote cross-border dialogue through community radio programming. It includes building a culture of peace using mass media and cultural activities as a medium to promote greater dialogue and information sharing for the people along the MRU border area. This program is designed to enhance the results of the three consortium members' programs in Sierra Leone, many funded by USAID/Sierra Leone, by increasing their level of intervention in the border areas with Guinea and Liberia.

C.   SUBREGIONAL CONFLICT PREVENTION AND PEACEBUILDING ASSISTANCE

Despite the inter-related nature of the conflict in the MRU, the assessment found very few donor programs planned at the sub-regional level. Most of the sub-regional efforts were the results of country-specific programs that enabled a few sub-regional meetings of CSOs. Most of these meetings dealt with the issue of Liberia and improving relations between the three MRU countries. There are, however, donor programs targeted at conflict prevention in the larger West African context. These are listed briefly at the end of this section.

The assessment found reference to a UN Working Group constituted by the UN Economic Commission for Africa (ECA) to coordinate support and to mobilize UN system and other partners in efforts to consolidate peace and security in the sub-region.   This group was constituted after a 1999 visit to the MRU nations by the UN Secretary General (SG). It met in Guinea in 2000 and identified three fast-track projects: 1) Revitalization of the MRU Secretariat; 2) Networking between the governments, civil society organizations, and the media; and 3) Support to the MRU for the establishment of a Joint Security Arrangement.   It also recommended the preparation of four mid-term projects in consultation with the MRU members:

1) assistance for developing and implementing income-generating projects, especially for women; 2) developing human resources affected by the brain drain triggered by the war and sustained by the prevailing insecurity and instability; 3) promoting macro-economic development projects; and 4) building the capacity of the MRU member states to control small arms and light weapons.

The assessment did not find indications of a subsequent UN sub-regional program to link the governments, CSOs, and media. But it did find an unfunded UN ECA project document entitled *MRU Joint Security Arrangement and Small Arms Control* and a UN ECA consultant finishing up an organizational assessment of the MRU Secretariat.

1. Assistance to the MRU Secretariat

The MRU Secretariat has been languishing since the fighting started in the sub-region in the 1990s. The UN SG's efforts to revitalize the MRU resulted in the development of a protocol on peace, security, and stability in the sub-region. This 15th Protocol (Attachment 1) was signed by all three nations in 2000 but has yet to be implemented. The UN ECA developed a project document for the *Mano River Union Joint Security Arrangement and Small Arms Control Project* with an anticipated start date of March 1, 2003. This two-year, $2.3 million proposal is to help the MRU implement its 15th Protocol, specifically its joint border security and confidence building units with a focus on stopping arms proliferation.

The UN ECA decided to take an in-depth assessment of the role, structure, and management of the MRU Secretariat before starting its assistance. The report of the consultant, who spent three months in 2002 doing the assessment, is expected to be given to the MRU countries in June 2003. Once the countries agree to the report and its recommendations, the UN ECA intends to call a donor conference (o/a October 2003) to solicit donor support to get the MRU back up and running, and presumably to fund the small arms control proposal.

The UN ECA preliminarily provided the Secretariat with a small amount of computer equipment in 2002. The UN OCHA Information Office in Conakry, Guinea tried to assist the MRU office in Conakry to design an MRU website, but this was done on an ad-hoc basis and no website has yet been created.

2. Assistance to MRU Civil Society Efforts

The civil society organizations in each of the three MRU countries were receiving substantial amounts of donor assistance to strengthen their national work and organizations. Several bilateral donors have allowed their funding of these CSOs to be used to promote civil society efforts to build networks throughout the MRU sub-region for peacebuilding. This has resulted in several sub-regional CSO networks that meet on a more or less regular basis. Being unable to visit Liberia, and in the short time of the assessment, we were not able to identify or assess all of the sub-regional CSO networks.[32] But we were able to talk to representatives from the following groups:

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[32] More information on CSO and the subregional networks is available in the WARP-commissioned assessment on *Civil Society and the Management of Conflict in the Mano River Union,* by Tony Karbo, 2001.

- *Mano River Union Civil Society Movement.* This network originated in 2000 when the Association of Liberian Professional Organizations (ALPO) contacted the Civil Society Movement in Sierra Leone and the Organisation Guieenne de Defense des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen (OGDH) in Guinea to cooperate in a united front. A conference in Sierra Leone resulted in the official creation of the Mano River Union Civil Society Movement (MRUCSM), and Civil Society Movements were organized at each country level. ALPO serves as the Secretariat for the MRUCSM and in this capacity received core funding support from National Endowment for Democracy (NED).   A second MRUCSM conference was held in Guinea, and the MRUCSM fielded a small group of election observers for the elections in Sierra Leone. The MRUCSM was planning on holding its third conference in Liberia, but this has not been possible because of Liberia's security situation.

- *Mano River Union Inter-Religious Coordination Committee.* This is a network of the Inter-Religious Councils of Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia. They are in the process of helping to create and add a Council from the Côte d'Ivoire. These councils are actively engaged in the sub-regional peace process. They initially met in Freetown in 2001 and signed a joint declaration committing to work together for peace. They formed the MRU Coordination Committee, and a joint visitation team met with each of the MRU heads of state to encourage direct talks among the three countries. They hold regular joint meetings and work in collaboration with other CSO actors, including the Mano River Union Women Peace Network. They actively worked to ensure the participation of the rebel groups and the government of Liberia in the current peace talks. They receive funding from a variety of sources including the international NGO, World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP).

  In 2002-2003 the WCRP implemented a program of "Peacebuilding, Reconstruction, and Reconciliation in the Mano River Basin." This assistance enabled the Councils to carry out mediation and peacemaking activities. This included meeting with the heads of state, creating a regional working group on small arms proliferation and border security, and developing a multi-religious strategy to engage religious communities in reintegrating child soldiers and abductees. WCRP has planned a two-year follow-on project which both assists sub-regional activities done through the Coordination Committee and their implementation on a national basis through the individual Councils. This includes the Côte d'Ivoire. This project is not yet funded.

- *Mano River Union Journalist Network.* The key persons for this network were not available during the assessment so the team was not able to get specific information for this network. From discussions with members in both Guinea and Sierra Leone, it appears to be a loose network of personal contacts between journalists, rather than an organized network. The journalist in Sierra Leone, however, was from the CSO West Africa Democracy Radio. This CSO has funding from the Soros Foundation to establish a regional radio network for the MRU countries. It was described as a nonpartisan radio station that would promote and defend democratic values, including the freedom of speech. Because of Guinea's restrictions on private radio and because of the press problems in Liberia, the radio was to be based in Sierra Leone. However, the Government of Sierra Leone refused to give the radio station a

license, allegedly out of fear of angering Liberia, which might then take reprisals. Discussions are currently underway about placing the station in Dakar, Senegal.

- *Mano River Union Women Peace Network.* This is a network of women's CSOs within each of the three countries, created by high level women. It based its headquarters in Freetown because that was the location of the MRU Secretariat. The Secretariat does provide them with office space within its own offices. The Chair of the Network is from Guinea with the First Vice Chair from Liberia and Second Vice Chair from Sierra Leone. National level co-ordinators are chosen in each country from the member networks. Since 2000 they have held several high level meetings to advocate for peace, including with all three MRU heads of states. They also confronted President Conte of Guinea and convinced him to meet with the other two MRU heads of state despite his reluctance to meet with Taylor. The MRUWPN was credited frequently in the interviews with having broken that deadlock as the three heads of state subsequently met in Morocco. The MRUWPN has political networks that it uses to access key decision makers. It has held a number of training seminars in conflict mediation and transformation, primarily in the capitals, but a few in the hinterlands. The MRU WPN has received assistance from a number of donors, including USAID/Guinea.

3. Assistance for a Negotiated Peace in Liberia

In addition to the work being done by the CSOs mentioned above, there is a concerted international effort underway to ensure a negotiated peace in Liberia. This is being done at the political level by the International Contact Group on Liberia. This Group is made up of the UN, ECOWAS, EU, and several countries including the UK, France, and the United States of America.

The ICG is focused on facilitating a cease-fire, fostering security guarantees between the MRU states and between Liberia and Côte d'Ivoire, creating a comprehensive DDR program, and restructuring and retraining the security forces (AFL and the national police).[33] It is expected that these efforts and programs will be supported by the international donors.

In addition, the Inter-religious Council of Liberia and its president, the Archbishop of Monrovia, have been working to facilitate a cease-fire. These efforts are supported by donors, including USAID/Liberia.

4. Regional Assistance

Donors are funding several conflict prevention activities at the West Africa regional level, some of which pertain to the situation in the MRU. Among these:

- *Canada.* Canada is implementing a Canada/West African Peace and Security Initiative, created in response to the G8 Africa Action Plan. It is currently in the process of identifying the sectors for its assistance. These will correspond with the West African priorities for

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[33] Bridgewater, Pamela, *The International Contact Group, a Way Forward for Liberia,* March 2003.

security sector reform in three areas: a) strengthening the West African peace support operations capacity; b) small arms; and c) policing.

- *ECOWAS.* ECOWAS has a Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) which can act as a multinational peacekeeping force. ECOMOG teams are normally comprised of military units or technical experts from ECOWAS member states. ECOMOG was deployed to restore peace in Liberia in 1997 and was also deployed to Sierra Leone. In 1999, ECOWAS heads of state signed a protocol establishing a Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Management, Resolution, Peacekeeping and Security.   All three MRU countries and the Côte d'Ivoire are members of ECOWAS.

- *WARP.* WARP has an agreement with ECOWAS to provide training and technical assistance to ECOWAS staff in conflict analysis and the formulation of preventive responses to conflict. This program creates an opportunity for CSOs to participate in the conflict prevention activities of ECOWAS laying the foundation for CSO led regional advocacy and intervention activities.

