

WEST AFRICA: CIVIL SOCIETY STRENGTHENING FOR CONFLICT PREVENTION STUDY

Conflict Prevention and Peace Building in the Mano River Union: Civil Society and its Role

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACDI	<i>Agence Canadienne pour le Développement International</i> (Canadian Agency for International Development)
ADECOMA	<i>Association pour le Développement Communautaire</i>
ADEN	African Development Network
ADF	Allied Democratic Forces
ADIC	<i>Association pour le Développement Communautaire</i>
AFL	Armed Forces of Liberia
AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (Sierra Leone)
ALPO	Association of Liberian Professional Organizations
APC	All People's Congress (Sierra Leone)
APRM	Africa Peace and Reconciliation Network
AVODEG	<i>Association des Volontaires Guineens pour le Développement</i>
CAD	Children's Aid Direct
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CCSL	Council of Churches in Sierra Leone
CDC	Civic Disarmament Campaign
CDF	Civil Defense Force
CEDE	Center for Democratic Empowerment
CENAFOD	<i>Centre Africain pour la Formation et le Développement</i>
CES	<i>Conseil Économique et Social</i> (Economic and Social Council)
CGG-SL	Campaign for Good Governance-Sierra Leone
CHAL	Christian Health Association of Liberia
CLHRE	Center for Law and Human Rights Education
CMRN	<i>Comité Militaire de Redressement National</i> (Military Committee for National Renewal)
CNOSC	<i>Conseil National des Organisations de la Société Civile</i> (National Council of Civil Society Organizations)
COFEG	<i>Coordination des ONG Feminines de Guinée</i> (Coordinating Committee of Guinean Women's NGOs)
CRS	Catholic Relief Services
CSM	Civil Society Movement
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSRPP	<i>Centre Sous Regional Pour la Paix</i> (Subregional Center for Peace)
ECOMOG	ECOWAS Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EU	European Union
EUPD	<i>Entraide Universitaire pour le Développement</i>
FAWE	Forum for African Women Educationalists
FIDH	<i>Federation Internationale des Ligues de Droits de l'Homme</i> (International Federation for Human Rights)
FLY	Federation of Liberian Youth
FNUAP	<i>Fonds des Nations Unies pour la Population</i> (UN Population Fund)
GEMS	Grassroots Empowerment for Self-Help

GIA	<i>Groupes Islamiques Armés</i>
GIE	Economic Interest Group
IFES	International Foundation for Electoral Systems
IFESH	International Foundation for Education and Self-Help
IFMC	Interfaith Mediation Center
IGNU	Interim Government of National Unity (Liberia)
INGO	International Nongovernmental Organization
IRC	Liberian Interreligious Council
JPC	Justice and Peace Commission
LCC	Liberian Council of Churches
LDC	Lofa Defense Force
LDRC	Liberian Democracy and Resource Center
LINSU	Liberian National Student's Union
LNGO	Local Nongovernmental Organization
LNTG	Liberian National Transitional Government
LPC	Liberia Peace Council
LRA	Lord's Resistance Army
LWI	Liberian Women's Initiative
LWF/S	Lutheran World Federation Services
LWR/SL	Lutheran World Relief Service/Sierra Leone
MAC	Media Against Conflict
MFDC	<i>Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de la Casamance</i>
MOJA	Movement for Justice in Africa
MRU	Mano River Union
MRWPN	Mano River Union Women's Peace Network
NARDA	New African Research and Development Agency
NCPSL	Network on Collaborative Peace Building
NED	US National Endowment for Democracy
NGO	Nongovernmental Organization
NMCL	National Muslim Council of Liberia
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NPRAG	National Patriotic Reconstruction Assembly Government (Liberia)
NPRC	National Provisional Ruling Council (Sierra Leone)
OAU	Organization of African Unity
OGDH	<i>Organisation Guinéenne pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme et des Citoyens</i> (Guinean Organization for the Defense of Human Rights)
OVODEC	<i>Organisation des Volontaires pour le Développement Économique de la Guinée</i>
PDG-RDA	<i>Parti Démocratique de Guinée-Rassemblement Démocratique Africain</i>
PUL	Press Union of Liberia
PUP	<i>Parti de l'Unité et du Progrès</i>
PVO	Private Voluntary Organization
RCD	<i>Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie</i>
REFAMP	<i>Réseau des Femmes Africaines Anciennes Ministres et Parlementaires</i> (Network of African Women-former Ministers and Members of Parliament)
RENAMO	<i>Resistência Nacional Moçambicana</i>
RFFMP	Mano River Women's Network for Peace

RUF	Revolutionary United Front (Sierra Leone)
SACCO	<i>Service d'Appui aux Coopératives et de Coordination des Interventions des ONG</i>
SCG	Search for Common Ground – Talking Drum Studio
SCIO	<i>Service de Coordination des Interventions des ONG</i>
SLAJ	Sierra Leone Association of Journalists
SLPP	Sierra Leone People's Party
SLTU	Sierra Leone Teacher's Union
SLWF	Sierra Leone Women's Forum
UFR	<i>Union des Forces Républicaines</i>
UIDH	<i>Union Interafricaine des Droits de l'Homme</i> (Inter-African Union for Human Rights)
UK	United Kingdom
ULIMO-J	United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy-Johnson
ULIMO-K	United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy-Kromah
UMCOR	United Methodist Church Committee on Relief
UN	United Nations
UNDP	UN Development Program
UNESCO	UN Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNHCR	UN High Commissioner for Refugees
UNICEF	UN International Children's Emergency Fund
UNITA	<i>União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola</i>
UNOMSIL	UN Observer Mission in Sierra Leone
UP	Unity Party
UPP	United People's Party
UPR	<i>Union pour le Progrès et le Renouveau</i>
USA	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WAJA	West African Journalists Association
WANEP	West Africa Network for Peace Building
WCC	World Council of Churches
WV	World Vision

Conflict in West Africa

Introduction: The Larger Context¹

Crisis and conflict are not new to post-colonial Africa. Until the 1990s, the most important conflict sites were located on the ever-shrinking domains of colonial or white minority rule. The armed liberation struggles, which emerged when peaceful achievement of independence was impossible, were frequently overlain with cold war-driven external involvement. The final demise of colonial occupation and the end of apartheid coincided a decade ago with a sweep of democratization across the continent, creating high hopes for an African rebirth. Though liberalization and liberation have brought important benefits in many parts of the continent, two large zones of complex, interpenetrated, and deadly civil strife have taken form. The largest stretches in a vast arc from the Horn of Africa to Angola and the two Congos, directly involving ten countries. The other, West African, conflict zone extends from Senegal to Liberia, and threatens to engulf Côte d'Ivoire, including a half-dozen states.

Some of the conflicts extend back further than 1990 (Sudan, Casamance in Senegal), but over the last decade the level of violence has intensified, and the warfare has flowed over state boundaries to create a maze of interwoven armed struggle. As well, calamitous outcomes previously beyond imagination became realities: the complete collapse of state institutions (Somalia from 1991, Liberia, 1990 to 1997, Sierra Leone at times in the 1990s). Gradually it became apparent that the web of conflict in these two large zones of civil strife reflected new parameters to African politics. The spread of rebel militias in part reflected a significant weakening of the institutional fabric of a number of African states. Close scrutiny of the insurgent groups populating the conflict zones reveals a number of crucial novel features in the nature of rebel militias. Both these factors merit attention.

The weakened fabric of states, unevenly experienced across the continent, originates in the protracted political and economic crisis of the 1970s and especially 1980s. Politically, the steady erosion of the legitimacy of single party or military dictatorships had produced by 1990 a widespread public cynicism and disgust: the state as merely a predator. Economically, the development ideologies of the 1960s produced a vast expansion in the scope of state action, which far exceeded its performance capacity or resource base. The economic austerity programs promoted by the international financial institutions and Western donor community by the 1980s had uneven results at best, and frequently shrank the institutional capacity for governance and service provision. Thus in many countries, insurgent groups faced a government far less able to exercise effective control over its territorial domain than had been the case in the 1960s.

Even more important were a series of developments in the nature of and resources for insurgent warfare that cumulatively transformed the landscape. In contrast to the earlier wars of national liberation, many of the 1990s rebels had little political purpose beyond a lunge for power and control of resources. Even more significant, they demonstrated the capacity to survive over extended periods of time with negligible popular support, or even in the face of strong public

¹ This section of the report was written especially for this study by Dr. Crawford Young of the University of Wisconsin.

antagonism (Revolutionary United Front [RUF] in Sierra Leone, Lord's Resistance Army [LRA] and Allied Democratic Forces [ADF] in Uganda).

The origins of rebel movements were also different. Beginning with the Tanzanian overthrow of Idi Amin in Uganda in 1979, in a growing number of instances displacement of existing regimes was accompanied by dissolution of extant armed forces (Chad in 1982, Uganda in 1986, Ethiopia in 1991, Somalia in 1991, both Congos in 1997, Liberia in 1990). Former soldiers fled into the countryside, or into neighboring countries, often with their weapons. The arms stock could be secreted in the countryside, or sold in a swelling black market. When one recollects the sheer size and armament level of some dissolved armies (Ethiopia and Somalia, for example), the proliferation of weaponry was on a very large scale; one may usefully contrast the new context of readily available automatic weapons with the disarmed populace which was a legacy of the colonial state.

To this new source of weaponry was added another: the collapse of the Soviet bloc left in its wake a number of bankrupt states with overflowing armories (Bulgaria, Ukraine, and Russia). This supply stream added to the armament resources accessible to potential insurgents, augmenting an already established international black market in arms. Although the end of the cold war mostly shut off official arms supply from the major powers, the new patterns of interpenetrated conflicts increased the willingness of neighboring states to become suppliers.

Less frequently noticed but also important was a diffusion of sophisticated military skills into insurgent ranks. Former officers with advanced training abroad from dissolved armies frequently turned up in rebel militia (Somalia, Uganda, Rwanda, and Congo-Kinshasa). Other insurgent leaders had acquired critical guerrilla warfare experience in Afghanistan (various *Groupes Islamiques Armés* [GIA] fragments in Algeria, Touareg rebels in Mali). The initial leaders of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) of Charles Taylor and the Sierra Leone RUF were trained in Libya. Although national liberation movement leaders also had acquired military skill through foreign training and experience, other insurgent movements of an earlier period, such as the 1964 Congo rebels, had only rudimentary abilities and were easily defeated by small mercenary groups reinforcing the national army.

Another novel development was the deliberate and systematic use of child soldiers, particularly notable in Sierra Leone, Liberia, Uganda and both Congos. This tactic was first employed systematically in Mozambique in the mid-1980s by *Resistência Nacional Moçambicana* (RENAMO), which had difficulty recruiting adult fighters. The agendaless insurgents of the 1990s were frequently driven to this expedient; in some cases, adolescent males in marginal circumstances willingly joined rebel militia, but in other instances they were forcibly abducted from rural communities, particularly in Sierra Leone and Liberia. Brutalized, terrorized, often drugged, the child soldier could prove a ruthless killer.

Also developing in the 1990s was the large-scale use of high value resources to finance insurgent combat. The end of the cold war shut off financial and supply channels motivated by global calculus, both to insurgents and to governments. Mobutu Sese Seko in Congo-Kinshasa and Samuel Doe in Liberia ceased to have any use value to the United States. In Angola, the *União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola* (UNITA), which had previously survived

largely on South African and American support, now had to seize and hold diamond fields to finance its warfare. Thus in the 1990s civil strife in Africa became intimately bound up with resource wars: timber and diamonds for Taylor; diamonds for the RUF and UNITA; gold, diamonds and coltan for the two Congo *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie* (RCD) factions. States torn by civil strife as well desperately struggled to retain control of some marketable resources. Governments choosing to intervene in neighboring states likewise sought to finance their action through seizure of high-value resources (Taylor and Sierra Leone seized diamonds; the six armies in Congo-Kinshasa seized gold, diamonds, oil, timber, coffee and coltan).

Finally, the high respect accorded in the African international system and its dominant norms to inviolability of frontiers and nonintervention substantially weakened. Occasional episodes of intervention occurred prior to 1990 (Ethiopia-Somalia, Tanzania's overthrow of Amin), but they were exceptional and widely criticized. But in the two zones of conflict, the degree of cross-border involvement has escalated dramatically. The existence of serious insurgent warfare in a neighboring state necessarily poses security dilemmas across the border. These become acute if a strife-torn state provides or permits sanctuary to rebels from a neighboring state. Conflict resolution then requires not only resolving the internal sources of strife, but satisfying the competing security logics of neighboring states. The current Sierra Leone conflict, for example, directly involves Liberia, Guinea and Burkina Faso. In Congo-Kinshasa, partners to the strife include Uganda, Rwanda, Burundi, Zimbabwe, Angola, and until recently Namibia, in addition to four armed Congolese-named factions and at least a dozen local militia known as "Mai-Mai".

When we sum these elements, we can readily understand why these conflict patterns have been so resistant to internal resolution and external mediation. The sheer complexity of the conflicts makes major outside players reluctant to deeply engage, though the British have made an important commitment in Sierra Leone. Engagement necessarily must pass through existing regimes, frequently either weak, corrupt, internally contested, uncooperative, or otherwise uncomfortable partners. The international community, beginning with the United States, is reluctant to engage major resources in what appear to be open-ended struggles; one may compare the 20,000 United Nations peacekeepers and multibillion dollar operation in Congo-Kinshasa mounted almost overnight in 1960, with the mere 3,500 UN soldiers assembled with great difficulty currently present in that vast country. Africa commands much less priority in world affairs than in earlier decades, a trend which will certainly be reinforced by the global struggle against terrorism now unfolding.

