

INTR 7032: RESEARCH REPORT

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**TITLE: THE ROLE OF NORMS, CULTURE AND IDENTITY IN SECURITY SECTOR REFORM: THE CASES OF
LIBERIA AND SIERRA LEONE**

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Abstract

The main argument of this paper posits that SSR should be approached as an instructive and learning process, which may present the key to instilling the tools to sustainable peace and good governance in a post conflict environment and particularly in Security Sector Reform (SSR). An analysis of the identity, culture and norms that underpin the societies of Liberia and Sierra Leone has been emphasised as a critical point of departure with which to examine the progress and shortcomings of the SSR processes in these two post-conflict states. Establishing that there needs to be a more interactive communicative process between the external actors' involved in the SSR process has been emphasised while acknowledging the need for the recipients of the reform to resonate with the proposed reforms.

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ABBREVIATIONS

American Colonization Society	ACS
Armed Forces of Liberia	AFL
Armed Forces Revolutionary Council	AFRC
All People's Congress	APC
African Security Sector Network	ASSN
Civil Defence Forces	CDF
Civil Society Organization	CSO
Defence Advisory Team	DAT
Democratic Control of the Armed Forces	DCAF
Disarmament, Demobilization and Re-integration	DDR
Economic Community of West African States	ECOWAS
ECOWAS Monitoring Group	ECOMOG
Enhancing Interaction and Interface between Civil Society and the State to improve poor people's lives	ENCISS
European Union	EU
Foreign and Commonwealth Office	FCO
Global Facilitation Network	GFN
International Financial Institutions	IFI's
International Military Advisory and Training Team	IMATT
International Monetary Fund	IMF
Liberia National Police	LNP
Ministry of Defence	MoD
New Partnership for Africa's Development	NEPAD
National Patriotic Front of Liberia	NPFL
National Power Authority	NPA
National Transitional Government of Liberia	NTGL

Office of Internal Oversight Services	OIOS
Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper	PRSP
Revolutionary United Front	RUF
Sierra Leone People's Party	SLPP
Security Sector Reform	SSR
Senior District Officer	SDO
Structural Adjustment Programmes	SAP's
Truth and Reconciliation Commission	TRC
True Whig Party	TWP
United Nations Development Programme	UNDP
United Mission in Liberia	UNMIL
UN Mission in Sierra Leone	UNAMSIL
Unites States of America	USA

Introduction

The definition of 'Peace-building' conceptualized by former UN Secretary General Boutros Boutros Ghali, sought to entrench the idea that a range of activities can be used in a post-conflict environment, as support structures to strengthen the likelihood of peace and avoid a relapse into conflict.¹ However, this approach is limited due to a focus on the short-term tasks of political negotiations and agreements, signing of a ceasefire, demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants, resettlement of displaced persons, the approval of a new or revised constitution and the holding of elections.² Not negating the importance of these key elements in a post-conflict environment, such a concise effort cannot address the fundamental causes of conflicts, a critical component in creating the conditions for the attainment of stability and peace. The cases under study in this paper are Liberia and Sierra Leone. In both cases addressing the mismanagement of the security sector, which created pronounced cleavages in the broader political economy and was characterised by ethnically motivated division, is considered a critical factor that must be taken into consideration.³

Zartman argues that the causes of the conflicts are devoid of any exclusive causal element, but are rather influenced by the multitude and overlapping Weberian categories of resources, identity and power, as is apparent in all conflicts.⁴ He asserts rightly that in Liberia the conflict from 1989-2007 arose because of ethnic resentment and government greed while in Sierra Leone the rebellion in 1991 grew out of youth alienation from the lack of any future, because of government greed.⁵ Addressing such challenges is the key to unlocking the potential for an environment that is able to consolidate long term peace, stability and good governance. This paper argues that to achieve this it is essential to examine how the causes of each conflict reinforce and significantly affect the Security Sector Reform (SSR) processes in each state.

Such an assessment will be undertaken from a normative perspective, which includes an examination of identity, culture and norms and the influence they play in perpetuating the social processes that led to the conflicts in the first place. The argument presented here, posits that identity, culture and norms are critical in the evaluation of the post-conflict environments of the two case studies. In this context identity refers to the 'distinct sense of self.' The definition of culture that has long provoked debate is taken to mean, in its wide ethnographic sense, that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits

¹ Karbo. T, "Peace-building in Africa," in Francis. D. J, (eds) Peace and Conflict in Africa, Zed Books, London, 2008, p 114.

² Ibid.