- *West Africa Network for Peacebuilding (WANEP).* WANEP is a regional consortium of NGOs based in Accra, Ghana. It was created by NGO representatives in seven West African countries as a mechanism to harness peacebuilding initiatives and strengthen collective interventions.   WANEP conducts conflict resolution and peacebuilding workshops throughout West Africa and has opened a number of national chapters including a chapter in Liberia.   According to the WARP assessment on CSOs in the MRU, WANEP was instrumental in connecting Liberian CSOs with other CSOs in the sub-region. The ultimate result was the creation of the Civil Society Movement in Liberia and the Mano River Union Civil Society Movement.

IV: PEACEBUILDING RESULTS FRAMEWORK

A. OVERVIEW

The goal of the WARP program is a "politically stable and economically prosperous West Africa." WARP supports activities in eighteen West African countries including the three MRU nations. The WARP program focuses on developmental obstacles that can be most effectively addressed through actions taken at a regional level in partnership with the leading regional organizations, including ECOWAS. WARP collaborates with the USAID bilateral missions in order to develop positive synergies among USAID-funded programs in the region.

WARP is working on the basis of its FY 2001-2008 Strategic Plan, which has a Special Objective for conflict prevention: "Early detection and response mechanisms to prevent regional conflicts established and functioning." In FY 2003, WARP expects to extend its conflict SpO and eventually transform it into a full SO to enable it to complete activities started and to address the fact that conflict is one of the most immediate challenges facing the West African region.

The results framework for WARP's conflict prevention assistance is as follows:

SpO7: Early detection and response mechanisms to prevent regional conflicts established and functioning.
IR1   Operational capacity of ECOWAS CPM enhanced
IR2   Enhanced capacity of regional civil society organizations to participate in conflict detection and response
IR3   Increased donor coordination in building regional capacity to detect and respond to regional conflicts
IR4   Lessons learned and best practices to avoid, mitigate, or transition from conflict to democratic governance shared regionally

WARP has several ongoing activities under SpO7, including strengthening the early warning systems within ECOWAS. There is one MRU-focused activity--the assistance to the IRC consortium for support for Victims of Torture and cross-border peacebuilding through community radio that is currently being implemented in Sierra Leone.

The conflict within the MRU is complex and interwoven between the three nations, their leaders, and their people. A durable peace in the MRU requires that the sub-regional dimensions of the conflict be addressed. The proposed framework for the WARP MRU Peacebuilding Initiative has taken this sub-regional perspective and developed a strategy to support the peacemaking and peacebuilding processes in the MRU.

B. MANO RIVER UNION PEACEBUILDING INITIATIVE

The MRU Peacebuilding Initiative is designed to address the critical issues and immediate needs in the MRU sub-region in order to reduce the levels of conflict and to prevent their recurrence. The MRU Peacebuilding Initiative takes an integrated approach that works to strengthen not only the intergovernmental efforts at peacebuilding, but those of the sub-regional civil society networks as well. It also builds on the conflict prevention work being done by the USAID bilateral programs in Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia through complementary and mutually supportive activities at the sub-regional level.

As discussed in Chapter Three, the USAID bilateral missions have well designed conflict prevention and peacebuilding programs underway. They are uniquely placed to realize these activities within their countries and have the expertise and staff to ensure their proper implementation. This is also true of the cross-border work being done by the UN agencies for the problems of refugees and returnees. Support at this level by WARP would not provide the value added that a sub-regional program should be able to offer and would serve primarily as another conduit to fund activities that are better implemented by bilateral programs. However, the value of WARP assistance is that it can build on the synergy of these bilateral programs by supporting their critical aspects at the sub-regional level. This also enables it to address the conflict issues that cross borders and the sub-regional roots of the problems.

1. The Framework

The proposed results framework for the MRU Peacebuilding Initiative focuses on these sub-regional dimensions and leads directly to both the strategic objectives of WARP's conflict prevention SpO and those of the bilateral missions.

Figure 1.

MRU Peacebuilding Initiative Results Framework

MRU Peacebuilding Initiative
SO: Promote a sustainable peace in the MRU

IR1: Sub-regional dialogue on Peacebuilding in MRU strengthened	IR2: Sub-regional CSO networks and peacebuilding programs strengthened	IR3: MRU Secretariat capacity for conflict prevention and peacebuilding strengthened
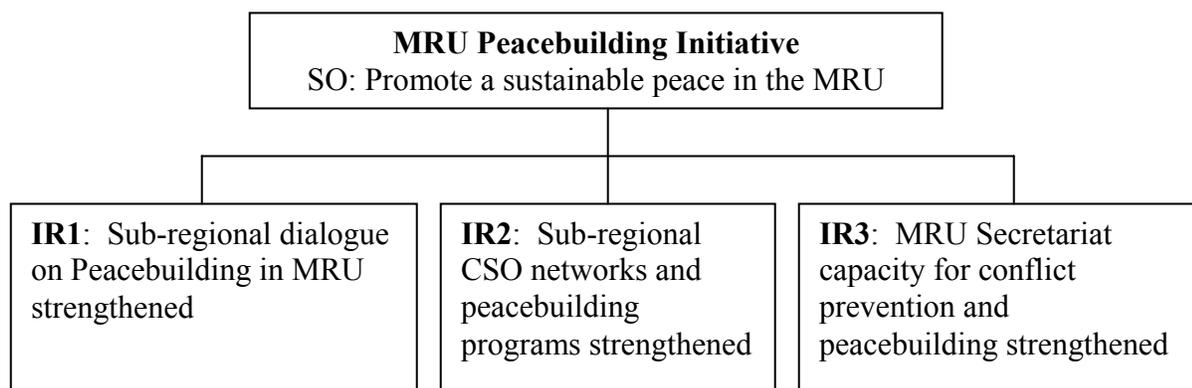
The strategy focuses on strengthening existing networks, institutions, and initiatives and developing them into a force for peace. It looks beyond mitigation to prevention and addresses the critical needs identified by those interviewed during the assessment.

IR1 will help raise the level of dialogue required to address the critical issues in the sub-region, such as the proliferation of arms, the smuggling of natural resources, and the assurance of a sustainable peace with Liberia. Both the quantity and quality of sub-regional dialogue among and between governmental leaders, CSO networks, residents in the border areas, and the press need to be improved and strengthened.

IR2 will help build the capacity of MRU CSO networks to plan sub-regional strategies and activities. It will help implement these activities through mentoring, the provision of technical and logistical assistance, and a small subgrant component. Participant CSO networks will be chosen on a competitive basis based on their programs, methodology, professionalism, and impartiality as well as a demonstrated commitment to sub-regional peace.

IR3 seeks to help the MRU Secretariat implement its sub-regional role in conflict prevention agreed to among the three nations in its 15th Protocol. It will help the Secretariat, with its CSO partners, to address the problems of porous borders while encouraging sub-regional trade and peace.

The timeframe for the MRU Peacebuilding Initiative is 2004-2008, which corresponds with the end of the FY2001-2008 strategy of WARP. The end date of 2008 enables a longer-term perspective and expands the opportunities for conflict prevention assistance as well as for mitigation and reconciliation. It takes the scope of activities beyond the immediate concerns of Conte's succession, the planned withdrawal of UNAMSIL, and, in most likelihood, beyond a Liberia governed by Taylor.

The MRU Peacebuilding Initiative strategy is flexible so it can respond to rapid situational changes and is able to take advantage of moments of opportunity. It is also flexible enough to include other geographic areas affected by MRU conflict, such as the western part of the Côte d'Ivoire.

2. Assumptions

There are several assumptions underlying the MRU Peacebuilding Initiative framework. These include:

- The situation within the MRU continues to be volatile and unpredictable in the short term. Conflict will continue but will vary in intensity, type, and geographic scope.

- The donor community remains committed to the sub-region and the presence of UNAMSIL in Sierra Leone, in some form, beyond the current 2004 planned withdrawal date.

- USAID bilateral assistance programs in the three MRU countries continue through 2008 and along the lines described in Chapter III, Section A, National Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding Assistance.

- Peacebuilding is a slow process that requires a change of political culture, the participation of its people, good governance, and economic opportunities across the sub-region.

3. IR1. Subregional Dialogue on Peacebuilding in the MRU Strengthened

IR1 focuses on the need to develop a sub-regional dialogue on peace and stability in the MRU. There is a critical lack of dialogue at the sub-regional level on almost every issue and level. There have been a few meetings and workshops on specific concerns, but there is virtually no sub-regional dialogue on a continuing or systematic basis.[34]

A sub-regional dialogue is needed between and among the different actors in the sub-region: the governments and governmental institutions of Guinea, Sierra Leone, and Liberia; the MRU Secretariat; sub-regional CSO networks and organizations; the residents of the borders of the MRU; and the sub-regional press. In some cases, it involves the international community and multinational corporations (such as logging companies, diamond brokers or arms dealers). Opening a dialogue opens political space for groups to discuss relevant issues, air differences peacefully and make beginning steps to finding durable solutions. Many of those interviewed cited the MRUWPN's efforts to break the political deadlock and to get the three leaders of the MRU to sit down and talk to each other as a critical first step towards sub-regional peace.

Raising the level of dialogue started under the bilateral programs can:

- Provide a safe forum to raise sensitive internal and external issues affecting the sub-region. Issues that cannot be discussed in one nation can be safely raised in another.
- Create different channels of dialogue, so that each sector of society within the MRU community can air their views and understand how the others think.
- Create political space between CSOs and MRU politicians and between the MRU leaders.
- Foster the commitment of countries in the sub-region to stop supporting dissident groups that destabilize their neighbors.
- Change the dialogue from the language of war to the language of peace and sensitize those involved to the needs of others.
- Help identify common interests and strategies to protect those interests.
- Name and shame those involved in trafficking (arms, diamonds, timber, persons), human rights abuses, and bad governance.
- Provide sub-regional support to those trying to do the right thing.
- Ensure the sub-regional distribution of essential information needed for critical thinking and rational decision making.

The bilateral missions are already supporting the exchange of information and the building of productive dialogues in their national programs. In Sierra Leone, NDI is implementing a civilian-military dialogue. In Guinea, IFES and NDI are supporting CSO-political party-governmental dialogues. In both countries, they are working to take the governmental leaders out of their capitals to meet with their officials and citizens.