All of the factors identified above are present to one degree or another in the West African conflict zone. The rebel movements are not identical in nature; the Sierra Leone RUF, the NFPL and new rebels in Liberia are best characterized as warlord formations, while the *Mouvement des Forces Démocratiques de la Casamance* (MFDC) in Senegal includes secessionists in some of its factions. Multiple factors are at play; the mosaic of conflict cannot be reduced to a single element, or a *passé-partout* explanation to simplify the search for understanding.

In a multiethnic and multireligious environment, communal identities play a part in defining social choice and political affiliation. The swelling antagonism to Doe partly derived from his use of an ethnic security map for his army, which became heavily drawn from his Krahn group.

This ensured its loyalty, but ruined its capacity to respond to the initially small challenge of the Taylor NPFL incursion in December 1989. The Kamajors in Sierra Leone, a Mende militia, have been an important resisting force against the RUF, but the latter includes a number of Mende in its ranks. The MFDC in Senegal is mostly composed of Jola, who are also numerous in the Senegal army and the Dakar population. Their armed fragments have enjoyed at times support from Gambia President Yahya Jammeh, also a Jola, and late Guinea-Bissau senior officer and serial coup-plotter Ansoumane Mane, likewise a Jola. The assassination of Mane in November 2000 and the election of Balante Kumba Yala as Guinea-Bissau President have cost the MFDC its open sanctuary across the border. General Robert Guei, briefly President of Côte d'Ivoire in 1999-2000, is guarded in his redoubt near the Liberian frontier by a private Yacouba militia, many of who are from Liberia where the ethnonym for the same group is Gio. Gio had provided the bulk of the initial fighting force of the Taylor NFDL. Ethnicity is thus woven into the fabric of conflict, but not in any clear-cut pattern. None of the major militia (except the Kamajors) has an ethnic designation. Although the MFDC might appear to reflect Jola aspirations, all of its fragments deny an ethnic objective, arguing instead that Casamance is a distinctive region containing multiple ethnic groups. Indeed, the first demands for Casamance autonomy were advanced by French settlers in the 1920s. The Jola do not speak with a single voice, reflected not only in the marked fractionalization of the movement, but by the numerous Jola, especially in Dakar, that do not support it. Ethnicity thus needs acknowledgment as one element, but not a prime determinant. Much less can one speak of "ancient tribal hatreds"; none of the rivalries observable have any deep history, and the identity units themselves are a product of ongoing social construction.

Warlordism is clearly central to Liberia and Sierra Leone, but less useful as a notion in the other countries. The degree of legitimacy of rulers in the subregion varies widely. Senegal, despite its inability to resolve the Casamance issue, has a relatively effective state, and a legitimacy greatly enhanced by the peaceful electoral succession in 2000 of Abdoulaye Wade. Jammeh seized power by military coup in Gambia in 1994, and was confirmed by very dubious elections in 1996. Ahmad Kabbah in Sierra Leone and Taylor were ostensibly elected in balloting more or less accepted by the international community, but have very limited legitimacy; both rule over states which had reasonable legitimacy and performance until the 1970s, then went into accelerating decline. State institutions are mere shadows of what they had been two decades ago. Guinea-Bissau had an exceptionally weak colonial infrastructure but a strong liberation movement; however, the latter never succeeded in consolidating an effective state, and by the 1980s faced seriously contested legitimacy. Guinea initially had a strongly supported radical populist regime under Sekou Touré; however, his rule veered into tyranny and institutional ruin by the time of his death in 1984. His military successor, Lansana Conté, had some initial external and internal support, but beneath the shallow pretense of a liberalized regime the ongoing reality is autocratic rule. However, the Guinean state remains much stronger than its southeastern neighbors, as demonstrated by the punishment inflicted on RUF insurgents who crossed the border in 2000 to spark an uprising by disaffected populations in the Guinea forest zone.

The cause of conflict resolution, in spite of the many complexities, does enjoy one major trump card: the surprising attachment of nearly all players to the existing state framework. Only in Casamance is there a call for dismemberment of an existing state and this comes only from the extreme factions of the MFDC. The formal institutional vessel for a reconstructed political order

thus exists. Given the deep delegitimation and institutional dereliction of several of the “really existing” states, persistent attachment in the popular imagination to a “Sierra Leone” or a “Liberia” is a crucial trump card. However artificial the origins of the African state system, remarkably a “nation” of sorts survives even without an operative state.

I. Introduction to the Conflicts in the Mano River Union²

The subregion defined by the states constituting the Mano River Union (MRU) has been unstable for over a decade. This instability has been characterized by violence and atrocities on a mass scale, loss of property, devastation of economies and the virtual collapse of several of its states. Many observers outside the field of conflict resolution and peace building have given simplistic explanations about the causes of this conflict, attributing it to ancient hatreds that religious and ethnic groups may have for one another. They argue further that the “ethnic warfare” that has emerged is a product of the collapse of prior authoritarian regimes, most notably the regimes of Sekou Touré of Guinea, Siaka Stevens of Sierra Leone and William Tubman of Liberia, which presumably held ethnic rivalries in check.

This is an inadequate and misleading explanation for three major reasons. First, apart from the tiny minority classes of repatriated former slaves, the people in this subregion share a common history, culture and religious heritage. Indeed, there are a number of ethnic groups that can be found in all three states. Such cultural affinity means members in these communities often share a perception of their history. It is, in fact, this common history of poor and authoritarian governance that is the core of these conflicts. Each of these regimes refused to put into place governance systems corresponding with the aspirations of most of their people. These regimes have been single party states sometimes masquerading as multiparty systems, but usually refusing to hold regular, free and transparent elections. Their leaders rejected the very idea of alternation of power. There has been a near total absence of any constructive dialogue between government and those they have aspired to govern. A tiny minority held the reign of power confiscating the wealth of the country. Under these authoritarian regimes nepotism, clientelism and corruption became the most important values of governance. In this context, the gap between the “haves” and “have nots” grew ever wider. As their economies declined in the 1980s the attendant impoverishment, deprivation and sense of exclusion radicalized the already existing discontent and pushed opponents of these regimes to ever more extreme solutions as a way of conquering power.

Second, the “ethnic hatred” or tribalism thesis ignores the ways in which the instability in the states of this region is intertwined as aspirations of particular leaders have led to exporting violence and deepening already troubled internal political relationships. Although each country has its own history that must be understood separately, all have been and continue to be interlinked, both in terms of the economic distress and potential for future economic recovery, and for the resolution of violent conflict and for future political stability to take root.

Third, none of the conflicts in the Mano River states is fully understandable solely in terms of the goals and tactics of the political actors within the region. The region and each of its conflicts have been affected by the interests not only of other West Africa states, notably Nigeria, Burkina Faso, Cote d’Ivoire and Niger, but of other African and European countries that have interests there.

2 In this report we refer to the states of Guinea (Conakry), Liberia and Sierra Leone as constituting the “Mano River Basin.” The term “Mano River Union” is used to designate the organization resulting from an economic agreement established in 1973 between Liberia and Sierra Leone, and joined in 1980 by Guinea. Given the past decade of conflict among these states the “Union” has been more an ideal than a functioning reality.

These interests have been manifested in the willingness of Nigeria to play a lead role in the “monitoring group” (ECOMOG) established by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), and in the actual conduct of ECOMOG operations that eventually led to its alignment with particular actors, and some strongly argue, in worsening the internal political crises. They have been manifested in covert military support to various factions and governments, and even in diplomatic intercession in the UN on the part of countries like France. Finally, they have been linked to a set of economic interests in the natural riches of this region, particularly in the control of the production and marketing of diamonds, that transcends the interests of given African and European states.

In the end, the collapse of the old authoritarian regimes came to be followed mainly by regimes that have failed to integrate and consolidate their nations. Each new regime began by declaring its intention to reform the antidemocratic colonial political structures and to open the system up to the excluded and exploited. Each successor regime was characterized in turn by the denial of personal and public rights of others, by poor management of public resources, and by their own brands of favoritism and nepotism. To defend and further their interests, the new elites mobilized groups on the basis of identifiable ethnic ties, and fostered ethnic antagonism. The majority of the population was rendered poorer. In reaction, some of the incumbent regimes became more radical in their determination to hold onto power. This was the case of Liberia and Sierra Leone.

II. National Dimensions of the Conflict

A. Liberia

In 1822, the arrival of settlers from the Western Hemisphere into the region now known as Liberia saw the introduction of a new cultural element and force in the competition for control of the coastal trade, and economic and political sway over the region.

Many circumstances had forced the settlers from the New World, mainly black people of African ancestry, to come to Africa after the abolition of slavery. They established enclave communities along the coast under a political framework patterned after the modern states of Europe and North America. The circumstances that forced their repatriation, however, had excluded them from experience of governance in the very societies that they now used as models. In 1847, the settlers proclaimed the Republic of Liberia, a unitary state, although the reality of various colonies established independently by various “colonization societies” might have suggested a level of decentralization favoring a federal arrangement.

Intermittent violent conflicts occurred between the settlers and the indigenous groups, particularly with the Gola, who prior to this colonization were already well on the road to political ascendancy in the region. In theory, the repatriates favored a republican form of government. In reality, however, they established a government dominated by a tiny elite made up of repatriated family. This governance pattern not only excluded the indigenous people, it was inconsistent with their own norms and principal of governance.

Meaningful national integration was never achieved. The minority settler group wound up controlling the central state and using it to serve their own political and economic advantages for the next 139 years (from 1847 to 1980). The 1980 *coup d'état* claimed to transfer state power from the repatriate elite to the majority indigenous population. Unfortunately, during the ensuing ten years, this new leadership established a brutal dictatorship managed in an oppressive and misguided manner, exacerbating the use of violence as an instrument of state power. This violence and the mismanagement of the economy eventually culminated in the civil war that began on Christmas Eve in 1989 and lasted well into 1997.

The National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) invaded Liberia from Côte d'Ivoire, determined to unseat the regime of then President Samuel K. Doe. Initially the NPFL was able to constitute a force drawing from a broad range of ethnic groups that felt aggrieved by the Doe regime and his perceived preferential treatment of the Krahn and Mandingo. As the conflict escalated, other warring factions, notably the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy-Kromah (ULIMO-K), the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy-Johnson (ULIMO-J), and the Liberia Peace Council (LPC) organized largely by mobilizing people on the basis of interests associated with narrow ethnic identities, emerged. By the time the crisis ended in 1997, seven different warring factions had emerged.³ From the outset, however, the NPFL was not a

³ The NPFL; the Independent National Patriotic Front; ULIMO-K; ULIMO-J; LPC; the Lofa Defense Force (LDC); and the Central Revolutionary Council-National Patriotic Front.

solely internal affair. Credible evidence suggests that it was supported by the regimes in Burkina Faso and Cote d'Ivoire and that it received some military aid from Libya, as well.

As with the complexities of the war, the search for genuine peace in Liberia was long, tedious, and complicated. It consumed tremendous resources and tested the goodwill of many countries and organizations. At the center of these organizations was ECOWAS. Against the background of incessant armed hostility and the threat posed to countries of the subregion, ECOWAS convened a special meeting of its Standing Mediation Committee in Banjul, the Gambia, in July 1990. At this meeting, ECOMOG was formed and authorized to intervene in the Liberian crisis to restore law and order and foster respect for human rights. While the government of Samuel K. Doe and some of the warring factions welcomed the intervention of ECOMOG, the NPFL vehemently resisted ECOMOG intervention. As part of this regional initiative to end the war, ECOWAS promoted the establishment of an Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU). In the meantime, however, there is a significant amount of research and analysis that shows that the ECOMOG intervention led to an expansion and entrenchment of the conflict and contributed to massive human rights abuses and state collapse.

The achievement of peace was gradual. It involved tremendous efforts at confidence building among Liberians and between the various warring factions and the negotiators. A total of thirteen peace accords were signed before a final cessation of hostilities was realized. The process produced three successive transitional national governance arrangements before real peace was achieved. In 1995, the first Liberian National Transitional Government (LNTG) was put into place. This government unified the country and replaced both IGNU and the National Patriotic Reconstruction Assembly Government (NPRAG). The new government was primarily a council of five members, two from IGNU, two from NPRAG, and one selected from an array of eminent Liberians. The council elected its own chairman. Under this arrangement, decisions of the council were often delayed because the representatives of the warring factions often had to consult with distant leaders then still residing in the territories they controlled.

When this proxy arrangement did not work, the second transitional arrangement — LNTG II — was put into place under which the leaders of the factions were represented directly on the council themselves and they in turn selected a new civilian leader. The Abuja Accords between the warring parties ushered in the final peace in Liberia. The accords were brokered by the strong intervention of then Nigerian President, Sani Abacha. They established programs for disarmament, elections and restructuring of security forces of Liberia.

The elections were eventually held using proportional representation as the basis of determining winners. Charles Taylor, head of the NPFL, emerged the winner with 75.3 percent of the votes. The reasons for this overwhelming vote for Taylor are no doubt multiple, but for a number of people and organizations it was simply an expression of war fatigue and fear that if Taylor had not won, the war would have dragged on. Other Liberian organizations strongly resisted this argument and the installation of a leader they viewed as a principal cause of much of Liberia's woes. Nonetheless, civil society in Liberia had grown strongly in favor of some kind of peace which produced considerable support for the Abuja Accords. Now they thought the hard work of implementing the provisions of these accords that called for the restructuring of the armed forces and security apparatuses under the supervision of ECOWAS had to begin.