³ Ebo. A, 'The challenges and lessons of security sector reform in post-conflict Sierra Leone,' in Conflict, Security and Development, Vol. 6, Issue 4, 2006, p 482.

⁴ Zartman. W.I, 'Greed and Grievance: Methodological and Epistemological Underpinnings of the Debate' in Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism, 2011, p 298.

⁵ Ibid, p 303.

acquired by man as a member of society.⁶ Social norms, the customary rules that govern behavior in groups and societies, social constructs are seen as the endogenous product of individuals' interactions.⁷

It is asserted in this paper that Identity, culture and norms are fundamentally link, particularly in Liberia and Sierra Leone and seen here as capable of influencing each other. This is deemed to be the case and relevant in understanding the undercurrent that permeated the socio-cultural and political landscapes of both west African states. The effect, or lack thereof, that these concepts are thought to have on the post-conflict SSR processes that were subsequently undertaken in the two cases under study, is examined to determine their meaning and manifestation in the periods before, during and after the conflict

The aim is to interrogate if and how these simultaneously rigid and fluid concepts can be cultivated in a local specific context to ensure the creation of a society that is conscious about the importance of peace and stability. This paper argues that the interaction inherent in international interventions that seek to reform post-conflict societies is a critical step in the achievement of this objective. The emphasis here is that for there to be a legitimate, genuine and purposeful reform of post-conflict states and particularly there institutions, material factors as well as normative concerns must be taken into consideration. An understanding of the communicative process that characterises such an interaction between the receivers of the prescriptions in the proposed reforms and the senders of the mechanisms needed to facilitate reform is essential.

Social Constructivism, the International Relations theory which places a premium on the role of ideas and cultural norms in explaining actor's decision-making processes is used in the analysis of the argument presented here. This is because it offers an alternative social theory of international politics, by moving away from the 'materialism' and 'individualism' based in neo-realist advocacy.⁸ The Social Constructivism theory has scantily been applied to assess the practice and outcomes of SSR, as much of the literature approaches post-conflict reform with a focus on the individualism that governs neo-realism. Social Constructivism focuses on the collective learning of ideas and cultural norms and the role this plays in decision making. It is therefore fitting in the analysis of the role of norms, culture and identity in the SSR processes in Liberia and Sierra Leone.

[As] Social Constructivists, in contrast to neo-utilitarian scholars who almost completely focus on the causal force of material interests and power, argue that shared ideas and knowledge are important building blocks of international reality and therefore emphasise the importance of the development of... norms, structures which by definition are 'collective expectations about proper behaviour for a

⁶ Definition is the one formulated in 1871 by Edward Burnett Tylor.
<http://global.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/146289/culture>

⁷ <http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/social-norms/#SocIde>.

⁸ Wendt. A, 'Social Theory of International Politics,' in Review of International Studies, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Vol. 26, No. 1, 1999, p 123.

given identity.' In essence norms constitute a community's shared understandings and intentions...they are 'social facts' that should reflect 'legitimate social purpose.'⁹

SSR may be conceptualized as falling in between the tenets of 'peace-building' and 'peacemaking.' The former referring to a United Nation's mechanism mandated to 'marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery,'¹⁰ and the latter which entails 'diplomatic means to bring hostile parties to agreement.'¹¹ The prospect of undertaking the far-reaching reforms needed to re-build a state and ensure the effective functioning of its parts, depends on a combination of factors being effectively executed. The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Post-Conflict Reconstruction Policy Framework identify these as political and governance issues, socio-economic development, human rights, justice and reconciliation, security and co-ordination, management and resource mobilisation.¹²

This research regards these factors as indicators of successful SSR and they therefore represent the dependent variable in this study. The independent variable in this study is represented by the Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) process effective execution of this phase this paper argues determines the outcome of SSR efforts. Critically, the ability to coordinate external support and engage a variety of actors from different sectors of the society and the recipients of the reform may be a determining factor of success or failure. This is, however, linked to the establishment of a symbiotic relationship between the external actors engaged in imparting institutional reform and a tailored ownership by the internal actors and recipients of the reform project. The emphasis here is that SSR should be responsive to the needs of the individuals, communities and states concerned, in order for the recipients of the reform to resonate with it.

This study argues that there is an increasing need for clarification and conceptualization of what exactly SSR is, and what it means for Liberia and Sierra Leone. This research conceives of SSR as a much broader and more encompassing concept when analysed with the understanding that norms, culture and identity play a determining role in how post-conflict transformation is carried out, and its subsequent outcome. The research asserts that SSR presents an opportunity to compliment the traditional underpinnings intrinsic in peacebuilding and peacemaking. It is argued that this is particularly true if and when it is efficiently implemented and upholds the central notion that reform must be symbiotic, and resonate with its recipients.