The MRU Peacebuilding Initiative can build on these programs by supporting dialogue at the sub-regional level. Dialogue often leads to action, and programs coming out of IR1 discussions
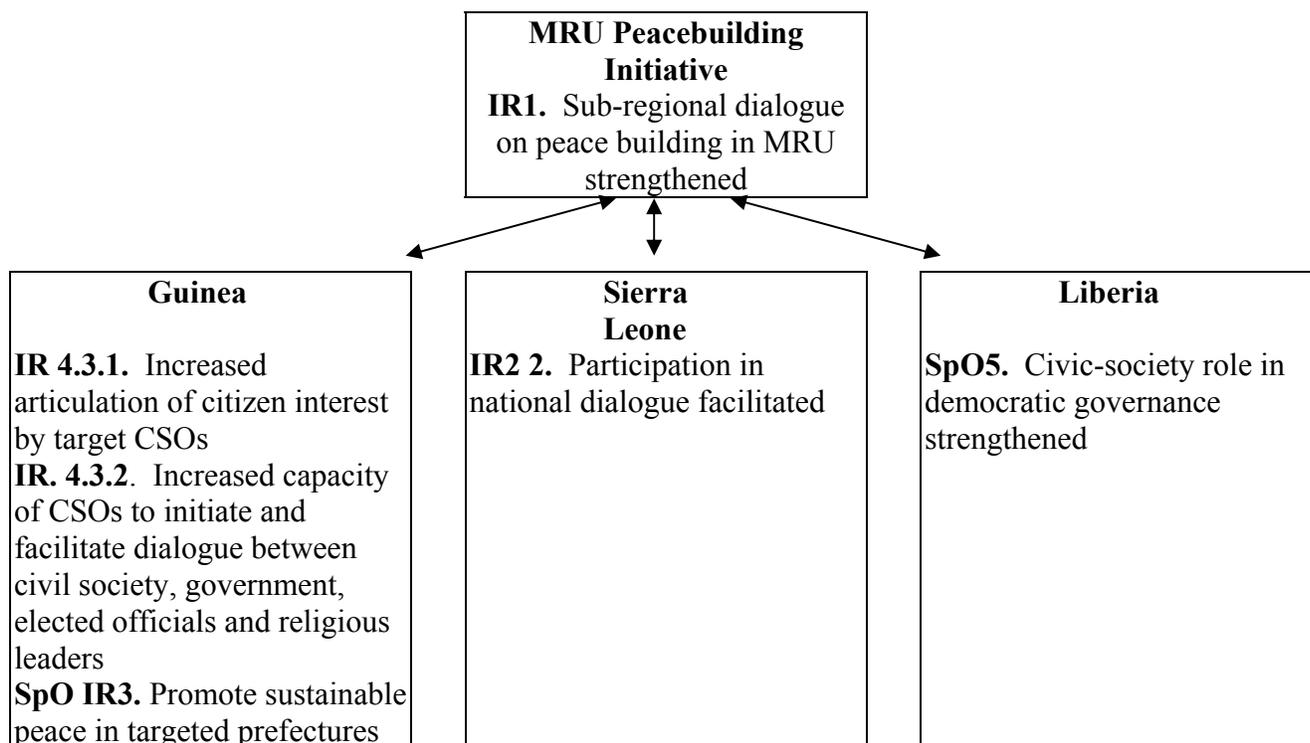
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[34] The exception is the international effort underway for peace talks and a cease-fire for Liberia.

can be supported by the Initiative's IR2 activities, or by the national level activities of the USAID bilateral missions or those of other donors.

Figure 2.

IR1: Synergies and Relationship with USAID Bilateral Programs

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                    ┌──────────────────────────┐
                    │   MRU Peacebuilding      │
                    │        Initiative        │
                    │  IR1.  Sub-regional      │
                    │  dialogue on peace       │
                    │  building in MRU         │
                    │  strengthened            │
                    └──────────────────────────┘
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Guinea	**Sierra Leone**	**Liberia**
IR 4.3.1. Increased articulation of citizen interest by target CSOs **IR. 4.3.2**. Increased capacity of CSOs to initiate and facilitate dialogue between civil society, government, elected officials and religious leaders **SpO IR3.** Promote sustainable peace in targeted prefectures	**IR2 2.** Participation in national dialogue facilitated	**SpO5.** Civic-society role in democratic governance strengthened

a. IR1 Activities

1) Creating constructive sub-regional dialogue

The activities of IR1 focus on building a constructive dialogue within the sub-region on peacebuilding and the prevention of conflict. This is an essential component of building a sub-regional peace. The MRU sub-region has many critical issues that could benefit from discussion at the sub-regional level. (Some of these are listed in Chapter Two, Section E.) Other priority areas for dialogue under the MRU Peacebuilding Initiative include:

- The sub-regional implications of national policies and programs so all sides recognize the implications of their actions and those of their neighbors. One lesson learned frequently cited was from the DDR programs in Liberia and then Sierra Leone. These were done at the national level and neither program addressed the issue of combatants who moved across the borders to avoid disarmament.

- Sharing the effects and impact of conflict between the aggressors and victims, among the different aggressors, and between the MRU political leadership and those directly affected by conflict--including women and youth.

- Improving governance of high-level MRU government officials through discussions on common issues such as how to fight corruption and establish border controls that facilitate sub-regional trade but stops illegal trafficking.

- Developing a long-term common vision of a peaceful and prosperous sub-region and what it will take to get there.

There are many different forums and channels for sub-regional dialogue- from private meetings in sensitive peace negotiations to large, sub-regional conferences. The most important aspect for dialogue assisted by the MRU Peacebuilding Initiative is that it serves as a constructive force for peace, is productive, and is focused on the objectives of the Initiative.

2)   Improving sub-regional media coverage of conflict prevention and peacebuilding

The MRU Peacebuilding Initiative can help strengthen the positive role of the media in peacebuilding and the dissemination of essential information. The availability of accurate, timely and unbiased information is an essential part of conflict prevention, reconciliation and peacebuilding. The media can act as an early warning system and a strong force for peace, but it can also play a very destructive role as witnessed in Rwanda.

The media in the MRU works under very different circumstances depending on the country. Freedom of the press is relatively open in Guinea, except for the airwaves that are almost exclusively Government. Hard news in Sierra Leone is buried by sensational stories and tabloids. Self-censorship is prevalent in Liberia because of government repression towards a free press. Assisting the media as a sub-regional group mixes these reporters and editors with their different styles of reporting, levels of training and restrictions and exposes them to the advantages and hardships of the media in neighboring countries. It builds the sub-regional links between journalists for mentoring, mutual support, and exchanges of information.

The MRU Peacebuilding Initiative can work to strengthen the sub-regional media so it can serve a constructive role and a voice for peace. Priority actions to professionalize the sub-regional press include:

- Training on their roles and responsibilities and developing a code of ethics for the coverage of war, peacebuilding, and politics
- Training to improve the content and accuracy of their work and the quality of their debate and analysis
- Ensuring the press is knowledgeable about the critical issues in the MRU so it understands what is important and knows what questions to ask
- Raising media awareness of how the information they disseminate affects the peacebuilding process and how information should be handled in times of crisis

- Developing links between the MRU CSO networks, their sub-regional activities and the press to: a) ensure widespread press coverage of the activities; and b) for the press to take advantage of relevant training opportunities offered in the CSO programs

IR1 will actively encourage media participation in public forums and workshops carried out under the MRU Peacebuilding Initiative and other appropriate activities as a means to ensure sub-regional coverage of events, dissemination of critical messages coming out of the forums and to ensure transparency of the dialogue processes.

b. Indicators

IR1 assistance is expected to result in a strengthened sub-regional dialogue on preventing conflict and building peace in the sub-region. Possible indicators to measure this result are:

- Increased frequency of formal and informal sub-regional contacts between civil society/private sector networks, MRU governments/ agencies, sub-regional press, specialized groups (ex-combatants, women, youth), and residents within the MRU border areas on issues related to conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

- Improved quality of sub-regional dialogue on the issues of peacebuilding and conflict prevention.

- Improved press coverage of sub-regional issues related to conflict, conflict prevention, and peacebuilding (quality and quantity)

4. IR2 Sub-regional CSO Networks and Peacebuilding Programs Strengthened

IR2 builds on the foundations being laid by the bilateral USAID missions in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia to strengthen national civil society. It is these national CSOs and their networks that created the sub-regional networks that are the focus of the MRU Peacebuilding Initiative IR2 activities.