B. Sierra Leone

In 1896, the British proclaimed a protectorate over the hinterland of the coastal colony of Sierra Leone, which had been under British administration since 1787. In 1961, following the introduction of a constitution, the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), led by Dr. Milton Margai, carried the elections. Sierra Leone thus became an independent state within the Commonwealth on April 27, 1961. The SLPP retained power in elections in 1962. Sir Milton died in 1964 and was succeeded as prime minister by his half-brother, Dr. Albert Margai. In 1967 the main opposition party, the All People's Congress (APC), led by Siaka Stevens, gained a parliamentary majority at general elections, but was prevented from taking power by a military coup. Following an army mutiny in April 1968, the APC was declared the official winner of the 1967 elections and Stevens became prime minister. A period of political turmoil followed, culminating in an attempted military coup in March 1971. This coup was only suppressed with the aid of troops from neighboring Guinea. In 1985 Stevens resigned and General Joseph Momoh was installed as president.

On April 22, 1992, members of the armed forces seized a radio station in Freetown and occupied the presidential offices. Their leader, Captain Valentine Strasser, subsequently declared the overthrow of the Momoh government. Again a Sierra Leonean leader, Momoh, sought to regionalize the conflict by seeking assistance from the Sekou Touré regime in Guinea. Touré immediately dispatched troops to Freetown. The ensuing violence between the Guinean forces and the coup plotters left more than 100 people dead. Momoh fled to Guinea, and Strasser announced the formation of a National Provisional Ruling Council (NPRC). Strasser affirmed the commitment of NPRC to introduce a multiparty system, to end the conflict and to continue to support the efforts of ECOMOG in peacekeeping operations in Liberia. Strasser's regime, however, was not without its own internal opposition. As early as 1991, guerrilla operations had begun in Sierra Leone, reportedly by NPFL forces. By 1994, the rebellion had a more "domestic" face with the formation of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), a force largely recruited from among unemployed youths. RUF continued and expanded the operations that had already been going on for several years in some parts of Sierra Leone, and it continued to receive military support from the NPFL. There is no doubt that from the outset these two rebellions were linked by their common interests in controlling a substantial amount of the diamond market. This interest also brought them foreign friends.

Strasser was himself overthrown in a palace coup in January 1996, and was replaced as head of state by Major Maada Bio. On February 26, 1996, presidential and legislative elections, which were contested by 13 political parties and monitored by international observers, were held as scheduled. Ahmad Tejan Kabbah won the presidential contest in a run-off election, which took place three months after the first round.

On May 25, 1997, dissident members of the armed forces, led by Major Johnny Paul Koroma, seized power, deposing Kabbah, who also fled to Guinea. Koroma claimed that the coup was in response to the government's failure to implement a peace agreement with the RUF, reached in November 1996. Koroma established the 20-member Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC), with himself as chairman and the RUF leader, Foday Sankoh, as vice chairman (in

absentia). The Nigerian government demanded that the junta relinquish power, and increased its military strength in Freetown. In early June 1997, Nigerian forces, which now comprise the bulk of the ECOMOG force in Sierra Leone, initiated a naval bombardment of Freetown in an effort to force the new military leaders to resign.

By early July 1997, the new military government had become completely isolated by the international community. The Commonwealth ministerial action group, which had been established to respond to unlawful activities by member states, suspended Sierra Leone from meetings of the Commonwealth, pending the restoration of constitutional order and the reinstatement of a democratically elected government. The UN Security Council also condemned the coup, and expressed support for ECOWAS' efforts to resolve the situation. The effective imposition of an ECOWAS embargo against Sierra Leone, enforced through the naval blockade and occupation of Lungi airport by Nigerian troops, resulted in increasing shortages of food, crude oil and other essential commodities. Meanwhile, a four-nation committee that had been established by ECOWAS to monitor a return to constitutional rule, and was comprised of representatives of Nigeria, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea and Ghana, urged the government to relinquish power during a series of negotiations with the AFRC.

The UN Security Council subsequently approved the adoption of sanctions against Sierra Leone. ECOMOG enforced the economic blockade on Freetown by launching aerial bombardments against merchant ships in the port. During September, hostilities between the AFRC forces and ECOMOG escalated resulting in numerous deaths. Thousands of Freetown residents subsequently fled from the capital.

Although international donors pledged substantial support, the stability of Kabbah's government was initially dependent on the continued presence of the ECOMOG forces, then numbering 7,000 (principally Nigerians, but also including Ghanaians and Guineans). In mid-April, Kabbah appointed Khobe (a Nigerian) as chief of national security.

In late July, the UN Security Council adopted a resolution establishing the 70-member United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone (UNOMSIL). The force, which had an initial mandate to remain in the country for a six-month period, was to monitor the security situation, and the disarmament of former combatants based in secure regions of the country.

C. The Conflict in Guinea

The involvement of Guinea in this conflict is a product of several long-standing patterns of international relations in the subregion. First, ever since the days of the Sékou Touré regime, the Guinean regular army has been sent into neighboring countries to conduct operations in support of allies. So, for example, Touré used Guinean troops to try to protect his allies in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau against coup threats. Second, the government of Guinea has allowed its territory to be used to stage operations against Liberia in its support of the efforts by ULIMO-K to destabilize the Taylor regime in Liberia. In addition, Guinea has felt itself to be the subject of external threats from outside the subregion by such states as Burkina Faso and Libya, joining forces with dissident Guineans such as the leaders of the ill-fated February 1996 coup attempted against the Conté regime.

Despite the fact that a great deal has changed since the days of Sékou Touré, including constitutional limitations on the power of the president to authorize such interventions without the support of the National Assembly, these patterns of behavior have persisted. ULIMO operations against Liberia, for example, were directly responsible for attacks by the RUF in September 2000, supported by Taylor, which virtually leveled a number of Guinean villages. What made these attacks even more threatening, however, was the purported linkage between these invaders and several former high-ranking Guinea military officers implicated in the February 1996 coup attempt. This invasion, taking place when it did at a time of heightened internal political discontent over the arrest of presidential candidate Alpha Conté, raised the specter of instability on a number of fronts simultaneously.

D. Regional Context of These Conflicts

The brief accounts of the conflict in the separate states has already revealed how this conflict has been regionalized from the outside through military interventions by regular armies and by guerrilla units across state boundaries, and by the development of transnational economic interests to exploit the natural resources of this region. In addition, there has been a major transnational refugee problem. Following the outbreak of civil conflict in Liberia in December 1989, an estimated 125,000 Liberians took refuge in Sierra Leone. In 2000, the UN High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) called the situation on the border of these three states the worst humanitarian emergency in the world, with hundreds of thousands of refugees cutoff from assistance and in danger of starvation due to the fighting.

The military dimensions of the regional conflict, however, have been important and nearly continuous since 1991. In August 1990, some 500 Sierra Leonean troops joined the ECOMOG force that was dispatched to Liberia to fight the Taylor rebellion. In November 1990, Charles Taylor and the NPFL threatened to attack the ECOMOG base at the international airport at Lungi. In March 1991, repeated border incursions into Sierra Leone by Liberian rebels, reported to be members of the NPFL, resulted in the deaths of many civilians including women and children. The Government of Sierra Leone responded by deploying over 2000 troops on the Liberian border, and in early April, these troops attacked rebel bases in Liberian territory. The Government of Sierra Leone alleged that the rebel offensive had been instigated by Charles Taylor and had been supported the Governments of Burkina Faso and Niger. Although the NPFL denied involvement, it was reported that RUF members, led by Foday Sankoh, had joined forces with the NPFL in attacks against government army positions in the early years of the war in Liberia.

Throughout 1991 a number of skirmishes occurred on the Liberian-Sierra Leonean border involving both government forces and rebel groups serving as proxies on both sides of the border. In mid-1991, for example, Sierra Leonean regulars, assisted by military units from Nigeria and Guinea, and benefiting from logistical support from the UK and the USA, initiated a counteroffensive against the rebels, and succeeded in recapturing several towns in the east and south of Sierra Leone. In September 1991, ULIMO forces, made up of former supporters of the former Liberian President, Samuel Doe, mounted an attack from Sierra Leone against NPFL forces in northwestern Liberia. In October, clashes between ULIMO and the NPFL continued in the Mano River Bridge area on the border with Sierra Leone.

During the period of intervention in Sierra Leone (May 1997 until February 1998), the links between Liberia's new President, Charles Taylor, and both the military junta and the RUF were a cause of concern to ECOMOG and to Nigeria. Taylor frequently criticized the ECOMOG strategy, and numerous reports have been offered to demonstrate that Liberia played a significant role in supporting the RUF militarily. Following the imposition of UN sanctions against the export of diamonds from Liberia, relations between Taylor's regime and the RUF to coordinate the smuggling of diamonds became even more well developed.

Nigeria's continued commitment to protecting the government of Sierra Leone was called into question in January 1999, when the new military head of state, General Abdulsalami Abubakar, indicated that he hoped to withdraw the contingent from Sierra Leone by May. Following negotiations held in Lomé, Togo in May, the RUF and Sierra Leonean government reached a power-sharing agreement. The new Nigerian civilian administration subsequently announced that a phased withdrawal of some of its troops from Sierra Leone would take place. This commenced in early September. The phased out withdrawal of Nigerian troops was replaced by UNMOSIL. Today, the UN force is the largest deployment in the history of the UN, numbering about 20,000.

Nonetheless, with the attacks by RUF forces against villages in Guinea, ostensibly supported by the Taylor government in Liberia, the regional aspect of this conflict took a serious turn for the worse and is by no means resolved.

III. Civil Society and the Management of Conflict in the Mano River Union

A. Overview

Established in 1973 as an economic alliance between Liberia and Sierra Leone, and joined in 1980 by Guinea, the MRU was once considered to be one of Africa's more successful attempts at pan-Africa co-operation and integration. Named after the river that all three countries share, the MRU countries also share many ethnic, cultural, social, economic and geographic features. Since the beginning of the Liberian civic war more than ten years ago, the MRU has become increasingly moribund. Even worse, as discussed in the previous section, the border area where the three countries meet has become the battleground among a proliferating number of armed groups.

Within the states comprising the MRU, despite the plethora of national civil society organizations (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. The 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 conflict resolution and peace-building capacities, 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 the relative calm now emerging.

Table 1 highlights a number of organizations involved directly in conflict resolution activities both within their respective countries and within the MRU in general.

Table 1. Principal Civil Society Actors Involved in Conflict Prevention and Management in the Mano River Basin

No	Structure	Activities	Partners	Strengths	Weaknesses
1	Guinean Organization for the Defense of Human Rights (OGDH)	Consciousness raising Training of actors Networking	Independent Press F. Ebert ENAD CNOSC/WANEP FIDH UIDH	Advocacy Mobilization Impartiality Networking with other Mano River human rights groups	Capacity for action has little application Little synergy with other internal actors
2	Mano River Women's Network for Peace: (RFFMP)	Consciousness raising Solidarity Networking	Private Press OAU UNDP	Consciousness raising of public authorities Internal and external mobilization	Limited scope of actions Limited resources Strong dependency on foreign aid

No	Structure	Activities	Partners	Strengths	Weaknesses
3	Network of African Women-former Ministers and Members of Parliament (REFAMP)	Consciousness raising Networking	Works with other civil society actors, women's groups Supported by FNUAP UNICEF WFP UNHCR	Ability to mobilize national and regional governmental authorities	Limited means for taking action Limited financial resources
4	ActionAid Liberia	Training and development, Trauma Healing	ActionAid, USA, USAID, EU	Agriculture, health, conflict resolution	Security concerns
5	International Foundation for Education and Self-Help (IFESH)	Education, self-help projects, conflict resolution & peace building	Local communities USAID, EU	Strong organizational management, risk takers	Inadequate resources
6	Lutheran World Relief/Service (LWR/SL)	Trauma & Healing, conflict resolution & peace building	USAID, Lutheran Church, USA, Local communities	Faith based, community oriented, strong management staff	Security risks in Liberia
7	Center for Democratic Empowerment (CEDE)	Sensitization, advocacy, networking, research	CBOs in Liberia, ALPO.	Resolve, strong management staff	Resource capacity, security concerns
8	Mano River Union Women's Peace Network (MRWPN)	Advocacy, Sensitization	LWI, ALPO	Resolve, political clout	Limited resources
9	Press Union of Liberia (PUL)	Sensitization, advocacy, education	ALPO, WAJA	Community and national orientation	Limited resources
10	SUSUKUU	Micro-credit, sensitization, advocacy	Women's groups, communities	Political clout, grassroots support	Security concerns
11	Association of Liberian Professional Organizations (ALPO)	Mobilization, networking, conflict resolution & peace building	MRU CSOs, community & regional organizations	Resolve	Lack resources, adequate office space and equipment
12	Liberian Interreligious Council (IRC)	Mobilization, sensitization, conflict resolution & peace building	Religious communities of Liberia	High profile issues of peace and security	Inadequate resources, unpaid staff
13	Campaign For Good Governance (CGG- SL)	Advocacy, sensitization, mobilization	All sectors of society	Strong advocacy and management skills	Too exposed to external influence
14	Interreligious Council/Sierra Leone (IRC)	Advocacy, Sensitization, conflict resolution & peace building	Religious communities in Sierra Leone, WCC	Advocacy, negotiation and mediation skills	Resources
15	Civil Society Movement (CSM)	Mobilization, Networking	CSOs and INGOs	Networking skills	Limited Resources
16	CARITAS, Makeni	Trauma Healing, Human Rights, Child Protection	Catholic Diocese, Makeni, Caritas International	Training and Trauma Healing	Small staff

No	Structure	Activities	Partners	Strengths	Weaknesses
17	World Vision (WV)	Training and support, capacity building	WV International, CBOs	Conflict resolution & peace building training, CSO strengthening	Overextended
18	Network on Collaborative Peace Building (NCPBL)	Networking	CSOs	Institutional strengths of member organizations	Lack of office space and staff

B. Subregional Character of Civil Society

There is a common assumption in the literature that strengthening civil society and particularly the links among actors involved in peace and conflict resolution activities would contribute to stability in the region. Until recently, however, CSOs in the three countries have had remarkably little contact with one another. Adversity now seems slowly to be bringing these groups together even as their governments wage undeclared war against each other. There have certainly been examples of cooperation and mutual support between particular CSOs of this type. For example, during the Sierra Leone civil war, CGG found refuge with and was assisted by OGDH. The Liberian CSO, Justice and Peace Commission (JPC), conducted training with CGG in Sierra Leone. PUL established contact with the Sierra Leone Association of Journalists (SLAJ). Another Liberian CSO, the Center for Law and Human Rights Education (CLHRE), worked with OGDH to assist the Liberian refugees in Guinea. Interestingly, all of these CSOs were grantees of the US National Endowment for Democracy (NED). More recently, ALPO has established contact with the OGDH and other CSOs in Guinea and Sierra Leone. While these contacts have been helpful, they were all ad hoc, and therefore CSOs did not become a sustainable regional actor of any importance until recently.