Communication and more specifically persuasion is highlighted by Constructivists as a vital mechanism for the construction and reconstruction of social facts, this process by definition is seen

⁹ Payne. R. A, 'Persuasion, Frames and Norms Construction,' in European Journal of international Relations, 7: 37, 2001, p 37 and 38.

¹⁰ The UN in Brief: What the UN does for Peace Peacebuilding,
<http://www.un.org/Overview/uninbrief/peacebuilding.shtml>, 2009.

¹¹ The UN in Brief: What the UN does for Peacemaking,
<http://www.un.org/Overview/uninbrief/peacemaking.shtml>, 2009.

¹² Solomon. H, 'The importance of post-conflict reconstruction in breaking the cycle of return 'return conflict,' in Kotze. D & Solomon. H, The State of Africa: Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development, 2008, p 2.

as an attempt to change actors preferences and to challenge current or create new collective meanings.¹³ This study seeks to investigate to what extent norms, identity and culture matter in the decision making processes of those trying to 'teach' SSR and similarly how the culture, norms and identity of the recipients of the reform influence their ability to 'learn' lessons from the SSR process. It is argued that the ability to impart lessons about SSR depends to a significant extent on the ability of the 'learner' to resonate with the proposed reforms. In essence it is averred that the realisation of the local agency necessary for reform to take place is dependent on the identity, culture and norms of the Liberian and Sierra Leonean post-conflict societies. Here a consideration of what extent persuasion plays a role in the reform process and whether this determines the degree of success or failure of SSR is deemed critical.

Borrowing from research on Implementing and complying with European Union (EU) governance outputs, influenced by sociological institutionalism the concept of 'fit' and 'misfit,' makes a distinction between the different levels of norms embedded in a society.¹⁴ This refers to the degree of compatibility between the norms enshrined in a directive from the EU and especially the higher-level domestic norms which have a decisive influence on whether European norms are incorporated smoothly or met with domestic resistance.¹⁵ Certainly there can be no comparison of the two very different contexts, but the fundamental assessment of an individual, community or state's ability and willingness to absorb or learn a new way of doing things is the same. This is because for a norm to elicit legitimacy it must be said to reflect a social process and reflect genuine social understanding.¹⁶

Persuasion can be described as 'the process by which agent action becomes social structure, ideas become norms and the subjective becomes inter-subjective.'¹⁷ It is therefore deemed necessary to analyse the conditions under which specific ideas are selected and influence policy and how local and international stakeholders produce the inter-subjective understandings that undergird norms.¹⁸ That this is linked to a compatibility of norms embedded in a society is a key component of this research, in the context of SSR in the two West African post conflict states.

Indeed before the conflicts in both countries the security institutions functioned more to threaten than to protect the basic needs of the populations they served.¹⁹ Liberia was never colonised and

¹³ Payne. R. A, Op Cit, p 38.

¹⁴ Trieb, O, 'Implementing and complying with EU governance outputs,' in Living Reviews in European Governance, Vol. 3, No. 5, p 8, 2008, footnote 4.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Payne. R. A, Op Cit, p 39.

¹⁷ Ibid, p 38.

¹⁸ Ibid, p 38.

¹⁹ Ebo. A, 'The challenges and lessons of security sector reform in post-conflict Sierra Leone,' in Conflict, Security and Development, Vol. 6, Issue 4, 2006, p 482.

was founded by ex-American slaves of the American Colonisation Society (ACS), whose 'love of liberty' brought them back to the West African coast in 1822, while Sierra Leone was established by returnee ex-slaves, from Britain and gained independence from the UK in 1961.²⁰ The legacy of authoritarianism, privatisation of violence and the reliance on neo-patrimonial networks that characterised both states, it is argued, were responsible for producing the socio-economic polarization evident in both states. It is these elements of poor governance and socio-economic mismanagement that this research believes to be intrinsically tied to the culture, norms and identity of the actors involved in each country's conflict and subsequently, post-conflict reform process.