The quality and capacity of CSOs in the MRU vary between the three countries and within each country. [35] In Guinea, civil society tends to be weaker because non-governmental associations were not allowed before 1984. Most Guinean CSOs lack organizational capacity and formal structures of internal self-government, and according to the WARP study, are rarely apolitical. In Sierra Leone, CSOs have a history of activism. In 1997, they organized a campaign of civil disobedience when the civilian government was overthrown by the military junta. CSOs in Sierra Leone vary in capacity, but most suffer from a general lack of resources and are dependent on international NGOs and donors for support. In Liberia, three types of CSOs have evolved over time: community-based organizations; NGOs focused on development; and NGO professional and umbrella organizations. According to the WARP study, there is a high degree of inter-organizational rivalry as many have the same objectives and seek funding from the same donors.
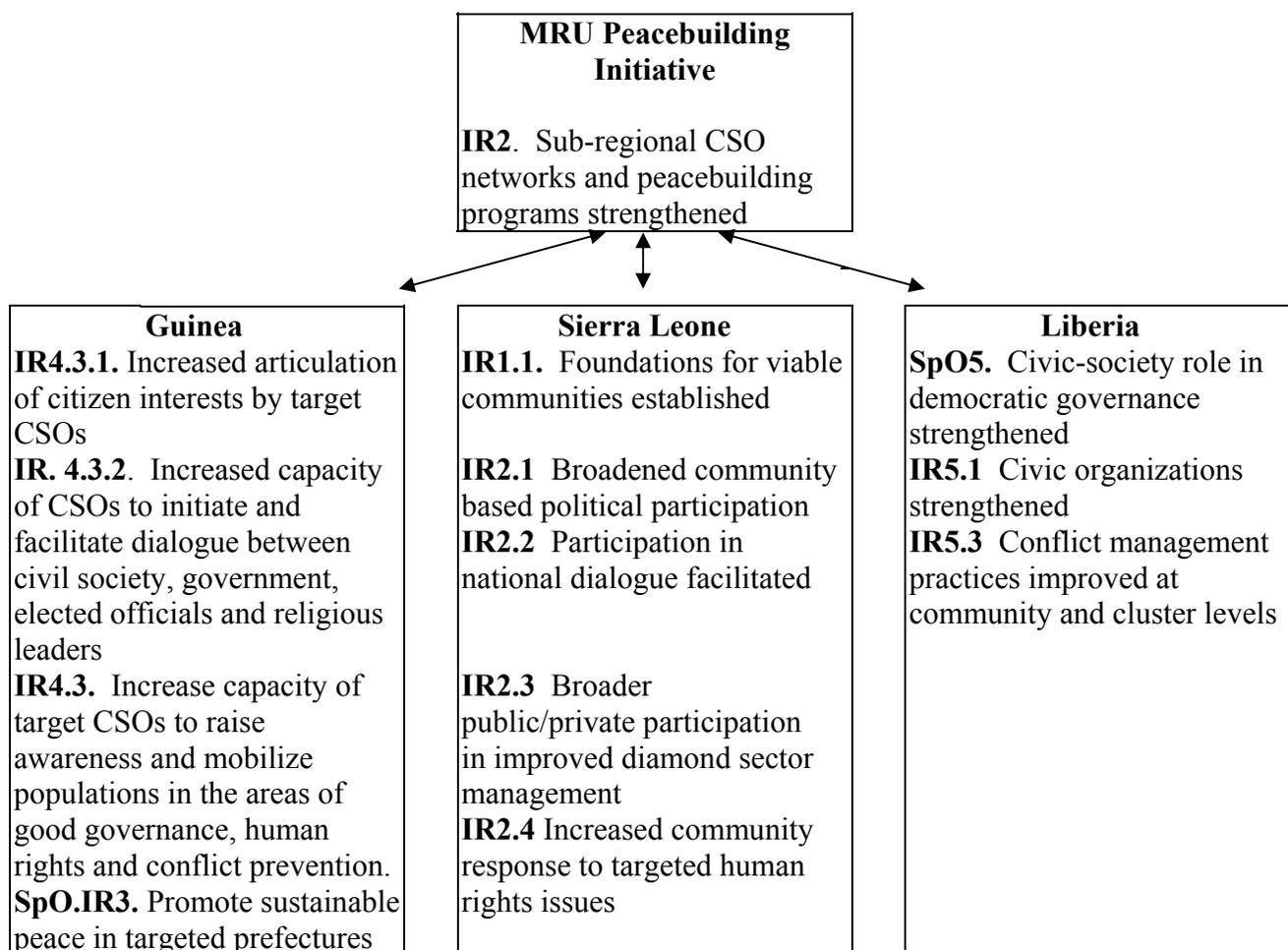
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[35] Information from Karbo, T., *Conflict Prevention and Peacebuilding in the Mano River Union: Civil Society and Its Role,* 2001.

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc

The three bilateral USAID missions are providing support to strengthen these national CSOs and their networks. The MRU Peacebuilding Initiative will build on the synergy of this support by strengthening the networks at the sub-regional level and encourage the development of well planned and coordinated sub-regional and cross-border programs.   It will also provide modest subgrants to these sub-regional networks to implement their activities at the sub-regional and cross-border levels.

Figure 3.

IR2: Synergies and Relationship with USAID Bilateral Programs

MRU Peacebuilding Initiative
IR2. Sub-regional CSO networks and peacebuilding programs strengthened

Guinea	Sierra Leone	Liberia
IR4.3.1. Increased articulation of citizen interests by target CSOs **IR. 4.3.2**. Increased capacity of CSOs to initiate and facilitate dialogue between civil society, government, elected officials and religious leaders **IR4.3.** Increase capacity of target CSOs to raise awareness and mobilize populations in the areas of good governance, human rights and conflict prevention. **SpO.IR3.** Promote sustainable peace in targeted prefectures	**IR1.1.** Foundations for viable communities established **IR2.1** Broadened community based political participation **IR2.2** Participation in national dialogue facilitated **IR2.3** Broader public/private participation in improved diamond sector management **IR2.4** Increased community response to targeted human rights issues	**SpO5.** Civic-society role in democratic governance strengthened **IR5.1** Civic organizations strengthened **IR5.3** Conflict management practices improved at community and cluster levels

a. IR2 Activities

IR2 has two primary areas of assistance. The first is to strengthen the capacity of the MRU CSO networks so they can effectively advocate and work for peace in the sub-region. The second is to enable the most capable and qualified of these networks to implement their sub-regional conflict

prevention programs through targeted financial and logistical support and the provision of subgrants.

The MRU Peacebuilding Initiative will ensure the MRU CSO networks develop strategic plans and technically sound programs that can be implemented in the sub-region and within each of the three countries. However, not all activities developed by these CSO networks can or should be funded by the MRU Peacebuilding Initiative. The Initiative will give priority to qualified sub-regional and cross-border programs and will encourage CSOs to seek bilateral mission, or other donor funding, for the implementation of the national components of their sub-regional programs.

1) Capacity building

The capacity of most of the MRU CSO networks to plan, manage, and implement activities is weak. According to the 2001 WARP-commissioned study on MRU CSOs:

> Despite the plethora of national CSOs working on aspects of the peace process, the role of civil society in the peace process has been slow to evolve and is still being formed. This shift from mobilization of communities to advocate for peace to the sustenance of a peace culture has yet to take place. This is because, in general, the CSOs are so poorly developed. Much needs to be done in terms of strengthening these organizations, not just for their potential role in conflict resolution and peacebuilding capacity, but in general. Of all the organizations observed in this study, fewer than fifteen had any staff trained in conflict resolution skills. Only slightly over half had advocacy and development programs. Many still struggle to define themselves in the wake of relative calm now emerging.[36]

Programs funded by the bilateral missions are addressing these national capacity issues. At the sub-regional level, most CSO contacts are sporadic and funded by resources diverted or borrowed from national programs. Several MRU CSO networks have received donor funding for specific activities, such as a sub-regional meeting or conference, but there is no systematic assistance or programs to help these sub-regional networks. The exception is the MRU Inter-Faith Coordination Committee, which receives project assistance from the World Conference on Religion and Peace and, to a lesser extent, from Church World Service.

The MRU Peacebuilding Initiative will strengthen the capacity of targeted MRU CSO networks in:

- Organizational development and strategic planning
- Accountability and organizational transparency
- Networking, coordination, and participation by CSO members within the networks and with other relevant regional and international networks
- Obtaining the technical skills needed for conflict prevention, peacebuilding, and monitoring

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[36] Ibid, 5.

- Supporting national CSO members threatened by an anti-CSO environment or other difficult national conditions

2) CSO sub-regional programs

The activities supported by the proposed MRU Peacebuilding Initiative will target conflict prevention and peacebuilding needs in the sub-region. It will also target the rebuilding of the sub-regional trade networks through the MRU border areas. Assistance would be provided through an integrated program of mentoring, technical assistance, training, financial and logistical support, and subgrants.

The activities will focus on the critical issues identified in Chapter Two, Section E as well as initiatives that will result from the dialogue supported under the Initiative's IR1, the CSO-related work in IR3, and other targets of opportunity that might arise. Priority areas to assist include:

- Monitoring and reporting on:

  - Implementation of peace accords and other related international agreements
  - Progress of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court, its effects, and lessons learned
  - The human rights situation in the sub-region in general, and in the conflict areas in particular
  - Circulation of people and goods in the sub-region
  - Critical cross-border issues such as smuggling of national resources and the proliferation of arms
  - Environmental damage caused from conflict, and gender-based violence
  - Work of the MRU Secretariat in implementing the 15th Protocol
  - Emergence of new or potential violent conflict in the sub-region.

- Advocacy on:

  - Ending the conflict and building peace
  - Resolving critical sub-regional issues
  - Promoting better governance and rule of law
  - Improving the standards and laws in the sub-region on gender-based violence, child-soldiers, free press, and arms control.
  - Sensitive issues that CSOs national members may not be able to raise or work on within their own countries because of security concerns

- Peacebuilding. There is an entire range of activities possible from mediating and facilitating peace talks to building a sub-regional culture of peace. The CSOs in Liberia suggested the need for a sub-regional rapid response team that could move into a crisis and hold talks to defuse tensions before they exploded. They also want to obtain observer status in ECOWAS. In developing the specifics of this program, links should be made with the existing WARP project that supports the early warning system in ECOWAS and its CSO linkages.

- Information sharing between sub-regional networks and within each sub-regional network on the most effective conflict prevention activities, lessons learned, problems encountered, and solutions found.

- Training, civic education, and awareness building on peace and the root causes of conflict in the sub-region. The best of the national CSO training programs can be shared and adapted to sub-regional programs. Training is needed at all levels in the sub-regional chain of actors. Priority areas include training in good governance for the key sub-regional political actors, and human rights both for border security forces and for CSOs in identifying and responding to the early warning signs of conflict.

- Addressing the porous border issues at the same time as encouraging sub-regional trade.

This last issue will be addressed by the MRU Peacebuilding Initiative through activities undertaken under this IR2, as well as through the assistance provided to the MRU Secretariat detailed in IR3.

b. Indicators

IR2 assistance is expected to result in a strengthened network of sub-regional CSOs and programs for peacebuilding and conflict prevention. Possible indicators to measure these results are:

- Increased capacity of MRU CSO networks to develop and implement strategic plans for peacebuilding.

- More effective and better coordinated sub-regional activities for peacebuilding and conflict resolution designed and implemented by sub-regional CSO networks.

5. IR3 MRU Secretariat Capacity for Conflict Resolution and Peacebuilding Strengthened

IR3 focuses on strengthening the inter-governmental body responsible for conflict resolution and peacebuilding in the sub-region. This assistance complements the activities in IR1 and IR2 and should provide the CSO sub-regional networks with a more effective inter-governmental partner in their effort to reduce conflict and address sub-regional problems.