This relative isolation of CSOs in the subregion has changed significantly in the past few years. Regional CSOs, like the West Africa Network for Peace Building (WANEP) (see Section IV) have been working with CSOs in all three countries, particularly in Liberia and Sierra Leone to establish early warning systems and peace building skills. The work of MRWPN (also discussed in Section IV) has been important in promoting and deepening the peace process across state lines. There have been recent efforts as well, promoted by the Guinean OGDH, to activate a network of human organizations to work on the underlying abuse of human rights by governmental bodies in all countries of the subregion. Even faith-based organizations have been increasing their regional consultations with the series of meetings held between Christian and Islamic organizations.

In late 2001, these efforts began to coalesce in the formation of a broader regional coalition of CSOs with the organization of a consultative meeting of MRU CSOs involved in conflict resolution and governance issues. This consultative meeting, with strong support from WANEP, was held in Freetown and produced resolutions committing civil society actors in the member states to undertake cooperative and concerted action to achieve and consolidate sustainable peace in the region; strengthen the capacities of the various organizations working on peace building and reconciliation to promote healing and social reconstruction; and lend support and remain in solidarity with one another across borders. It remains to be seen if it will also result in the

formation of a more sustainable process through the formal creation of a regional organization for civil society.

C. Liberia

1. The Character of Liberian Civil Society

Prior to the civil war, CSOs functioned mainly in the area of health care delivery and education. During the war, however, civil society actors became more visible to everyone because many of them were involved in the delivery of emergency assistance.

There are three main categories of CSOs operating in Liberia: community-based organizations (CBOs), development-oriented nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and professional and pro-democracy human rights advocacy organizations.

CBOs are those organizations whose membership and activities are confined to specific localities and or trades. These types of organizations cater only to their members and the communities they serve. They normally have strong community-based support and work in concert with the community leaders. CBOs may or may not have formal structure but the members tend to trust each other because they are familiar with one another. For example, the Bong Women's Association of Liberia caters to and advocates for the interest of the women of Bong County, Liberia.

NGOs are organizations that focus their activities in one or more sector areas and whose operations extend beyond specific localities or regions. These organizations may operate in one or more regions of the country. In this category are local and international NGOs (LNGOs and INGOs). These organizations have formal structures such as boards, management teams, among others. An example of a LNGO in Liberia is Susukuu. Susukuu is involved in agricultural development projects and micro-credit enterprises.

Nongovernmental professional and umbrella organizations are organizations that cater to professional individuals or organizations comprising individuals with similar or different professional training or background. Organizations such as PUL, the New African Research and Development Agency (NARDA) and ALPO play coordinating and advocacy roles in the interest of and on behalf of their members.

Development NGOs often work with and reinforce CBOs in the various communities in which they operate, providing them with skills training for local inhabitants and creating employment opportunities and basic social services in health, education, clean water and sanitation. These activities have helped to maintain peace and stability in many communities and the relative peace enjoyed in large parts of the country. Peace has been maintained through the provision of healthcare services and good drinking water. Healthy populations have tended to be more productive and therefore less prone to be engaged in nonproductive pursuits.

Pro-democracy and human rights advocacy CSOs and social movements like PUL, JPC and the student union often have an adversarial relationship with the government. Advocacy demands for such fundamental rights as freedom of speech and assembly are viewed by the government as a

challenge to its authority. The reactions of governments to their activities have ranged from hostile pronouncements in the media to brutal assaults and imprisonment. In most instances the government is much more likely to grant permission to demonstrate on critical national issues to its surrogate organizations with which it maintains a dependent client relationship than to CSOs that it perceives as hostile.

Interactions and networks among CSOs are limited. Meetings and consultations seldom take place to discuss the building of internal capacity and strategies to attract funding for their operations. Since many of them essentially have the same goals and objectives, there is a high degree of interorganizational rivalry. Therefore, they make little attempt to share individual organizational successes.

2. Liberian CSOs and Conflict Resolution/Peace Building

CSOs in Liberia that have attempted to influence policy in general, and specifically influence the course of the internal war and peace process, have operated in an unfavorable environment. This has been demonstrated by the intimidation and brutality that many CSOs face in the process of registration and accreditation, as well as during normal operations. CEDE, for example, was vandalized and some of its staff beaten up by members of the security forces in August 2000. There are numerous credible reports linking these acts to the Taylor regime, which opposes all strong and independent CSOs. Despite this fact, CSOs have been able to work on the general issues of conflict resolution, governance and peace building at several different levels.

Prior to the civil war, Liberian civil society associations were notable for their ability to bring pressure on government to democratize and defend the rights and interests of particular groups such as workers, students, youth and community leaders. For example, in the 1970s the Movement for Justice in Africa (MOJA) began the process of sensitization of students, workers and community leaders about good governance. PUL also played a major role through mass demonstrations in asserting pressure on the government to abolish the one-party rule and institute a multiparty system. The Liberian National Student's Union (LINSU), Federation of Liberian Youth (FLY), African Development Network (ADEN) and other similar organizations played critical roles in ensuring that the rights of the students and youth were protected.

Even during the most violent phase of the civil war, faith-based groups had attempted to play a role in the prevention of further escalation by constituting the Interfaith Mediation Center (IFMC). This group had been created by The Liberian Council of Churches (LCC) and the National Muslim Council of Liberia (NMCL). These traditional religious NGOs had also contributed to the peace process by providing services in relief, health and education. The IFMC also attempted to play a more direct role in peacemaking and escalation prevention during this period by trying to get the leaders of the main warring factions, NPFL and the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) to talk to each other. Their efforts were rewarded with the holding of direct peace talks in Freetown in June 1990. These talks eventually failed, but the formula that IFMC developed was eventually adopted by ECOWAS and its monitoring group, ECOMOG, as the basis for settling the conflict.

In the wake of this failure, however, Liberian CSOs never abandoned their efforts at peacemaking, especially after the signing of the Abuja Accords that specified that peace could

only be assured by resisting trends towards militarization and by strengthening the role of civic groups in Liberian society. In 1994 and 1995, amid continued fighting in the rural areas, citizens groups began to organize demonstrations demanding that the warring factions and the international community redouble their efforts to establish peace. When these demonstrations risked getting out of control and adding to factionalism, the IFMC convened a series of national consultations intended to bring various civic groups into a common framework with single peace agenda — disarmament, peace, and free and fair elections. In March 1995, for example, IFMC organized a one-day “stay home” action intended to demonstrate the solidarity of the majority of Liberians for peace. These actions led to the formation of a consortium grouping about fifty organizations, including religious institutions, unions, business groups, and youth and professional associations. This group, the Civic Disarmament Campaign (CDC), intended to mobilize civic organizations in Liberia around the urgent need for disarmament, continues to hold regular discussions under the leadership of the IFMC.

Meanwhile, individual civic groups organized their own programs to address the peace process and disarmament. The Liberian Women's Initiative (LWI) for example, conducted meetings, participated in demonstrations, and presented a range of position statements to ECOWAS and the factional leaders. Susukuu organized programs to encourage fighters to disarm by providing academic opportunities and sometimes health care. Together, these associations launched a “school for guns” program to educate former combatants.

Elections were eventually held in 1997 based on the principles agreed to in the Abuja Accords, and strongly defended by Liberian CSOs. The post-election period has witnessed the emergence of new peace building and reconciliation roles for the CSOs. There have been a plethora of human rights or democracy advocacy organizations that have attempted to play various roles in the peace building process. A good example is the case of IFESH, an international NGO working mostly in the education sector. IFESH runs a remarkable program of sensitization and training aimed at helping communities re-create the basis of successful self-governance and negotiate solutions to the issues that still plague communities as a result of the war. It has been able to diffuse its curriculum and training program from the village to the national level, with special concentration on the conflict-torn counties of Nimba and Bong. In some cases, it has worked to create clusters of village communities that together have been able to resolve old disputes and create a climate of reconciliation as the basis of a new, more peaceful society.

Another example is the work that the United Methodist Church Committee on Relief (UMCOR) did in southwestern Liberia. Here, UMCOR created a reconciliation program among youth from two rival tribes (the Kru and the Sarpo) based on learning not only vocational skills, but conflict resolution tools acquired through the experience of engaging in sporting activities together (see separate case study in Section IV).

Similarly, ActionAid, an international NGO, has worked with the Christian Health Association of Liberia (CHAL) and a local NGO, ADEN, to develop a program of building capacity in management, conflict resolution and peace building. The program, called “Palava,” is targeted at youth and elders from two districts of Grand Cape Mount County. The training exposed the trainees to peer-based approaches to negotiation, mediation and conflict resolution. As a result of this capacity-building effort the peer “Palava managers” were able to help settle land and other

disputes between members of the same family; within towns, between towns and even in some instances disputes involving people of different ethnic groups and chiefdoms. Peer mediation and conflict resolution are now common amongst youth, elders, children and parents in this area and the techniques are spreading from the two initial counties to other counties using the original youth trainees as trainers.

While the proliferation of civil society groups is a good sign for the consolidation of democracy, it brings its own pitfalls. Most of the CSOs have the same aims and objectives. The existence of splinter civil society groups lends itself to a waste of time, energy and resources. As has already been stated, the fact that most CSOs in Liberia lack internal structures of democratic decision-making, accountability and clearly defined programs is of grave concern.

There are other factors that limit the development of an effective civil society in Liberia today. First, there is the persistent hostility of the Taylor regime that has contributed not only to harassing CSOs that dare to work in this area, but which appears to be implicated in physical attacks on CSO workers, students and journalists. Second, there is the ever present issue of inadequate funding and inadequate training. The fact that so many CSOs request funding from the same international humanitarian organizations and the UN may make it more difficult to forge a unified civil society movement and a genuinely national front for democratic change.

D. CSOs in Guinea

Guinea's associational life is weaker than any in its subregion, due in large part to the stifling efforts of the single party regime under the *Parti Démocratique de Guinée* (PDG) — led by Sékou Touré. From 1958 to 1984, this regime suppressed the private economic sector and all forms of voluntary associational life, substituting in their place state-controlled corporations and corporate-style associations.

This changed dramatically with the military coup of April 4, 1984. The newly installed Military Committee for National Renewal (CMRN) opted for a more individual and collective liberty of association. It promulgated a new constitution that guaranteed freedom of association “without any constraint and in all forms.” In 1986, the new regime began its program of administrative decentralization. At the national level, it put in place the *Service de Coordination des Interventions des ONG* (SCIO), charged with supporting NGOs. The tradition of central control, however, remained in the form of legislation that specified a number of conditions for the legal operation of associations including the fact that they needed to be apolitical and use any revenues generated for community development efforts. More recently, SCIO has been replaced with *Service d'Appui aux Coopératives et de Coordination des Interventions des ONG* (SACCO), administratively located in the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Decentralization.

The practice of the Guinean State has not been nearly as liberal as the text of its constitution suggests. Under the constitution, an NGO must inform the government (SACCO) of its existence and provide it with information about its charters and by-laws. In return, the government is supposed to give the association a document officially recognizing its legality. In point of fact, the government has interpreted this law to give it discretion to approve some NGOs and to reject or simply not act on the application of others. It has also claimed the authority to suspend the legal recognition of certain NGOs, such as OGDH. In general, the Government of Guinea has

persisted in its arbitrary application of the registration process in order to discourage or suppress associations it considers to be critical of the state and its policies.

1. Character of Guinean Nongovernmental Associations

Today, there are approximately 800 NGOs recognized by the Government of Guinea. To understand Guinean NGOs it is necessary to understand that they were created for three quite different purposes. The first involved associations created to meet a particular felt need on the part of segments of the Guinean population, either for the promotion of a development activity previously neglected by the state or for a human rights concern. In general these groups have been created either by Guinean nationals who are no longer connected to the Guinean State but reside in Guinea or by nationals residing abroad. *Centre Africain pour la Formation et le Développement* (CENAFOD), *Organisation des Volontaires pour le Développement Économique de la Guinée* (OVODEC), and *Association pour le Développement Communautaire* (ADIC) are examples of this type of NGO that was formed to promote this type of development. OGDH is one of the rare examples of the latter type, a civil association.

The second type is the NGO formed to respond to the efforts of external donors to have local partners through which they can implement their development programs. For the most part, groups such as the “Economic Interest Groups” (GIE) are of this type and have little if any foundation in the society itself. For this reason, they have remained very weak and have produced poor results both in terms of technical results and in terms of their capacity to broaden popular participation in the development process.