The MRU is the only inter-governmental union in the sub-region, and before it became sidelined, its Secretariat was said to have been a positive force for economic integration and sub-regional trade. According to the UN ECA consultant, in the 1980s it dismantled the customs barriers between the three countries and enabled goods of local origin to cross with minimum tax. It also trained MRU customs officers on these regulations and worked on infrastructure development, including a bridge across the Mano River. It started the ground work for socio-economic development based on agro-industry (testing palm oil mills), but the work stopped when the fighting began in Liberia.

Secretariat funding has been adversely affected by the conflict in the MRU that diverted scarce member state resources. The Secretariat has remained open based on token payments by Guinea and Sierra Leone, but this has not been enough to pay for the salaries of all the staff, most of which have moved on.

In 2000, efforts by the UN SG to rejuvenate the MRU resulted in all three member states signing the 15th Protocol on Cooperation on Defense, Security, Internal Affairs, and Foreign Affairs (Attachment 1). This protocol gives the MRU Secretariat an inter-governmental role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding within the MRU. It calls for the creation of a MRU Joint Security Committee made up of the Ministers from each of its member states from their Ministries of Defense, Security/Justice, Foreign Affairs, and Internal Affairs. The role of this committee is to address border security issues, including any relevant issues that may arise.

The lack of funds and the personal animosities between Taylor and Conte have prevented the Secretariat from fulfilling its security role. Nevertheless, it received its first complaint in 2001 from Liberia that charged the Government of Guinea with supporting the armed dissidents fighting to overthrow the government of Liberia.
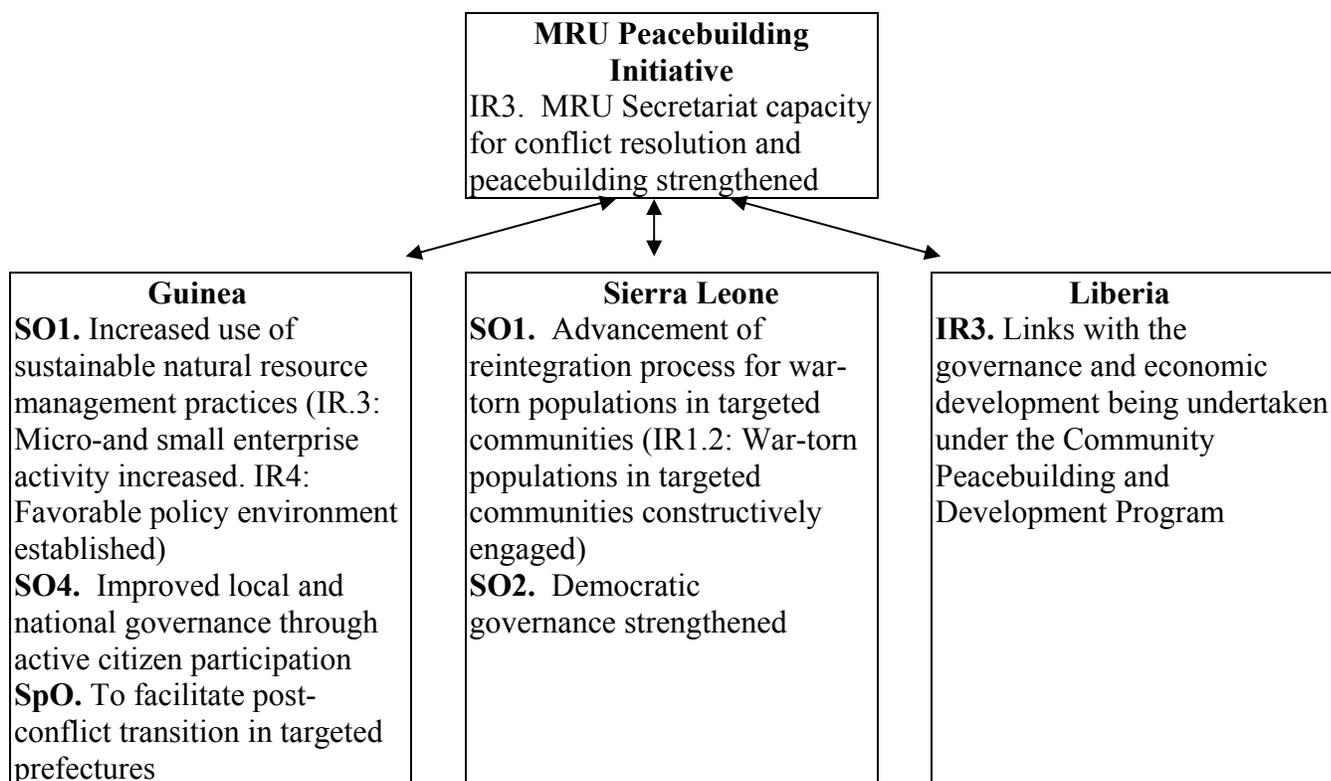
Although it is proceeding slowly, the UN ECA seems to be leading the UN effort to help revive the MRU Secretariat. It funded the assessment of the Secretariat that is to include recommendations for its organizational restructuring. It also developed a proposal to help the Secretariat implement portions of the 15th Protocol through activities focusing on arms control.

Given the critical role that the MRU Secretariat could and should be playing in the peace, security, and economic prosperity of the sub-region, it is included in the MRU Peacebuilding Initiative. The details of this assistance will need to be carefully coordinated with the other donors, but the MRU Peacebuilding Initiative can help strengthen the Secretariat by addressing its efforts to address the problems resulting from porous borders and encouraging sub-regional trade and peace.

These efforts will directly contribute to the strategic objectives and results anticipated in the WARP SpO on conflict prevention as well as the three USAID bilateral programs, including their objectives related to improved governance and increased economic opportunities.

Figure 4.

IR3: Synergies and Relationship with USAID Bilateral Programs

MRU Peacebuilding Initiative
IR3. MRU Secretariat capacity for conflict resolution and peacebuilding strengthened

Guinea	Sierra Leone	Liberia
SO1. Increased use of sustainable natural resource management practices (IR.3: Micro-and small enterprise activity increased. IR4: Favorable policy environment established) **SO4.** Improved local and national governance through active citizen participation **SpO.** To facilitate post-conflict transition in targeted prefectures	**SO1.** Advancement of reintegration process for war-torn populations in targeted communities (IR1.2: War-torn populations in targeted communities constructively engaged) **SO2.** Democratic governance strengthened	**IR3.** Links with the governance and economic development being undertaken under the Community Peacebuilding and Development Program

a. IR3 Activities

IR3 activities focus on strengthening the capacity of the MRU Secretariat to fulfill its sub-regional peace and security role. This will be done by direct support to the Secretariat and through support to its activities that intertwine with the Initiative's activities supported under IR1 and IR2.

1) Capacity building

The capacity of the MRU Secretariat has been destroyed through its neglect by its member states and by the attrition of its mostly unpaid staff. There is still a core group of functionaries who keeps the Secretariat doors open in Freetown along with its two regional offices in Liberia and Guinea, but they lack the motivation, means, and resources to accomplish meaningful work.

Help seems to be on the horizon with the UN ECA initiative to rejuvenate the Secretariat. The MRU Peacebuilding Initiative can assist with this badly needed effort. The Initiative's timeframe of 2004-2008 enables it to look past the current stalemate created by personal animosities to a better political climate where member states resume their funding of the Secretariat and the Secretariat resumes its inter-governmental work.

The MRU Peacebuilding Initiative can help strengthen the institutional capacity of the Secretariat through a combination of technical assistance, training, and direct support. It can also strengthen the Secretariat's capacity to implement its programs by assisting targeted programs addressed at the problems of porous borders, peacebuilding, and sub-regional trade.

2) MRU Secretariat programs

There are several priority areas that the MRU Peacebuilding Initiative can help the Secretariat address. These include:

Addressing the Issues of Porous Borders

Many of the sub-region's problems are aggravated by its porous borders, which enable the illegal traffic of arms, natural resources, and combatants between and through the MRU. The inability of the MRU member states to adequately patrol their borders means they remain porous and extremely exposed.[37]

Border protection aspects are being addressed by donors primarily through military assistance programs (U.S. DOD training of Guinean rangers in 2001 and U.S. and UK IMAT assistance in Sierra Leone). The proposed UN ECA project would also assist the border protection aspects by supporting the Secretariat's Joint Security and Technical Committees.

According to the 15th Protocol, a Technical Committee is to be created to implement the policy decisions made by the MRU Joint Security Committee. It is to review border security and related issues, receive and investigate reports on border security, and create Joint Border Security and Confidence Building Units.

The Technical Committee has not yet been created, but is to be made up of representative from each member state from each of the following:

- National Security Adviser,
- Ministry of Defense;
- Ministry of Security/Justice;
- Ministry of Foreign Affairs;
- Ministry of Internal Affairs;
- Chief of Defense;
- Inspector-General of Police; and
- MRU Secretariat.

The MRU Peacebuilding Initiative would work with the UN ECA assistance to strengthen the capacity of the Technical Committee and the Joint Border Security and Confidence Building Units to effectively fulfill their conflict prevention and peacebuilding roles. While UN assistance is expected to focus primarily on the issue of arms control, the MRU Peacebuilding Initiative will focus on other critical issues arising from the porous border, such as the smuggling

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[37] UN ECA, *Mano River Union Joint Security Arrangement and Small Arms Control Project,* 2002.

of natural resources, the cross-border recruitment of combatants, and the taking of women and children for porters, soldiers and "wives."

The Initiative will also work to link the CSO sub-regional networks to the Technical Committee to ensure CSO input into policy decisions, the development of joint action plans and other areas where the inter-governmental committee can work with the sub-regional CSO networks.

Promoting sub-regional peace

The MRU Secretariat has a significant role to play in the promotion of sub-regional peace. At the policy level, it can promote constructive dialogue between the member states on many critical issues related to peace and security. It can also extend this dialogue to the technical levels and key ministries within each of the three member states responsible for implementing the policy decisions.

This role is evident in the Secretariat's own objectives:[38]

- Harmonize efforts in the restoration of peace and security within the three member states and along their borders;
- Foster regular consultations up to the highest level of their administrations;
- Re-establish normal relations within the scope of the Mano River Union; and
- Effectively fight against arms smuggling, drug trafficking, etc.

At the grassroots level and along the borders, there is also a significant role for the MRU Secretariat. The 15th Protocol also provides for the creation of Joint Border Security and Confidence Building Units. These units are to be made up of representatives from each of the three countries, specifically:

- The district officers/sous-préfets of the border districts;
- The Paramount Chiefs;
- The senior police and/or immigration officer at the border areas;
- The senior customs officer and the senior border guard;
- Commanding army officer at the border;
- The youth representative;
- The women's representative; and
- The chairman of the rural development committee or equivalent.

The purpose of the Units is to organize and conduct joint patrols, develop and promote cordial relations between the people in the border regions through cultural, social, and supporting activities; and exchange information. This ties in with the MRU Peacebuilding Initiatives activities for both IR1 and IR2.

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[38] Mano River Union Secretariat, "Funding Proposals for the Implementation of Strategies for the Consolidation of Peace and Security in the Mano River Union," 2000.

Basic Education and Policy Support (BEPS) Activity
Creative Associates International, Inc

The Initiative can help the Secretariat "promote cordial relations" through strengthening its capacity to create and maintain these Units, by providing direct support for appropriate programs developed by these Units, as well as by providing complementary support through MRU CSO network activities in the border regions funded under IR2.

Promoting sub-regional trade and economic integration

The MRU was created for the purposes of economic integration between Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea. While it was active, the Secretariat worked to create a customs union and a free trade zone between the three member states, achieving the free trade of goods of local origin in 1981. One of the primary objectives of the Secretariat is still to develop the economic potential of the MRU by stimulating the growth of intra-union trade.

The links between the lack of economic opportunity and the continuing conflict are evident. The bilateral missions are working to increase the economic opportunities within their countries and to provide ex-combatants and youth with appropriate job skills. The resumption of cross-border trade is a critical link in rebuilding the war-torn economies in the MRU.

The Parrot's Beak area, where the borders of Sierra Leone, Liberia, and Guinea meet, used to be a major hub of sub-regional and regional trade. In Sierra Leone, the border town of Koindu was a major sub-regional market and center of economic activity. According to USAID/Sierra Leone, people used to come from as far away as the Côte d'Ivoire. Today, the market is a ghost of its prewar size. On the other side of the border in Guinea, Gueckedou was another important hub of national and international trade with Liberia, Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire, and Nigeria. This hub was damaged by the 2000-2001 border incursions into Guinea and still has not fully recovered. In Liberia, the nearby market town of Voinjama was the Liberian hub, and it is now inaccessible behind LURD lines.

Building a sustainable peace in the sub-region will require the rebuilding of these trade routes. There is a need to strengthen the transportation networks that carry products between the three countries, rebuild markets, and improve cross-border communications. The customs and immigration agents along the border will need training so that they are able to facilitate the crossing of legal trade as well as to prevent the crossing of illegal goods.

The need for this type of training was evident during the assessment. At the land border between Guinea and Sierra Leone, the immigration officers in Sierra Leone refused entry to the West African team member because there was no place on his national ID card for them to stamp. They wanted a passport with pages to stamp even though a passport is not required for travel by ECOWAS residents between ECOWAS member states. They finally settled for stamping the USAID Mission Orders for our travel, but the incident illustrates the need for basic training for the immigration and customs officials on all sides of the borders.

b. Indicators

IR3 assistance is expected to result in a strengthened MRU Secretariat that is better able to fulfill its role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. Possible indicators are :

- MRU Secretariat functioning and working on critical issues related to rebuilding free trade within the sub-region and preventing illegal trafficking between borders

- Joint MRU Secretariat/sub-regional CSO network collaboration established on peace and security initiatives for the border regions and for inter-regional dialogue at the policy level

- High level dialogue and consultations between MRU member governments re-established and strengthened

C. IMPLEMENTATION NOTES

1. Management

The MRU Peacebuilding Initiative could be implemented by WARP through the provision of one or more cooperative agreements or contracts. It is anticipated that one umbrella organization could provide the strategic vision and programmatic oversight required for IR1 and IR2. A separate agreement/contract with a more specialized organization might be required for IR3. The grantee/contractor would need to be perceived as impartial, highly capable, and able to work effectively in a very sensitive political environment.

An umbrella mechanism could manage the project and all of its components. It could provide the necessary technical expertise, do training, help develop materials, act as a mentor, build the beneficiaries' institutional and organizational capacity, manage the subgrant program, and ensure the proper use of funds. It would also be responsible for all of the monitoring, reporting, and evaluation of the activity, including developing a detailed performance monitoring plan.

The subgrant program would be based on competitive criteria and the CSO network's ability to deliver results, similar to the program being implemented by USAID/Liberia in its Community Peacebuilding and Development Program.

All activities will require close coordination with the three USAID bilateral programs to maximize impact and to avoid duplication of efforts or conflicting work. The MRU Peacebuilding Initiative would also want to take advantage of bilaterally funded training opportunities and materials that could benefit the sub-regional programs. Similarly, the bilateral programs should be able to benefit from the trainings, materials and activities developed by the MRU Peacebuilding Initiative.

2. Activity Design Issues

There are several issues that will need to be taken into consideration when the specific proposals are designed for the MRU Peacebuilding Initiative. These are in addition to the usual concerns of sustainability, cost-effectiveness, and avoidance of the creation of donor dependence.

For the CSO networks these include:

- The capacity of the CSO networks and their ability to handle multiple activities and funding. The assessment noted that several CSOs and their networks were headed by the same person(s). These same person(s) also had extensive commitments for international trips and conferences.

- The neutrality of activities supported and the avoidance of activities with the potential to make things worse if something were to go wrong.

For the MRU Secretariat these include:

- The probable need for phased or conditioned assistance to the Secretariat, and the most effective way to start this assistance. There are currently several unknown variables related to assisting the Secretariat. Among these are:

  - *Who will assist what*. The anticipated donor conference in October 2003 should provide a good indication of other donor intentions and the areas they might assist.
  - *The ability and willingness of the three member states to adequately fund the Secretariat.* There must be a demonstrated level of commitment by MRU member states to support and work through the MRU.
  - The *issue of back pay and the identification of other debts.* Some of the MRU staff has not been paid for years. The exact nature and extent of the debt needs to be determined as well as finding a solution to the outstanding pay issue before any assistance is started.
  - *The commitment of the MRU member states to re-staffing the Secretariat with qualified professionals.* The assessment heard comments about the need to change the old guard, but as they stayed without pay for years at their posts, the team believes a compromise solution will need to be found.

The resolution of these last three issues may require conditionality of funding and/or a Memorandum of Understanding between the MRU member states and WARP specifying the commitment of each.

3. Performance Monitoring Plan

Once the proposals are finalized and the cooperative agreement(s)/contract(s) are issued, an in-depth performance monitoring plan will need to be developed. If an umbrella mechanism is used, it could develop the detailed performance monitoring plans for both its grant/contract and the MRU Peacebuilding Initiative.

The performance monitoring plan for the MRU Peacebuilding Initiative should include the following components:

- Specific indicators for each activity and result
- Annual targets for each indicator
- Baseline data information on CSO sub-regional networks and the MRU Secretariat, level of existing sub-regional dialogue, and specific data on existing sub-regional activities

- External midterm evaluation around months 18-20, to include recommendations for refinement of strategy, indicators, and results
- Regular reporting (quarterly reports with output tables for each activity, annual reports and an end of project report)
- External final evaluation with results, impact, lessons learned, and recommendations for possible follow-on activities (by month 46).

ATTACHMENTS

ATTACHMENT 1

FIFTEENTH PROTOCOL TO THE MANO RIVER UNION DECLARATION: COOPERATION ON DEFENSE, SECURITY, INTERNAL AFFAIRS, AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS

WE, the Heads of state and Government of the Member States of the Manor River Union;

IN FURTHERANCE of the Aims and Objectives of the Mano River Union;

CONSEQUENTLY on the decision as recorded in Article Eighth of the Mano River Union Declaration:

RECALLING the Final Communiqué of the Consultation Meeting of the Heads of State of the Mano River Union held in Bamako on 2 March 2000, in particular the reiteration of our will to immediately reinstate dialogue at all levels, in order to promote good will, neighborliness and co-operation among members;

DESIROUS of strengthening the institutional capacity of the Union to contribute to the maintenance of peace, security and stability of the Member States of the Union;

MINDFUL of the need for the establishment of a framework to create an effective mechanism to monitor and ensure the security of common borders with the aim of preventing, controlling, discouraging, forestalling and averting security related problems in the border regions of the Member States;

DECIDING for the purpose of the foregoing to create an institutional framework for Defense, Security and Internal Affairs;

DO HEREBY ESTABLISH THIS PROTOCOL TO THE DECLARATION:

FIRST: THE MANO RIVER UNION JOINT SECURITY COMMITTEE

There shall be a Mano River Union Joint Security Committee, hereafter called "Committee" which shall be subordinate to the Heads of State and Government of the Mano River Union:

I. Composition of the Joint Security Committee

The Committee shall consist of Ministers of each Member State
a) The Minister in charge of Defense;
b) The Minister in charge of Security/Justice wherever applicable;
c) The Minister for Foreign Affairs;
d) The Minister for Internal Affairs.

II.   Functions of the Joint Security Committee

The Committee shall perform the following functions:
a) Address border security issues;
b) Broaden the scope of its mandate to include other related issues that may arise from time to time;
c) Deal with policy issues, monitoring and oversight;
d) Direct the Technical Committee and ensure that is decisions and those taken by Heads of State and Government relating to border security and related issues are implemented;
e) Receive and review all reports arising from border security and related issues in Member States;
f) Draw up an Action Plan for the mobilization of financial resources through the Mano River Union for the implementation of its programmes and;
g) Perform any other functions that may be deemed appropriate.