The third type may be thought of as entrepreneurial NGOs. One subtype are NGOs created by young educated Guineans who are attempting to recover some of the economic status they were led to believe was their due, but they have been unable to obtain due to the liberal structural adjustment policies of the Guinean State. The second subtype consists of NGOs formed by current and former high-level government officials largely to further their pursuit of power and influence. In some cases, these are former ministers or high-level officials who have been dismissed from their posts and who establish NGOs to maintain their visibility both internationally and nationally. Many of these people wager that in holding positions with the government-established NGOs, they can solidify their importance to the regime and perhaps return to power. This is the case of the NGO, *Association des Volontaires Guineens pour le Développement* (AVODEG), headed by the First Secretary of State for Decentralization, Allassane Condé. The problem for the associative movement is that these types of NGOs are not led by people whose training and inclination is in the area of the voluntary sector, nor do these directors have the habits of fostering a social basis for their associations in the Guinean population.

In general, all three types of NGOs suffer from a severe lack of organizational capacity. Many lack formal structures of internal self-government such as general assemblies, administrative councils, executive committees, or accounting departments. Most decisions are taken by individual leaders or at best by a small group of loyal allies. Clear strategic plans and objectives rarely motivate their decisions. For the most part their internal financial capacity is virtually nonexistent. Their own internal technical competence, apart from what they may obtain through externally funded project resources, is very weak. There are a few exceptions among the

individual NGOs, such as CENAFOD, *Entraide Universitaire pour le Développement* (EUPD), OVODEC, OGDH, ADIC and *Association pour le Développement Communautaire* (ADECOMA). There are also a few umbrella or network NGOs, notably the Forum of NGOs for Sustainable Development in Guinea, and the Coordinating Committee of Guinean Women's NGOs (COFEG) that have been able to raise substantial amounts of resources to undertake development projects.

One additional characteristic of the Guinean voluntary association sector today is that the associations are, in fact, rarely apolitical. The Guinean government has a tendency to view any public action by civil society that is critical of governmental behavior as stemming from the political opposition. This is certainly the case for OGDH. Others in the NGO community think that any compromise that associations negotiate with the government represents the reassertion of state power over them. Many see the creation of the National Council of CSOs (CNOSC) in this light. At present, the role of civil society as an instrument for defending the interests of the population and of monitoring governmental performance is still poorly understood on both sides of the equation.

2. Guinean CSOs Working in Guinea on Conflict Prevention and Mitigation

In the course of this study, we identified a total of eighteen actors whose programs involved them to varying degrees in dealing with conflict, and with some aspect of the regional conflict in the Mano River area. These can be divided into three basic types:

- four networks (MRWPN, REFAMP, the Forum of NGOs and WANEP);
- four NGOs, of which two are Guinean (OGDH and the Subregional Center for Peace [CSRPP]) and two are foreign (National Democratic Institute and International Foundation for Election Systems); and
- two quasi-governmental institutions (the Economic and Social Council (CES) and CNOSC).

In addition, we interviewed people from several faith-based associations — the National Islamic League, the Anglican Church, and the Protestant Church; several independent private sector media outlets — the *Independent and Democratic Group* newspapers, and the *Lynx and Lance Group*; and several political parties — *Parti de l'Unité et du Progrès* (PUP) - the ruling party, as well as *L'Union pour le Progrès et le Renouveau* (UPR) and *L'Union des Forces Républicaines* (UFR), of the opposition.

Of these, only a handful were found to be actually working in or aspiring to work in the area of conflict resolution at any level. The only Guinean NGO that we discovered that had as its primary mission conflict resolution was CSRPP. This group was created at the instigation of the Lansana Conté Foundation, itself officially an NGO whose connections with the Guinean state and the current regime are so close that it is difficult to accept that it represents a form of voluntary and nongovernmental association. Thus far, the center is in its formative stages and appears to be concerned primarily with the construction of a facility in Conakry that can serve as

a meeting place and training center for the entire subregion. This group is legally recognized by the Guinean State and has obtained recognition as an international NGO

A second NGO, OGDH, has worked on a much broader agenda than on the subregional conflict issues, although it has clearly attempted to contribute to the mitigation of that conflict as well. More broadly, its work is on consciousness raising and training on human rights and civil rights issues. Its training programs for the police and military have attempted to reduce the threat of violence against the regime by introducing these officials to basic concepts of human rights and attempting to improve their operational methods, thereby reducing their abuses of human rights. This organization also attempts to improve governmental accountability in the area of human rights performance by holding press conferences and publishing open letters. For this reason, leaders of the Guinean government view OGDH as part of the political opposition. Consequently, OGDH has often found its opportunities to participate in quasi-official organizations and consultations, like those held by the CES, as quite limited. In addition to these activities within Guinea, however, OGDH has been very active in fostering networks of human rights groups among the three states of the Mano River Basin, and has actively supported groups in Sierra Leone and Liberia. In that way, it sees itself as part of the subregional peace process, by trying to reduce human rights abuses of all three regimes and foster nonviolent methods for their leaders to work out disputes.

Normally, state institutions are not considered part of civil society, but in the case of Guinea, CES has played such an important role as a catalyst that it must be discussed in this context. Following a series of studies on the sources of conflict in Guinea commissioned by USAID/Guinea, CES was able to organize a series of consultative meetings (*concertations*) with a wide array of CSOs. The result was the formation of three commissions including one on sources of insecurity and the armed services. This commission, made up of civil society actors and government officials, developed an action plan to help resolve the outstanding issues. This seems to indicate a new kind of collaboration between civil society actors and the state on issues of security and conflict resolution.

A second organization, whose character is not yet fully clear as it is still in its early stages of formation, is CNOSC, the counterpart of CSM in Liberia and Sierra Leone. CNOSC appears to have the potential for playing a vibrant role in conflict prevention and peace building in the subregion. This institution is the outgrowth of a series of *concertations* organized by the US private voluntary organization (PVO), International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES), at the subregional, regional and national levels. These meetings led to the formation of an organization designed to promote civil society work in both development and conflict mitigation. The new organization will include both representatives named by civil society actors and some named by CES.

By far, the most important actors in conflict resolution work in Guinea have been two of the four network actors, MRWPN and REFAMP. WANEP/Guinea is still in its early development and has yet to begin functioning as an NGO in the conflict mitigation field, and the Forum of NGOs has had no direct role in conflict resolution, serving mainly as a vehicle for linking external donors to national NGOs for local-level development activities.

MRWPN's activities have focused on trying to reopen a political dialogue and peace negotiation process among the political leaders in the three Mano River Basin states. Members of this network participate regularly in official interstate meetings and visit separately the highest level authorities in the three regimes. This network is substantively strengthened by the fact that an exceptionally dynamic and energetic leader, Mrs. Sarah Daraban, a former minister in the government of Guinea, and the President of COFEG leads it. She is also active in REFAMP, which is a region-wide association. MRWPN has limited resources, staff or equipment of its own and currently operates out of COFEG's offices.

The Guinean branch of REFAMP has mainly worked to raise public awareness around the issue of the armed attacks against the Republic of Guinea. In effect, it has supported the current Guinean government's positions in mobilizing popular support against the neighboring states. Although this group claims to be completely apolitical, it is housed in a government facility and has as its president and principal leader a former minister in the Conté government. From the point of view of material resources, this group appears to be much better equipped and staffed than any of the other civil society actors observed.

As for the political parties and newspapers, these groups have played a role of educating their members and customers on the issues. This education has, of course, been very diverse. The independent newspapers have mainly served to raise questions about the wisdom of the government's decision to use armed forces to intervene in the affairs of neighboring states. They have also publicized the President of the National Assembly's statements, often critical of the policies on this issue and on the lack of adherence by the executive to consult with the National Assembly as mandated in the constitution. The parties have taken partisan positions supportive of or critical of the government's decisions in these matters without trying to contribute directly to the conflict resolution process.

The religious associations, notably the Islamic League and the various Christian denominations (Catholic, Protestant and Anglican) have played much less extensive roles in conflict resolution matters. Their principal activity has been to participate in MRU meetings on regional security, reconciliation and peace held in Freetown in February and April 2001, in Conakry. Interestingly, the Guinean representatives to these meetings were Monsignor Albert David Gomez of the Anglican Church and El Mohamed Conté, Deputy Secretary General of the Islamic League. The head of the Catholic Church, which has been much more openly critical of the government's policies of conducting military campaigns against its neighbors, was not designated to attend, despite the fact that the Forest Region of Guinea, which is heavily Catholic, has borne the brunt of both ULIMO camps and attacks from Liberia. Nonetheless, the meetings between Guinean religious leaders and Sheikh Kafumba F. Konneh of Liberia and Sheikh Abu Bakarr Conteh (Sierra Leone) represented a new initiative in creating pressure for a peaceful settlement to the Mano River dispute. In the final declaration of these meetings, the religious leaders demanded an immediate cessation of hostilities between the states under the terms of the ECOWAS Non-Aggression Pact and the MRU agreement. They also urged opening a frank and open dialogue among the various parties to the dispute, creating a conflict prevention mechanism to follow up these talks and implementing a peace process, and broader cooperation between the governments and the civil society, particularly with religiously based associations in the three states.

E. Sierra Leone

Today, the environment for CSOs in Sierra Leone is very positive, and most of them can thrive. These groups have varying capacities to articulate their interests and engage the government. For the most part, Sierra Leonean CSOs lack resources and rely on international NGOs and other donors for training and for help with networking. These connections with other CSOs both within the country and the region have proven valuable in assisting civil CSOs to meet, exchange views and formulate policies for advocacy, lobbying and engaging government.

1. Civil Society Involvement in Conflict Management and Peace Building in Sierra Leone

CSOs have been very active in the conflict in Sierra Leone. The efforts that initially influenced the government of Sierra Leone to come to the negotiating table with the RUF were preceded from 1994-1996 by civil society initiatives. Civic groups have engaged in a series of activities associated with conflict prevention and peace building. First, they have developed programs to set the stage for peace and for the consolidation of peace. This involved educating people about the need for peace; promoting greater access to the tools of conflict resolution, at the local level, through workshops and seminars; and addressing some of the underlying issues that might cause the peace process to fail such as the problem of reintegrating ex-combatants into their communities, and of coping with past atrocities. CGG, for example, has worked in the area of sensitization of community groups and now has opened a human rights advocacy wing, which is strongly involved in advocating trials for perpetrators of heinous crimes against civilian populations during the war. Caritas Makeni has tirelessly worked in a similar direction with an emphasis on youth and human rights. It is heavily involved with conflict resolution training of youth to develop leadership and life skills. Organizations such as WV and Talking Drum Studio have worked to create suitable conditions for people to voice their opinions.

Second, civil society was at the forefront in the restoration of democracy in Sierra Leone. It was civil society that hailed the overthrow of the dictatorial APC regime by the military junta, NPRC. Civil society took an active part in Bintumani I & II Consultative Conferences, which paved the way for the restoration of democracy. It was civil society again that put pressure on the military junta to hold multiparty elections and hand over power to a civilian government when the junta, who wanted to continue in office, argued for “peace before elections.” Civil society for its part agitated for “elections now,” and mobilized the populace to push for immediate elections. Multiparty elections were held in February and March 1996.

Barely a year in office, the civilian government was overthrown by a military junta, AFRC. Civil society again opposed the junta, organized a campaign of civil disobedience and agitated for the restoration of the elected government of President Kabbah. The country virtually came to a standstill until the junta was removed from office nine months later and with ECOMOG military support, President Kabbah was restored to power.

Third, since 1995, civil society groups have been pushing very hard to open up negotiations so that a formal peace process could commence. In that year, a significant development took place. Women’s groups began to actively promote an end to hostilities, and a return to democratic governance. In December 1995, a group of community leaders from the towns and villages

bordering on Liberia crossed over the bridge to RUF-held positions bringing peace messages with them. At least three of the leaders of this group were to remain in rebel captivity for two years. This, however, marked the beginnings of civil society's role in conflict prevention and peace building. One of the initiative's instigators, John Massaquoi, later wrote: "We assembled at the edge of the bridge on the Liberian side, began singing and started moving bravely, but never sure if we would be back alive. We got there alive. We met the rebels."⁴ Though this move did not end the distrust between the government and the RUF it did mark the beginning of a relationship that would later lead to high-level talks between the two sides.

Two groups that have been instrumental in restarting the peace process are IRC and MRWPN. The efforts of MRWPN in using personal relationships have facilitated the commencement of contacts at the ministerial level. Subsequently, these initial contacts have paved the way for a high-level summit of the three heads of state to be held in January 2002. These efforts are detailed in more depth in a separate mini-case study in Section IV. The IRC, for its part, attempted on several occasions to deal with disastrous turns in domestic Sierra Leonean political affairs, notably in 1997 and again in 1999. Its first effort followed the coup staged by Major Johnny Paul Koroma to overthrow the newly elected government. IRC leadership responded by condemning the coup publicly. Following the Conakry Accords in October 1997, it met the AFRC Chairman, President Kabbah and his government in exile and with the newly appointed UN Special Envoy Francis Okello, the British High Commissioner, the UNDP resident representative and other ambassadors to demand the restoration of democracy in the country. Again in January 1999, following the RUF invasion of Freetown with its ensuing misery and mayhem, the IRC led the way in attempting to broker peace among the warring parties.

Following the RUF invasion of Freetown in January 1999 and the subsequent signing of the Lomé Accords, Sierra Leonean CSOs gained added impetus to get involved in the peace process. Together, these events intensified two sets of problems that could jeopardize the peace — the problem of healing the incredible wounds inflicted by the brutality of the RUF forces, and the problem of reintegrating a large number of combatants coming in from the bush and hoping to be part of the demobilization process.