III.   Procedures of the Committee:
The Committee shall elect a Chairman from amongst its members on a rotational basis from the Member States for a period of one year.

The committee shall meet quarterly on a rotational basis in the three Member States.

SECOND: SUBSIDIARY BODIES OF THE COMMITTEE

A. TECHNICAL COMMITTEE

1. Composition of the Technical Committee

The Technical Committee shall comprise of:

a) A representative of the National Security Adviser;
b) Representative of the Ministries for Defense, Security/Justice where applicable, Foreign Affairs and Internal Affairs;
c) The Chief of Defense Staff or his Representative;
d) The Inspector-General of Police or his Representative;
e) A Representative of the Mano River Union Secretariat.

2. Functions of the Technical Committee

The functions of the Technical Committee shall include the following:

a) Review on a regular basis border security and related issues in Member States;
b) Receive, investigate and analyze reports on border security and related issues;
c) Create a structure that would ensure that reports from the field are submitted directly to the current Chairman of the Joint Security Committee who shall make such reports available to his/her colleague committee members including the counterparts in the other Member States.

A copy should also be directed to the Secretary General of the Mano River Union for information and necessary action;

d) Establish the Joint Border Security and Confidence-Building Units whenever deemed necessary;

e) Perform any other functions that may be deemed appropriate.

3. Procedures of the Technical Committee

The Technical Committee shall elect a Chairman from amongst its members who will serve for a period of one year on a rotational basis.

The Technical Committee shall meet at least once every month unless the Joint Security Committee decides otherwise.

B. JOINT BORDER SECURITY AND CONFIDENCE BUILDING UNITS

1. Composition of the Joint Border Security and Confidence Building Units

The Composition of these Units shall include:

a) District officers of border districts in the case of Sierra Leone and Liberia, and 'Sous-préfets' in the case of Guinea;

b) The Paramount Chiefs or their counterparts in the border areas;

c) The Senior Police and/or immigration Officer at the border areas;

d) The Senior Customs Officer at the border post or his equivalent;

e) The Senior Border Guard at the border;

f) The Commanding Army Officer at the border;

g) The youth representative at the border;

h) The representative of women at the border area;

i) Chairman of the Rural Development Committee in Guinea, or his equivalent in the other Member States

2. Functions of the Joint Border Security and Confidence-Building Units

The Units shall be non-political and shall perform the following functions:

a) Organize and conduct joint patrols of the borders;

b) Develop, facilitate, foster and promote cordial relations between the people of the border regions through cultural, social and sporting activities;

c) Exchange information and investigate reports or observations with regards to all border security activities;

d) Submit reports to the Chairman of the Technical Committee promptly;

e) Resolve minor cases of border security violations occurring in their own administrative areas;

f) Any other functions that may be delegated to them by the Technical Committee.

3. Procedure of the Joint Border Security and Confidence-Building Units

a) The Committee shall elect a Chairman from amongst its members to serve for a period of one year on a rotational basis;
b) The Units shall meet as frequently as possible and in any case no less than once a month.

Done at Conakry

This ninth day of May in the year two thousand

In three copies, two in the English language and done in the French language, each text being equally authentic.

Alhaji Ahmad Tejan KABBAH
For the Republic of SIERRA LEONE

Dahkpanah Dr. Charles Gankhay TAYLOR
For the Republic of LIBERIA

General Lansana CONTE
For the Republic of GUINEA

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A:

LIST OF CONTACTS: ORGANIZATIONS AND INDIVIDUALS

CONTACTS IN THE USA

Canada, Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade
>Finch, Susan. Coordinator, Canada/West Africa Peace and Security Initiative (in Canada)

Refugees International
>Nyce, Sayre.

Search for Common Ground
>Kulp, Heather. Program Manager for Africa

Mercy Corps
>Scriven, Karen. Director of New Program Initiatives

USAID
>Garvey, Stephanie. Africa Bureau, Desk Officer, Sierra Leone and Guinea
>Isralow, Sharon.   Africa Bureau, Conflict Backstop
>Morris, Sharon. DACHA, Conflict Office

CONTACTS IN GUINEA

Canada
>Laviades, Carlos. Charge d'Affaires, a.i.

CENAFOD (Centre Nationale de Formation pour l'Education)
>Touré, Saran. Director

Commission Nationale de Lutte Contre la Circulation Illicite des Armes a Feu (CNLCPCIM)
>Major General Camara, Calf Moussa Bayault. Director General of the Bureau BIH, Army, Ministry of Defense
>Camara, Momo. Deputy Director, Service for NGO Coordination, Ministry of Administration and Decentralization
>Cisse, Dr. Mahmoud. Conseiller Juridique, Member National Commission. Ministry of National Defense
>Dr. Cisse, Mohamed Lamine. Official, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
>Dr. Camarah, Manualy Saiba. Director Section UN, MAEC
>Cherif, Moundjour. Member, Judge, Ministry of Justice
>Diajarou, Dieng Fatou. President of the Sub-Commission of Information, Education, Communication CNLCPCIM From the Ministry of Security, Assistant to the Minister.

Diallo, Amadou Bailo. Permanent Secretary, National Commission, Ministry of Defense
Ehoulet, Kaba Maria Thérèse. Member of Sub Commission on Information, Education, Communication. From the Ministry of Youth, Sport and Culture, Conseillere Chargée des Questions de la Culture.
Gaye, Fofana Naby. UNDP expert on arms issues. Member of the National Commission CNLCPCIM, from the Ministry of Defense.
Keita, Blaise Pascal. Director of Legal and Consulaire Affaires (DAJC), Division Juridique. Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation
Dr. Kouyata, D. Osman. Assistant Attorney, Ministry of Foreign Affairs
Col. Kpogounou Tofany Henri. Member, President Commission Defense and Security at National Assembly
Sylla, Fodi Noassa, President Union des Societés et Entreprises de Sécurité Privée

Economic and Social Council, Republic of Guinea
Kamano, Michel. President
Camara, Mamadou Bobo. Secretary General
Diallo, Balde Hadja Mariama Sire. Member
Diallo, Thiam. Vice President
Guillao, Lenaud Josephine. Vice President
Questem, Lamine Bangona. Member

European Union
Dr. M'Baye, Abdoul Aziz. Representative a.i.

GTZ: German Cooperation
Cicoria, Paola. Project Director

International Foundation for Electoral Systems
Coté, Elizabeth. Representative

International Rescue Committee
Swett, Tim. Deputy Director
Kallon, Ibrahima. Administration Manager

Inter Religious Council of Guinea
Mano, Isaaac. Secretary, Finance and Administration Officer

Organisation Guineene de Defense des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen (OGDH)
Dr. Maadjou, Sow Theirno. Director
Diallo, Abdoul Gadiry. Member

Mano River Union Civil Society Movement
Fofana, Bakary. 1st Vice President of National Council of Civil Society Organizations in Guinea

Mano River Union Journalist Network
　　　Keita, Assan Abraham. Director of Publication, Lynx

Mano River Union Women Peace Network
　　　Dr. Kaba, Saran Daraba. President, Guinea
　　　Bayoh, Sallay. Sierra Leone Refugee Branch
　　　Morgane, Goumou Fatoumata. National Coordinator for Guinea

National Democratic Institute
　　　Marantz, Denis. Country Director

Organisation Guineene de Defense des Droits de l'Homme et du Citoyen
　　　Dr. Sow, Thierno Maadjou. Director
　　　Diallo, Abdoul Gadiry. Member

Réseau Liberté
　　　Real, Barneby. Director
　　　Breton, Paul. Deputy Director

UNDP
　　　Toe, Amadou. Deputy Resident Representative
　　　Djobaté, Ousef. Consultant

UNHCR
　　　Dr. Rakatotmalala, Claude. Délégué Assistant, Program
　　　Tounkara, Fatoumata Diariou.   Public Information Officer

UNICEF
　　　Yansané, Ibrahima. Project Officer Child Protection

UNOCHA
　　　De Lys, D. Hervé Ludovic. Head of Office and Humanitarian Affairs Officer
　　　Thomle, Sofie Garde. Information Officer

USAID
　　　Boncy, Robert. Deputy Director
　　　Atteberry, David. Sierra Leone Program Officer
　　　Diallo, Ahmed T. Program Assistant, Office of Democracy and Good Governance
　　　Diallo, Alpha S. Team Leader Office of Strategic Planning and Results Center
　　　Diallo, Mamadou Kenda.   Acting Team Leader, Office of Democracy and Good Governance Rainey, Patricia. Strategic Results Coordinator

US Embassy
　　　Gecas, Vida. Regional Security Officer
　　　Rios, Karl. Political Officer

CONTACTS IN SIERRA LEONE

American Refugee Committee International
Nourse, Tim. Global Micro Finance Coordinator

British High Commission
Stuart, Ian. First Secretary (Development)

Inter-Religious Council of Sierra Leone
Alhaji Lisman Nurudin Sahid Jah, Executive Council Member
Alhaji Dr. A.B. Karim, Executive Council Member
Reverend L.B. Rogers-Wright, Executive Council Member
Reverend Henry Christopher Samuels. Executive Council Member

International Human Rights Law Group
Nzeyimana, Pierre Claver. Program Director
Pemagbi, Joe H. Jr. Program Officer

International Rescue Committee
Koch, Kristina. Deputy Country Director

Koindu Civic Leaders
Folleh, S.W.   Senior Section Chief
Foryoh, E.K. Acting Paramount Chief
Foryoh, Moses F. Community Secretary
Tengbeh, Principal. KBSS School
Kabba, I.M. Court Chairman
Yabasue, Tené, Chair-lady, Market Ladies

Management Services International
Arthy, Helen. Field Manager, Diamond Policy and Management
Tamba, Sandi. Deputy Field Manager, Diamond Policy and Management
Temple, Paul. Team Leader, Peace Diamond Alliance

Mano River Union Civil Society Movement
Barie, Hassan M. Civil Society Movement and Mine Workers Union
Kuyateh, Davidson A.   Secretary General, Civil Society Movement, Sierra Leone
Minah, Festus, E. President, Sierra Leone Teachers Union
Reverend Kabo, Morie. Program Consultant, Civil Society Movement, Sierra Leone
Kouteh, Fred Hassan. Member, FBC-USL
Thoronka, Samuel, Member, Motor Drivers Union

Mano River Union Journalists Network
Waritay, Lamini A.   Executive Director, West Africa Democracy Radio

Mano River Union Women Peace Network
French, Miatta. Executive Secretary
Macfoy, Christiana. Treasurer
McCarthy, Roseyln. Program Chairperson, MARWOPNET Sub-region
Pratt, Nana. Focal Point for Sierra Leone

Mano River Union Secretariat
Morris, L. Director, Economic Affairs Division a.i.
Tejan, Alhaji MHB. Budget/Finance Controller
Vincent, Jalm P. Planning Officer, Economic Affairs Division, a.i.