One group that responded to these twin problems was ActionAid. This group has been particularly active involving youth and women in the process of rebuilding their lives and identifying the critical elements of poor governance, including state corruption that has contributed to the misery and lack of opportunity experienced in the past. ActionAid has also encouraged women to assist young abducted mothers and combatants in the process of reintegration.⁵

In addition, WV, an international NGO, has designed programs that focus on supporting fledgling Sierra Leonean CSOs to build up their capacity to help rehabilitate ex-combatants. Overall, WV has supported 325 projects. Of these, 138 have focused on civic education and the peace process. These projects involved a number of different activities. First, in collaboration with other INGOs and the Government of Sierra Leone, WV funded the mass production and dissemination of the Lomé Peace Accords. It distributed ten thousand copies to all sectors of

⁴ ACCORD, 2000.

⁵ Ibid.

society and developed radio programs and workshops to promote discussion of the accords in those parts of the country that were secure and accessible. Second, it engaged in a series of conflict resolution initiatives involving local paramount chiefs and their subjects, members and relatives of the RUF, the SLA (West Side Boys), the Civil Defense Force (CDF) and others in the western Area and the southern province. One Sierra Leonean CSO funded by the WV initiative, for example, was the Forum for African Women Educationalists (FAWE). FAWE received support to undertake a Training of Trainers workshop on the culture of peace in the south, east, and western area. Other associations, such as Caritas Makeni and Talking Drum Studio, have also been significant players in this type of activity. As a result of all these activities, many more people have gained an understanding of the peace process and have developed more interest in issues of public governance, peace and reconciliation. For the first time in its history, Sierra Leoneans seem to be taking interest in and actively engaging the government in constructive ways.

Fourth, most CSOs in Sierra Leone were completely marginalized from their focus on the peace process once the actual negotiations developed in 1996 and afterward. They turned their attention instead to other tasks vital to the conflict mitigation process — strengthening citizen participation and influencing the political system. The goal was to make the political system more accountable and responsive to the people, so that government itself is perceived as better and worth supporting, and supporting the establishment and work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

In May 2000, however, the security situation again deteriorated with the killing of 19 civilians in the residence of Foday Sankoh, leader of the RUF. RUF rebels also took about 500 UNOMSIL troops hostage. With these acts, Sierra Leonean CSOs, despite the chaotic environment, once again became very active in promoting both democracy and peace. Civil society initiatives preceded and complemented official diplomatic efforts every step of the way. Various civil society groups (CGG, CSM, Sierra Leone Teacher's Union [SLTU], SLAJ, Caritas Makeni, Grassroots Empowerment for Self-Help [GEMS], MRWPN and others) were important at different stages. Some CSOs continued to work to mobilize public opinion in favor of peace and democratization. Others were able to gain sufficient credibility and influence to force both the government and the RUF to the negotiating table. Still others, viewed as nonpartisan actors, worked to open up more debate and hence to generate more options for negotiation.

Finally, throughout this entire period, some civil society groups have focused on the task of simply building the capacity of civil society. CGG has been at the forefront of these activities by strengthening the overall capabilities of CSOs in management and resource mobilization, and in advocacy and lobbying skills. It has also focused specifically on gender issues — empowering women economically and politically. Other groups, like the Catholic Diocese, Catholic Relief Services (CRS), CSM and GEMS have also been very active in teaching conflict resolution skills and in capacity building for advocacy.

IV. Case Studies

A. A Regional CSO Intervenes in the Sierra Leonean Civil War: WANEP [Case MRU1]

WANEP is a three-year-old regional specialized service CSO (tertiary) operating across West Africa to facilitate cooperative responses in transforming violent conflict and in building peace. According to its recent annual report, “WANEP promotes the development of mechanisms for collaboration, community empowerment and participation as we strive for peace, transformation and sustainable development.” Its involvement in Sierra Leone dates back to 1998, but its activity accelerated after the disastrous RUF attacks on Freetown in January 1999. Following the worst fighting, the WANEP secretariat paid a solidarity visit to Sierra Leone and then undertook a comprehensive impact assessment. WANEP’s approach during the assessment was to initiate the peace building process by holding discussions with civil society groups and key stakeholders in Sierra Leone. It invited the full participation of the Africa Peace and Reconciliation Network (APRN). Together they launched the Collaborative Peace Building Program, which is ongoing. This program has involved a broad range of actors including civil society leaders from the whole country, former combatants from the AFRC/SLA, RUF, CDF, political leaders, professional organizations, trade unions and traditional chiefs. Among others, these activities have influenced leaders like the AFRC/SLA leader, Johnny Paul Koroma, to disband the AFRC/SLA. CDF and RUF have proposed a joint conflict resolution committee, where politicians have been engaged in a deep reflection about what type of Sierra Leone should result from post-war rebuilding efforts, and what type of vision and leadership are needed to bring this forth. The collaborative approach to peace building encouraged NGOs to come together and to form the Network for Collaborative Peace Building, which allows for efficient coordination.

At the same time, WANEP is trying to counter the belief that because NGOs are presumed to lack leverage and legitimacy they cannot be effective in a political peace process. One approach that WANEP has taken to countering this view is to work closely with affiliates (in this case WANEP-Sierra Leone) who people know will be in the country in times of conflict and peace, giving them more legitimacy than “outside actors” may have. As these affiliates work to build cohesion within civil society they gain political leverage to resist the next wave of political instability that could throw the society back into warfare.

Sierra Leone is in a delicate phase of its peace making process. Key actors have now been arguing for all Sierra Leoneans to work towards reconciliation. External actors like WANEP must be very careful in this peace process. Because of its growing legitimacy within Sierra Leone as a peace building organization, it has been invited to participate in discussions regarding the establishment of Special Court under UN Security Council Resolution 1315 (2000). On the one hand, a Special Court could be viewed as a sign that the society was moving toward the institutionalization of peace. At the same time, the Sierra Leonean political system might not be ready for a Special Court as part of its reconciliation process. Members of the RUF, for example, might well fear and resist such a mechanism because they could be afraid admitting their wrongdoing before such a court might equal submitting themselves for prosecution. Through its collaborative mechanism and local NGO partners, WANEP can help Sierra Leoneans find the

right mix of measures to rebuild and to consolidate peace, but they must come to these decisions based on their own knowledge and growing political power.

B. The Mano River Union Women's Peace Network [Case MRU2]

MRWPN grew out of the initiative of several dynamic women who were already heavily involved in both national and international civil society life. These women attended a conference of African Women for Peace and Development under the aegis of ECOWAS, and in turn participated in the writing and adopting of the Abuja Declaration and Action Plan for Peace.

Following these meetings, the leaders of these groups organized a coordinating committee of nine prominent women from the MRU, headed by Ruth Perry, a Liberian. The avowed goal of this organization was to complement the work of the states in the region to end the violence in the Mano River Basin and to create the conditions for sustainable peace.

Subsequently, the MRWPN has operated at a number of different levels to try to deal with the conflict. It has undertaken separate actions in each of the countries concerned, and attempted to coordinate actions at the subregional level.

MRWPN has attempted to serve as an early warning system in conjunction with local authorities. In the three countries, MRWPN has had contact with traditional women's groups in various parts of society and has been able to learn from local market women that people who were not from the area had infiltrated zones near the border with Liberia. This fact was made clear by market women who noted that men they did not know were approaching them for products that were not commonly sold in their markets, and so they realized that these people were not from the area. This caused concern and suspicion that these men constituted a military threat. The women reported this fact to the local authorities, but no action was taken by the governments to investigate the allegations.

The organization has also been trying to build a broad coalition of partners within the region to promote the peace process. It forged relationships and held discussions with UN agencies (UNHCR, UNESCO, UNDP, UNICEF, etc.) to deal with the deplorable condition of refugees, particularly of women and children in the camps on the Sierra Leonean border (Massankoundou and Kountaya). It held discussions with religious authorities and with international donors to try to improve conditions in the camps.

In December 2000, after the security problem on the Sierra Leonean border had become intolerable, the Mano River women went to Bamako to encounter the heads of state of ECOWAS who were meeting to forge new political institutions for the ECOWAS community and where the Mano River dispute was being actively discussed. They insisted on seeing the heads of state of the three Mano River states and explained to them that they were prepared to assist in finding a peaceful settlement to the conflicts.

Between early December 2000 and mid-February 2001, a series of important international meetings occurred in West Africa to deal with sources of violence and the role of women in these conflicts. These included the preparatory meeting for the Summit for Children held by the

West Africa NGO Forum in Bamako, and the World Coalition meeting in Dakar on the role of the army in Africa; the joint Africa Leadership Forum/African Women for Peace and Development consultative meeting on the role of women in the settlement of conflicts held in Tunis in January; the meeting of the Pan-African Women's Association, and the meeting of the African Commission on Human Rights held in April 2001. These meetings made it possible to raise to the highest level the concerns of the Mano River women over arms trafficking, continued insecurity and guerrilla forces spilling over from civil wars on the border regions of the Mano River countries

Subsequently, the leaders of this group went directly to President Conté, the Guinean head of state, to request that he meet with the heads of state of Liberia and Sierra Leone to negotiate an end to the conflict. Conté had previously announced that he would never negotiate with Liberian President, Charles Taylor. At the conclusion of this meeting President Conté agreed to hold such a meeting. The meeting was scheduled initially to take place in October 2001 but has now been rescheduled for January 2002.

Several lower-level meetings have taken place as a result of this changed situation. Foreign ministers from the three countries have been dispatched to hold preparatory meetings for the heads of state summit. President Conté has encouraged the Guinean National Assembly to contact counterparts in the two neighboring countries in order to involve them in the peace process. As of August 2001, plans for a summit conference to be held in January 2002 seem to be well underway. While no one can predict what the outcome of these talks will be and how long it might take to work out details of a settlement, many see the intervention of the Mano River women as critical in producing a breakthrough in getting the negotiations started.

Overall, what MRWPN has been able to do is raise awareness of the conflict and forge a series of networks to begin addressing it in ways that were not possible through the actions of governments alone. The persistence of its leaders and their capacity to build networks may have also created a shift in the climate for negotiations and opened the way for some face-to-face talks at the highest level of the Mano River states.

C. Forging a Civil Society Movement: the Role of the Guinean Organization for the Defense of Human Rights [Case MRU3]

The leading human rights association in Guinea is clearly OGDH. It is a member of the International Federation of Human Rights Leagues, of the International Union of Human Rights Associations, and of the Union of Africa Human Rights Associations. Its Director, Thierno Sow, is a prominent African human rights activist.

As a CSO, the primary goal of OGDH is not peace and conflict resolution. Its founder saw it as a classical human rights group, working to improve the human rights performance of the Guinean regime, and fighting against all forms of racism, discrimination, intolerance and arbitrary governmental power. Its leadership contends that human rights abuses continue to be the norm in the functioning of the Guinean police and military. Such a modus operandi contributes to considerable conflict and represents a potential source of violence within Guinean society.

OGDH did, however, get involved in the Mano River conflict in a number of ways. When the Mano River conflict first broke out in 1989, the OGDH leadership decided to undertake a public campaign of warning the Guinean authorities of the risks of escalating the violence should the government decide to mount military operations in the neighboring states of Sierra Leone and Liberia. It did this through declarations, open letters and press conferences. It also began to sharply criticize the Government of Guinea for violating international conventions on the treatment of refugees that the government had signed.

At the subregional level, Thierno Sow became a leader in establishing a subregional civil society network for the Mano River Basin. To this end, he and OGDH participated in meetings with human rights groups in Liberia and Sierra Leone to try to create a pressure group for the opening of peace negotiations among these states. He has also worked with a number of other civil society associations including WANEP/Guinea, unions and other NGOs to hold a meeting in Freetown, Sierra Leone which formally launched the Mano River CSM.

Despite these seemingly positive activities, however, the OGDH has been hampered by the attitude of the executive branch of the Government of Guinea. In general, OGDH's criticisms of human rights violations and its positions on conflict mitigation in the Mano River Basin have been viewed by the government as products of a political opposition and have tended to be discredited. The OGDH, for example, still has not received official approval from the Guinean Ministry of Territorial Affairs that claims to have the right to make determinations of this type with regard to officially declared NGOs. At times its lack of official status has been used against it in determining who will be invited to participate in civil society meetings planned by such state institutions as CES. At other times, its participation is solicited, but then little has been done to assure that it is involved in follow-up meetings. Despite the USAID-supported IFES/CES civil society consultations held in Guinea in 2001, Dr. Sow contends that the OGDH is still viewed by the executive branch with great reserve, if not open hostility.

D. Peace Building in Southeastern Liberia: the Role of the United Methodist Church Committee on Relief [Case MRU4]

The civil war that engulfed Liberia in December 1989 divided Liberians in many different ways — government against the invading force, civilians against civilians, tribes against one another and to some extent, religious groups against one another. People in every category felt vulnerable, leading many to vent their anger on any person or group perceived as threatening.

This case study is set in Gbason town, Sinoe County in southeastern Liberia. Gbason town is located strategically between Greenville and the district headquarters of Juarzon. There, two ethnic groups found themselves in increasing conflict — the Sarpo from the Juarzon area, and the Kru, who were predominantly from in and around Gbason town. The underlying problem between them came about because the Sarpo were sympathetic to the Krahn, an ethnic group then in power. They accused the Kru of siding with NPFL, the rebel group headed by Charles Taylor, and of targeting prominent members of their tribe. Though there was no solid evidence for this allegation, it soon became a real issue amongst members of the Kru ethnic group, leading to a tribal feud in the area. As a consequence, elders from the two ethnic groups could no longer interact with one another on a friendly basis. Schools, clinics and churches were restricted to

members of only one ethnic group and it was obviously impossible to hold joint meetings of any sort in the area.