Search for Common Ground
Fortune, Francis. Regional Director, West Africa
James, Ambrose.   Department Head, Community Peace Building, Talking Drum Studio
Foday-Musa, Gibril. Department Head, Public Affairs, Talking Drum Studio
Sesay, Nancy. Producer Talking Drum Studio

UNAMSIL
Col. Sana. Commander PAKBAT V, Kailahun

UNECA
Eghan, Ben C, MRU Assessment Consultant

UNHCR
Kimbimbi, Sanda. Representative a.i.

UNOCHA
Johnson, Denis. Chief OCHA Sierra Leone

USAID
Koenen-Grant, Julie. Country Program Manager
Jallo, Abdulai. Democracy and Governance Team Leader
Almaguer, Frank.   Team Leader, Independent Evaluation of the USAID Sierra Leone Program

US Embassy
Chaveas, Peter R., Ambassador
Bishop, Michael, RSO
Ltc. Godbout. DAO

West African Monetary Agency
Nabassoua, Yacouba. Director General

World Conference on Religion and Peace
Reverend Tolbert III, William. Regional Director

World Vision
    Mirana, Taplima. Koindu
    Sati, Lahar. Coordinator Skills Training, Koindu
    Fewry, Edward O. Assistant Manager, TIP (ICDP). Buedu
    Muana, Taplima. Regional Supervisor, STEP (ICDP), Buedu
    Saati, Lahai, S. Skills Training Coordinator, STEP (ICDP), Buedu
    Seseny, Omaru, D. Assistant Regional Coordinator, TIP, Buedu
    Tucker, Leonard. District Coordinator TIP (ICDP), Buedu

CONTACTS IN LIBERIA

Africare
    Dean, Jim. (by e-mail)

Association of Female Lawyers of Liberia
    Cllr. Williams, Abla Gadegbeku. Secretary General (by e-mail)

Catholic Relief Services
    Studer, Raymond L. Country Representative (by e-mail)

Center for Justice and Peace Studies
    Norris, Hilary. Executive Director (by e-mail)

Civil Society Movement of Liberia
    Saa Philipe Joe. Chairman (by e-mail)

Development Education Network Liberia
    Siakor, Franklin. Director (by e-mail)

International Foundation for Education and Self-Help
    By e-mail

Inter-Religious Council of Liberia
    Kazolo, David D. Secretary General IRCL
    Lartey, Benjamin. Secretary General of the Liberian Council of Churches.
    Francis, Michael Kpakala. Archbishop of Monrovia and President of the Inter-Religious
    Council of Liberia (by –email).

Liberia Council of Churches
    Lartey, Benjamin Dorme. General Secretary

National Forum for Public Policy and Development
    Mitchell, Abraham. Executive Director (by e-mail)

Peace Building Resource Centre
      Mulbah, Edward K. Executive Director (by e-mail)

USAID
      Birgells, Edward. Mission Director

West Africa Network for Peacebuilding Liberia Chapter
Women in Peacebuilding Network
      Gbowee, Leymah R. Actg. National Coordinator (by e-mail)

APPENDIX B:

INTINERARY FOR ASSESSMENT: MAY 5 THROUGH MAY 26.

5 – 6 May.   Team members Nelson and Bassene travel to Guinea from USA and Mali respectively.

7 – 17 May.   The team worked in Conakry and began the assessment by meeting with USAID/Guinea and Embassy officials, interviewing other donors, NGOs, CSOs, and Government of Guinea officials. The trip scheduled to the Forest Region of Guinea was cancelled by the RSO because of security concerns.

18 May.   The team drove overland to Freetown, Sierra Leone.

19 – 23 May. The team worked in Freetown interviewing USAID and US Embassy officials, other donors, and NGOs and CSOs. The team met with the USAID/Liberia Mission Director and discussed the USAID program and conditions in Liberia. With the USAID/Liberia Mission Director and the USAID/Sierra Leone Country Program Manager, the team flew by helicopter to the border areas with Guinea and Liberia to assess conditions and visit post-conflict programs being done by USAID/Sierra Leone.

24 May.   The team drove back to Conakry, Guinea

25 - 26 May. The team departed Conakry for return to USA and Mali.

APPENDIX C:

ASSESSMENT SCOPE OF WORK

Mano River Union Conflict Assessment and Peacebuilding Result
Framework Design
West Africa Regional Program
Bamako, Mali

I. SUMMARY

This statement of work provides for an assessment of political stability and conflict conditions in the Mano River Union (MRU) comprising the countries of Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia. The objective of the assessment is to develop a comprehensive framework for future WARP interventions in the areas of cross-border /sub-regional conflict prevention and peacebuilding. By addressing the need for enhanced political stability in the MRU, this activity links to the goal of the WARP to promote greater peace as a requisite to regional economic integration and prosperity.

II. BACKGROUND

The conflict in the MRU presents a complex set of issues stemming from three countries grappling with active political instability, armed conflict and post conflict transition problems. The enduring conflict have caused the disintegration of communities characterized by vast internal and cross-border movements of refugees, the loss of infrastructure and economic gains and the installation of permanent chaos, particularly along the border areas of the three countries concerned.

While many initiatives by national government, the regional and international communities are underway, turmoil persists. The recent disarmament of and demobilization of the Revolutionary United Front, the end of the war and successful elections in Sierra Leone is being threatened by the continued deterioration of peace in Liberia and the resulting new wave of refugees into Guinea and Sierra Leone and serves to heighten the tension between the three countries. As a matter of fact, these countries are inextricably linked through their economies, social networks, political environment and prospects for peace and development. It is therefore generally recognized that the solution for peace and security in the MRU will require multi-faceted efforts along political, diplomatic, humanitarian and long-term development fronts. However, the reality shows the absence of an overarching, coordinated framework to address the conflict in the MRU.

To date, USAID has bilateral assistance program in all three MRU countries, each addressing various aspects of the impacts of the conflicts within their respective borders. These programs include the USAID/Guinea Special objective for the Forest Region, a recently approved Special objective for Sierra Leone, and previous interventions by the office of Transition Initiative. Finally, the WARP/Conflict Prevention Special objective envisions to support cross-border activities in the MRU aimed at facilitating the return and reintegration of refugees and the use of

radio programming and broadcast for peacebuilding purposes, in collaboration with the afore-mentioned bilateral programs,

The present activity therefore seeks to provide an integrated sub-regional framework for collaborative future intervention between the WARP and other USAID programs in the MRU.

III. SCOPE OF WORK

1. Objective:

The objective of this activity is to develop a comprehensive framework of intervention for future USAID/WARP activities in the Mano River Union in the field of conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

2. Title:

Mano River Conflict Assessment and Peacebuilding Result Framework Design.

3. Scope:

Over an estimated period of 2 months, the contractor will:

a) Assess current country-specific political stability and conflict conditions in the MRU, and implications at cross-border and sub-regional levels;

b) Examine the root causes of the conflict and identify the various actors involved at national sub-regional and regional levels;

c) Map interventions and evaluate their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, partnership linkages among them, as well as gaps in sub-regional programming.

d) Based on the results of a), b) and c), develop a three to five-year framework for USAID future interventions in the MRU, including objectives, activities, results indicators and a performance monitoring plan.

IV. APPLICABLE DOCUMENTS

WARP Strategic Framework
WARP Special objective Results Framework
USAID Special Objective Results Framework
USAID/Guinea Democracy and Governance Strategic Objective Results Framework
USAID/Guinea Special Objective for the Forest Region Results Framework.

V. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

The specific results to be achieved under this statement of work are as follows.

1. Result 1: A comprehensive assessment of conflict conditions, actors and opportunities for sub-regional political stability and sustainable peace is conducted in the MRU.

2. Result 1 output:

a) Identification of conflict priority issues and conditions prevailing in the MRU, their inter-relations and impact from a cross-border and sub-regional perspective.

b) Inventory of major national, regional and international stakeholders including their respective interests, nature of involvement in the conflict to date, and opportunities positive engagement in peace processes in the sub-region;

c) Mapping out of major international organizations, national NGOs and regional CSOs in the region and an appreciation of their interventions in terms of results accomplished, complementarity and programming gaps.

3. Performance requirements:

The assessment shall use desktop review and field research, and closely collaborate with WARP, ongoing USAID programs , regional CSOs international organizations in the MRU and . Particular attention shall be given to issues and needs specific to the border area shared by the three counties, and opportunities for cross-border peacebuilding.

Result 2: A comprehensive and integrated strategy and results framework is developed for future USAID/WARP interventions in the MRU, including objectives, activities, results indicators and performance monitoring plan.

Result 2 output:

a) Specific objectives and options for USAID/WARP future activities in the MRU

a) A comprehensive Result Framework and performance monitoring plan

Performance requirements:

The contractor shall pay attention to issues pertaining to the return and social rehabilitation of refugees particularly victims of torture and sex-related abuses, the promotion of national and cross-border communication and peacebuilding dialogue through the use of radio programming and broadcast, and the development of regional civil society capacity to participate in conflict prevention and peace processes. In developing options for USAID intervention, the contractor shall also consider programming linkages between civil society organizations and the ECOWAS Mechanism for Conflict Prevention, Resolution, Management, Peacekeeping and Security.

APPENDIX D:

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