UMCOR had developed a long-standing relationship with the people of this area, and held its annual conference in Gbason town. The total lack of security in this area led it to try to protect its community and to mend relationships between the warring factions. It decided to use that relationship to launch a program of reconciliation and vocational training targeted at youth. It sought and obtained external funding to run this program on its mission station located in the area. Given the history of deteriorating relations between the two ethnic groups, when UMCOR paid its first visit to the area to commence the project, elders from Gbason area suggested that only candidates from their area benefit from the project, and warned of difficulties should UMCOR try to integrate youth from both groups.

UMCOR officials took the warning of the elders very seriously. They decided to include trauma counselors as a critical part of the program. They also decided to use their own vehicle to travel the “no go area” (Juarzon) in order to recruit candidates who were interested in taking advantage of the trauma healing program. UMCOR had to utilize this option because no youth from the Sarpo area dared travel through the lines of the Kru in another conveyance for fear of falling victim of the wrath of their rivals.

The program began with an enrollment of about 130 candidates, with almost equal representation from the two tribes. UMCOR decided to begin the program without publicly acknowledging the fact that there was tension in the area. The counselors and instructional staff of the program, however, quickly detected visible evidence of this tension. The staff members found that they had to spend a great deal of their time just trying to settle what appeared to be insignificant disputes. To try to better understand the root causes of the conflict, the staff met with the youths from the two communities separately. These meetings revealed startling and disturbing information about century-old hatreds, based strictly on ethnicity.

The UMCOR staff then realized that the best approach to dealing with these tensions between the ethnic groups was to begin with the youth. The logic behind this decision was based on the fact that it was the youth that were frequently involved in physical violence with one another. The solution that UMCOR decided to adopt was to transfer the tensions into activities of organized games. They subsequently procured a variety of games and sporting materials and encouraged the two sides to play. These exercises went on for nearly two months before positive results manifested themselves. Ethnic tensions eased while the desire to play with one another, regardless of the ethnic background, increased dramatically.

Two months later, the project was faced with a real challenge. To evaluate the effectiveness of the program and to discover the sincerity and commitment of the participants to move the process of reconciliation forward, the participants asked to take a break and return to their own communities. Because participants from the Juarzon area, however, were transported in UMCOR vehicles during the onset of the project, it was widely suggested that the vehicles not be used in transporting them back home. Doing so, UMCOR staff believed, would reinforce the notion of “no go areas” and perpetuate the fear in the youths about each other.

UMCOR staffers summed up the experience as follows:

“We were apprehensive a little, of course. But that’s what peacemakers are. They take risks and wait for the outcome of those risks. The risks we took fortunately produced the required outcomes. Based on the feedback we got from the youths, we had helped them build relationships during the various sporting activities that many of them carried home with them.”

By the end of the program, some participants of the Kru ethnic group, along with their colleagues who were not part of the program, escorted the students from the Sarpo ethnic group who were going further on to Juarzon.

V. Findings and Lessons Learned

The conflict in the Mano River Basin has been one of the bloodiest and longest running in modern African history. Given the failure of the states in the subregion to bring this conflict to a successful conclusion, it is all the more obvious that CSOs within the three countries and working at the subregional level have a vital role to play — not only in making peace but in building it. A transition from war to peace will require many steps, from the establishment of security systems and early warning systems to signal the increasing risk of a return to violence, to the protection of war victims — particularly the most vulnerable, women and children; to the reintegration of combatants, refugees and internally displaced persons; to the strengthening of civil society to help manage ongoing conflicts of all kinds that can erupt at any time into violence; and to help bring about more accountability and better governance.

The lessons of this case are both daunting and promising. On the one hand, as a zone of violent conflict, this has been a very difficult context for civil society to function effectively for a number of reasons. In a war-torn society, indigenous resources are even more scarce than usual, and the risk of displeasing opponents can be very high. On the other hand, this study reveals that other factors, such as entrenched and overly centralized yet weak regimes can be even more of a problem for an effective civil society, and that war zones can attract a great deal of international attention and funding. Of course this dependence on foreign funding can itself pose serious problems if it is not done in a very sensitive and systematic manner.

Structure and history count. Liberia and Sierra Leone had vibrant civil societies prior to their open civil wars. This civil society not only provided services and encouraged economic development, at times it was even able to have some influence on internal political conflicts. Guinea, on the other hand, had no such modern history of an autonomous civil society. Decades of French colonial rule and then of a one-party dictatorship uprooted many of the habits of voluntary association and of alternative and traditional sources of authority. Single party rule, replaced by single party dominance has not been conducive either to autonomous power, or to the creation of a civic society that is itself not viewed as a part of the political opposition.

Guinea and Liberia share another structural factor that may also be a major constraint on the development of civil society — political dominance by a minority ethnic group (the Soudou in Guinea and the Americo-Liberians in Liberia). Efforts to strengthen autonomous social organization are often viewed by ethnic minority governments as advantages for their rivals and they are suspicious of any such efforts. In such a context, the capacity of civil society actors to do anything more than the state's bidding, and particularly to offer critical views of its security policies is very limited. This is true, even though, until late 2000, the level of violence in Guinea was much lower than that experienced in the neighboring states.

Even if the governmental structural conditions are similar, however, as they were in Liberia and Sierra Leone, the opening for an effective civil society can be quite different. Our study shows that civil society in Sierra Leone was much more adaptive at recovering and forming networks to address common issues than was apparently true of Liberia. This difference cannot be fully explained by this study, but may have something to do with the nature and circumstances of the

elections that brought the current leaders to power and along with them their views of civil society. As been evidenced in Liberia, victorious rebels and their movements are rarely charitable toward civil society, which they often see as linked to external forces that were often their opponents.

In addition, structural conditions and the course of the war may help explain why the distribution of CSOs is noticeably different in Liberia and Sierra Leone on the one hand, and in Guinea on the other. The sphere of influence for most African elites is the capital. The capital is the seat of the INGOs, which support many of the CBOs and CSOs that operate in the subregion. Since most of the resources are located here, many CSOs find themselves operating in the capital, sometimes at the expense of communities that might be in need of services provided by these CBOs or CSOs. In Sierra Leone and Liberia, however, more CBOs and CSOs function outside the capital than is true for Guinea. For security reasons, activity in the provinces in Sierra Leone has been limited to areas where UNOMSIL has deployed. Equally true is the fact that donor NGOs and other donor organizations have much more access to CSOs based in the capital cities of the states under review.

One factor that does not appear to differ significantly in the three Mano River states, however, is the role that women have played in civil society, particularly in associations that have attempted to deal with conflict. In all three states, women have been at the vanguard of the CSOs and networks working to promote negotiations and to deal with the victims of war. In each case, most of these women leaders are drawn not only from the elite but also from people who previously held positions of political power.

Even with these challenges and constraints, however, this is not a story without optimism. First, it is clear that, at least in Liberia and Sierra Leone, civil society is beginning to become more professional and develop competence in specific areas such as promoting economic production, health and educational services and working to improve democracy and good governance. Civil society actors in this region are becoming far better at creating internal networks of support. They are also getting more skilled at forging partnerships with international development agencies because they can bring skills that are in short supply elsewhere in the society. Some of this civil society development has been aimed at dealing with conflict and its aftermath. In some instances it is even proving to be a base for building a demand for better and more democratic governance structures, an issue at the heart of the instability of these societies to begin with.

Beyond national CSOs, however, we are beginning to see the emergence of regional and subregional networks that can amplify the power of separate national associations. This is proving especially important for Guinea where national CSOs are weak. The fact that Guinean women are driving forces in two of the most important networks, MRWPN and REFAMP, may mean that networking is an alternative to national power. The effort to forge a network of human rights groups, and even of religious leaders, may be a powerful extension of this strategy. Of course networks can be captured by authorities in one or more states, as may be the case for the Guinean participants in the inter-religious network. External funding agencies must be ever vigilant to this possibility as they make their decisions about whom to finance. With all of the limitations, however, it is now fairly evident that the resumption of dialogue among the Mano River heads of state can be attributed, at least in part, to the efforts of these civil society actors.

No doubt other international forces such as the isolation of Liberia in the UN Security Council, and the criticisms of Guinea by ECOWAS played a role as well, but civil society's role was clearly there in a number of different ways. The formation of the Mano River CSM following the conference held in Freetown in October 2001, is but another example of civil society's ability to gather strength.

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ANNEXES

Annex 1 Conflict Study Methodology

West Africa Regional Conflict Prevention and Peace Building Case Study Methodology

Guide to Conducting the Studies

August 21, 2001

ARD, Inc.

Under the

BASIS-West Africa Conflict Task Order

USAID/Africa Bureau

Introduction and Overview

Conflict Prevention and Peace Building Case Studies in this Task Order are designed to further a number of different goals. First, they provide examples of how civil society associations (broadly defined) have attempted to become involved in a variety of conflict amelioration processes in specific settings. Second, they are focused on a particular subregional conflict and in so doing they provide additional perspective and analysis on that particular conflict, principally as a way of understanding the context in which CSOs have attempted to function as peacemakers. Third, they extend our work of assessing the capacities of CSOs to undertake this work in the West Africa region, and help us understand both their strengths and limitations to do so. Finally, in the process of conducting these case studies, we hope to learn more about the relationships of CSOs to subregional and regional institutions that are involved in trying to resolve conflicts and maintain order, such as the CILSS and ECOWAS.

The underlying assumption of this study is that a number of factors matter in how effective civil society actors are likely to be in playing a role in conflict mitigation. We hypothesize that these factors are:

- The overall political environment for civil society actor, and especially the relationship between national governments, regional institutions and civil society;
- The capacity of civil society associations in terms of their own organization, training and skills;
- The phase of the conflict in which they are trying to have an impact (see presentation by Terrance Lyons).

Data for these studies will come from a number of sources. Of course we will synthesize what material is already available on the board outline of the conflict and on the role of civil society organizations in it. For the most part, however, our data will come from interviews conducted in the countries involved in the conflict. For our two case studies these countries are:

- Casamance dispute — Senegal, Gambia and Guinea Bissau
- Mano River rebellion — Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea (Conakry)

Many of our interviews will be conducted with actors in civil society themselves. Others will complement these and will involve members of the national media, members of national governments, political party leaders, and other informed persons.

The product of these interviews and other data sources will be a unified report that will combine our analysis of the several countries. The report will consist of the following elements:

- An analysis of the key political stability issues in the subregion;
- An understanding of the principle actors involved in tensions, disputes and conflicts, including those working to prevent or reduce these conflicts. These will include local governments, national governments, international and regional organizations, and civil society actors including as relevant civil associations, farmer associations, professional associations, media associations, human rights associations, women's associations, and business networks;
- An understanding of the relationship between and among these actors with regard to efforts to deal with the conflict; and
- The identification of particular issues involving the capacity and limitations of actors, and particularly civil society actors to communicate and form networks to strengthen their joint abilities to play constructive roles in dealing with the conflict lessons learned in this case.

In addition to the overall synthesis report, research in the individual countries should enable us to produce a number of mini-cases of particular efforts on the part of CSOs to become involved in conflict prevention and peace-building activities. These cases will illustrate the issues of capacity, policy environment, and phase of conflict in the likelihood of success or failure, and will permit a more focused and concrete discussion of the improvement that may be made to strengthen the process.

I. Below is a set of questions to guide team leaders and members in conducting the various kinds of interviews. They are not intended to be definitive, but they should help in structuring the kind of information that we hope to receive.

A. Policy Environmental Issues for CSOs [to be ascertained through key interviewed and in interviews with a limited number of CSO leaders]

The overall issue we are examining here is the degree to which a CSO can be a participant in the formation and implementation of policies within a given society.

1. Does the constitution or fundamental law authorize or guarantee freedom of association, assembly and expression? How has this been treated in operational law and in the practice of the governmental authorities?
2. How easy is it for CSOs to be legally registered, or to operate in a legal condition? What problems do they usually encounter?
3. Is there a multiplicity of laws governing the operation of different kinds of associations? Are there a number of different government ministries involved?
4. How easy is it in law and in reality to suppress a legally registered or recognized association?

5. Is it possible for CSOs to generate revenues from their own activities?
6. What is the image of CSOs that is portrayed in the national media (print and electronic)?
7. What is the perspective of CSOs on the willingness of government to include them in its functions in general (for example to include them on commissions or in legislative hearings)?

B. Organizational Characteristics

1. Autonomy

- a. How was the association formed (voluntary or government induced)
- b. In the past or at present does the government name officials of the CSO?
- c. In the past or at present does the government provide financial support or other forms of logistical support to the CSO?

2. Legal Status

- a. Is the CSO currently legally recognized?

3. Internal Governance Issues

- a. Does the CSO have a Board of Directors
- b. Regular meetings of its Board?
- c. Does it have members?
- d. Do its members paid dues or an inscription fee?
- e. Are there annual meetings of the membership?
- f. Are the CSOs officers elected by its members or its Board?
- g. Have they ever changed?
- h. Are women included in the Board?

4. Capacity Issues

- a. Does this CSO have a separate bank account?
- b. Is this account audited by some independent source?
- c. Does the CSO have a staff (paid or voluntary)?

- d. Does it have an office
- e. A telephone/ fax
- f. Internet connectivity?
- g. Has the CSO received financial support from public institutions
 - h. From its own government
 - i. From international donors such as the UNDP, World Bank, European Community
 - j. From bilateral donors, such as USAID, CIDA, the NORDICS
 - k. From private donors, such as foundations and institutes, and church groups

C. Conflict Prevention and Peace building Activities

1. Actions

- a. Has the CSO undertaken any mobilization campaigns or lobbying efforts in general?
 - i. which?
 - ii. how often?
 - iii. with what results?

2. Has the CSO undertaken any actions specifically to try to deal with a conflict or with its consequences?

- a. Which?
- b. At what level — local, national, beyond the separate nation — subregional?
- c. How often?
- d. What results?

3. What training have leaders or members of this CSO had in terms of

- a. Analysis of conflict?
- b. Negotiation?
- c. Mediation?

4. Do the leaders of this CSO want to become more heavily involved in working on issues of conflict?
 - a. What kinds of conflict?
 - b. At what level?

II. Additional Questions to Pose of CSO Leaders on the Particular Subregional Conflict

1. What is the perspective of your association on the problem of insecurity in the sub-region? For example on the issues of insecurity of frontier areas, of refugee issues, or of civil war?
2. What is (are) the principal cause(s) of these problems in the view of the leaders of this group?
3. What solutions do the leaders of this group think are possible to improve the situation?
4. Is this group interested in being involved in these possible solutions?
5. Has this group already tried to become involved in these solutions?
6. With what results?
7. What are the successes that the CSO has had in trying to reduce conflict?
8. What are the capacities of this CSO in the view of its leaders that have contributed to its having these successes?
9. What are the limitations or weaknesses of this group in the view of its leaders to work in this area?
10. What kinds of support does this CSO want in order to be more effective in this area?
11. Are there any specific needs in the area of
 - a. relations with the media?
 - b. communications with other associations at the national level?
 - c. communication with other associations in the subregion or region?

III. Interviews with Other Actors –A Few Suggestions

A. Donors

1. What programs do they have in conflict prevention and peace building?
2. Who are their partners?
3. What is their perspective on the specific conflict?

4. What role do they see for civil society in the improvement of this conflict situation?
5. What relationships do they have with regional and sub-regional actors working on these conflict issues?

B. Media, Parties, Unions

1. What is their perspective on the evolution of this conflict?
2. What role do they think civil society actors have played in this conflict?
3. What role do they think civil society actors could play?
4. What do they think are the limitations of civil society actors playing a larger role?
5. What role has the media (parties, unions) played in this conflict?
6. Can it play a larger role?
7. What does the media (parties, unions) need to do so?
8. Do media outlets (parties, unions) have relationships with others in the subregion and region that could be helpful in their playing a larger role in conflict issues?

Annex 2 List of Interviewed Persons and Organizations

NAME OF CSO	CONTACT NAME & ADDRESS	TELEPHONE & FAX NUMBERS	E-MAIL ADDRESS
SIERRA LEONE			
Network on Collaborative Peace Building in Sierra Leone (NCP SL)	Richard Konteh, Chairman: 7 Percival St. Freetown	Tel: 023-501-321	ncp_sl@yahoo.com rkonteh@yahoo.com
MRU Secretariat	The Secretary-General Abdulai Diallo Delco House, Lightfoot Boston St. Freetown		
Campaign For Good Governance (CGG)	Mrs. Zainab H. Bangura, Coordinator, 1 Richard St. P.O. Box 1437, Freetown	Tel: 228-454/225-253/226-852 Fax: 228-896/224-439	cgg@sierratel.sl
Grassroots Empowerment for Self Help (GEMS)	Barbara Bangura, National Coordinator 7 Percival Street, Freetown	Tel/Fax: 226-224 Fax: 228-896/224-439	gems_gems@hotmail.com
European Union (EU)	Jeremy Tunna Cliffe, Head of Delegation Wesley House, 4 George Street P.O. Box 1399, Freetown	Tel: 227-319/223-975 Fax: 225-212	endelsle@sierratel.sl
Network Movement for Justice and Development	Abu Brima Coordinator, 8 Kingharman Rd., Freetown	Tel: 229-937	
Caritas Makeni	A.B.M. Gbanie Peace building and Human Rights Unit. 22 Wilkinson Rd., Freetown		caritasm@sierratel.sl
Civil Society Movement (CSM)	Alithur Freeman 8 Ecowas Street, P.M.B. 374, Freetown	Tel: 222-984 Fax: 223-083	civilsocietysl@hotmail.com
Council of Churches in Sierra Leone (CCSL)	Alimamy P. Koroma, General Secretary 4 ^A Kingharman Road, Freetown	Tel: 240-568/240-554, Fax: 241-109	ccsl@sierratel.sl
World Vision, Sierra Leone (WVSL)	Justin A. Polley Program Manager 39 Freetown Road, Lumley, Freetown P.M.B. 59	Tel: 234-205/230-725/233-663 Fax: 230-156	Justin_polley@wvi.org
Sierra Leone Teachers Union (SLTU)	Davidson A. Kuyateh- Secretary General Rogaland House Lowcost step. P.O. Box 477, Freetown	Tel: 263-253/263-254 Fax: 263-042	sltu@sierratel.sl

NAME OF CSO	CONTACT NAME & ADDRESS	TELEPHONE & FAX NUMBERS	E-MAIL ADDRESS
Mano River Union Women's Peace Network (MRWPN)	Mrs Agnes Taylor-Lewis, 2 nd Vice President Delco House 4th Floor, Lightfoot Boston St., Freetown	Mobile: 076-603-905, Tel: 241-382	marwopnetsl@yahoo.com
Cause Canada	Desmond Kamara Vocational Coordinator 122 Pademba Road, Freetown	Tel: 229-270/228-312	causesl@sierratel.sl
Action Aid Sierra Leone	Tennyson Williams, Officer, Youth Development & Social Integration 36 ^A Freetown Rd, Lumley, Freetown	Tel: 234-197	aasl@sierratel.sl
Interreligious Council of Sierra Leone (IRC)	Alimamy P. Koroma, Secretary General, C/O Council of Churches in Sierra Leone., 4 ^A Kinghaman Rd. Freetown		ccsl@sierratel.sl
Sierra Leone Women's Forum (SLWF)	Miss Parker 23 Pademba Rd., Freetown	Tel: 221-540	sierraleonewomensforum@hotmail.com
Conciliation Resources,	Sahr Gborie West Africa Program, 21 Small Waterloo St., Freetown	Tel: 076-604-263	crsl@sierratel.sl
Talking Drums Studio	Mrs. Frances Fortune, Director 44 Barthurst St., Freetown	Tel: 223-082/223-479	tdssl@sierratel.sl
Makeni Catholic Diocese	Bishop George Biguzzi Smart Farm, Freetown		biguzzi@sierratel.sl
Catholic Relief Services (CRS)	Dr. Richard Konteh Program Manager 117 Jomo Kenyatta Rd. P.O. Box 1342, Freetown	Tel: 222-159/223-794 Fax: 228-646	crs@sierratel.sl
LIBERIA			
Media Against Conflict (MAC)	Pete Kahler Chairman. Bushrod Island, Monrovia	Tel: (231) 226-440 Fax: (231) 227-912	Pkahler60@yahoo.com
Search For Common Ground (SCG) Talking Drum Studio	Mr. M. Borlay, Executive Producer. Bushrod Island, Monrovia	Tel: (231) 226-441 Fax: (231) 226-441	Tmanjoeborlay@yahoo.com

NAME OF CSO	CONTACT NAME & ADDRESS	TELEPHONE & FAX NUMBERS	E-MAIL ADDRESS
Press Union of Liberia (PUL)	James Kiazolu, President Press Union Of Liberia, P.O. Box 20-42091000, Monrovia 10	Tel: (231) 227-105	pul@liberia.net press union of liberia@yahoo.com
ActionAid	James B. Logan Country Representative, Mamba Point, Monrovia	Tel: (231) 228-037	Aal@liberia.net
AFRICARE	Marion Subah Acting Country Representative, Mamba Point, Monrovia	Tel: (231) 226-541	Africare@liberia.net
Children's Aid Direct (CAD)	Paula Nawrocki Country Representative, Mamba Point, Monrovia	Tel: (231) 227-003	Cadlibr@liberia.net
Center for Democratic Empowerment (CEDE)	Daniel Gbadoe Acting Executive Director, 10 Street, Sinkor, Monrovia	Tel: (231) 226-595	Cede94@aol.com
Catholic Relief Services (CRS)	Debra Lynn Edward-Skene Country Representative & Augustine A. Allieu, Head of Programs, Randall Street, Monrovia	Tel: (231) 225-727	Cr@crsliberia.org.lr aaallieu@crslr.org
International Foundation for Education and Self Help (IFESH)	Dustin Wolokelie, Program Manager Mamba Point, Monrovia	Tel: (231) 227-915 227-761	ifeshliberia@hotmail.com
Justice and Peace Commission (JPC)	Frances Johnson Moris, National Director, Ashmun Street, Monrovia	Tel: (231) 226-723 227-657	Justice@jpcorg.lr
Liberia Democracy and Resource Center (LDRC)	James Fromoyan, Executive Director, Broad Street, Monrovia	Tel: (231) 227-591	Ldrc.liberia@yahoo.com
Lutheran World Federation/Service (LWF/S)	Reinhard Tietze Country Representative & William Saa, Trauma Counselor 12/13 Street Sinkor, Monrovia	Tel: (231) 227-120 227-354	Lwfmon@liberia.net



NAME OF CSO	CONTACT NAME & ADDRESS	TELEPHONE & FAX NUMBERS	E-MAIL ADDRESS
Interreligious Council (IRC)	Archbishop Michael Kpakala Francis, Chairman David Kiazolu, Secretary General	Tel: (231) 227-245	
Mano River Women's Peace Network (MRWPN)/Liberia Women's Initiative (LWI)	Mary Brownell, Executive Chairperson, Ashmun Street, Monrovia	Tel: (231) 227-095 Fax: 226-678	Women-initiative@yahoo.com
New African Research and Development Agency (NARDA)	Lencedell Mathews, Executive Director, Johnson Street, P.O.Box 876, Monrovia	Tel: (231)227-889	
Unity Party (UP)	Mrs. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Party Leader, Broad Street, Monrovia		Liberiamagic@africaonline.co.ci
United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR)	Julius K. Sele, Program Manager, Mamba Point, Monrovia	Tel: (231) 227-317	Pm@umcor.org.lr Umcorliberia@yahoo.com
Ministry of Transport		Tel: (231) 227-707 Fax: (231) 227-515	
SUSUKUU	Dr. Togba-Nah Tipoteh, Director General, Gibson's Building, Broad Street, Monrovia	Tel: (231) 226-944	
Association of Liberian Professional Associations (ALPO)	Saa Philip-Joe President-General, Raymond Building, Broad Street, Monrovia	Tel: (231) 227-828	
Mano River Union sub-office (MRU)	Luke Bawo, Ministry of Planning and Economic Affairs, Jean-Jarvis Building, Randall Street, Monrovia	Tel: (231) 229-119	
GUINEA			
Agence Canadienne pour le Développement International (ACDI)	Mr Carlos, Premier Secrétaire et Consul du Canada en Guinée		
Centre Sous-régional pour la Paix (CSRPP)	Dr Sano Oumory B.P. 6962 Conakry	Cel: 013400116	
Conseil Économique et Social (CES)	Mme Joséphine Guilao, Vice Présidente		

NAME OF CSO	CONTACT NAME & ADDRESS	TELEPHONE & FAX NUMBERS	E-MAIL ADDRESS
Fondation Internationale pour les Systèmes Électoraux (IFES)	Bakary Fofana, Secrétaire Exécutif du CNOSEC, Residence Mike, Quartier Camayenne BO. 603, Conakry	Tel: 224 404599 Fax: 224 422730	lfes-guiena@biasy.net
Forum des ONG pour le Développement Durable en Guinée	Mr Ben Sekou Sylla, Président,		
Église Anglicane	Monseigneur Albert David Gomez		
Eglise Protestante	Pasteur Eli Fendouno		
Groupe de presse : Lynx et Lance	Mr Thierno Diallo, Journaliste		
Groupe de presse: Indépendant et Démocrate	Mr Hassae Kaba, Rédacteur en Chef		
Ligue Islamique Nationale	El Ibrahima Sory Fadiga, Secrétaire Général El Mohamed Conté, Secrétaire Général Adjoint		
National Democratic Institute, Denis Marantz, Director	Immeuble Al Iman, Appt 34, Conakry BP 601	224411813 cel: 662773 Fax: 224 411812	Ndi-gn@mirinet.net.gn
Organisation Guinéenne pour la Défense des Droits de l'Homme et des Citoyens (OGDH)	Dr Thierno Madiou Sow, Président, B.P. 2476 Conakry	224 463786 cel: 13401120	ogdh@mininet.net.gn
Parti de l'Unité et du Progrès (PUP)	Abdourahmane Sow, Membre du Comité National de la Jeunesse		
Réseau des Femmes du Fleuve Mano pour la Paix	Mme Saran Daraba Kaba, Président BP 1359 Conakry	Tel: 224 422963/ 451867 Cel: 013 403357 Fax: 224 412778	sdaraba@yahoo.com
Réseau des Femmes des Africaines Anciennes Minitres et Parlementaires (REFAMP)	Hadja Makalé Camara- Président, B.P. 153 Conakry	Tel: 45 55 17, 455380	
Union pour Progrès et le Renouveau (UPR)	Mr Siradio Diallo Président du Parti		
WANEB-Guinée	Mr Diakité Sekou, Formateur		
Union des Forces Républicaines (UFR)	Zomaniqui Bakary Koyo, Secrétaire Général		