The main questions posed by this research include; to what extent are the SSR efforts in post-conflict African states a reflection of socialization and learning processes from the external actor's involved in the initial phases of a country's SSR? And whether these proposed reforms, resonate with the intended recipients? Indeed there is a shortage of literature that analyses the reform of a post-conflict security sector from such a norm based perspective, but this study deems a deeper interrogation of these processes essential to a much fuller understanding of the failures or successes of SSR. The assumption is that SSR should be undertaken in a context that is conducive to learning. It is hoped that the research will be able to shed more light on other relevant aspects of this level of analysis. To what extent this impacts the ability to impart meaningful reform would contribute to the assessment of the importance or lack thereof that identity, norms and culture play in the execution and outcome of SSR initiatives.

The first chapter of this research will introduce the methodology that will be used as a framework in this paper and contextualise the theory of Social Constructivism within the ambit of this research. Chapter two will analyse the origins of SSR as a concept and contextualize the targets in SSR in both Liberia and Sierra Leone. Chapter three examines the historical background in an attempt to uncover alternative causal processes; the way in which identity, culture and norms have emerged in both states will be examined followed by an assessment of colonial experience and identity formation. Chapter four looks at the post-colonial experience and the endemic state malaise that characterised this period while chapter five examines the DDR processes in both cases under study, as the independent variable that this paper argues, determines the success or failure of overall SSR measures. Chapter six examines external actors and the role that persuasion plays in their interaction with the recipient communities of their proposed reforms. Furthermore local agency and how this contributes to sustainable SSR is considered including an analysis of what the prospects for reform in both Liberia and Sierra Leone are. Finally conclusions are drawn.

²⁰ Fayemi. J.K, 'Governing Insecurity in Post-Conflict States: the Case of Sierra Leone and Liberia,' in dcaf.ch, 2004, p 2. Available at: dcaf.ch/content/download/36144/527505/.../bm_ssr_yearbook2004_8.pdf.

Chapter one:

Methodology

Qualitative research for this study was conducted through desktop research and consists of the use of secondary data such as books, articles, journals, official documents and reports from organisations such as the Department for International Development (DFID), The Global Facilitation Network for Security Sector Reform (gfn.ssr) and the United Nations (UN), to name a few. Insights from prominent authors including Ball, Ebo and Fayemi, amongst others will be explored. The research focuses on theory development, which is an inductive backward looking research design. Social Constructivism, explained in more detail below, is used to analyse to what extent the presence or absence of ideas and cultural norms plays a role in the decision making of actors involved in the SSR process. An emphasis is placed on how this manifests into progress, or lack thereof, of reform of the post-conflict states' of Liberia and Sierra Leone. The research will demonstrate the importance of this level of analysis in assessing trends and outcomes of post conflict reform, with specific reference to SSR as conceptualized and contextualized within an African framework.

The cases of Liberia and Sierra Leone are selected based on my ability to make empirical observations. Both countries have had similar experiences with violent conflict and the subsequent experience of post-conflict reform. The research will utilize within-case analysis to establish the causes of success or failure of SSR in each state. Mills' method of difference will be used to eliminate variables that do not impact the variance on the Dependent Variable (DV), and can show impact of the Independent Variable²¹ (IV) which is a successfully implemented and executed DDR programme.

The shortcomings of too many variables and too few cases does not hinder this study as the aim is to develop the theory of Social Constructivism by identifying the causal mechanisms that lead to the success or failure of SSR and to assess how this is reinforced by norms, culture and identity. The pitfall in using Mills' method of difference is noted, particularly the high possibility for 'false positives' and 'false negatives.'²² It is acknowledged that the 'method of elimination,' although useful may prove inherently weak as a method of causal inference, as another case may be discovered at a later stage where the same outcome is observed but is not associated with the variable that survived elimination in the comparison of the two cases.²³ The dilemma in showing causality, in such an instance, is addressed through the use of 'sufficiently comparable cases that provide the functional equivalent of experimental control,'²⁴ this will be done by taking into account other variables that may determine the failure or success of SSR. Therefore the variable or condition

²¹ George. A. L & Bennett. A, Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences, MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2005, p 155.

²² Ibid, p 156.

²³ Ibid, p 155.

²⁴ Ibid, p 156.

that survives elimination can only be regarded as possibly associated with the outcome, and not as either a necessary or sufficient condition for that type of outcome.²⁵

The ability to recognize the variables excluded as neither necessary nor sufficient may still represent an alternative causal mechanism, when analysed in combination with other variables. This is invaluable because in social sciences causation of many phenomena of interest is complex and is seldom associated with a general claim of necessary or sufficient conditions.²⁶ Furthermore the use of process-tracing, over time within each country, is employed to supplement case comparisons to avoid false positives and false negatives.²⁷ This is done through a detailed narrative explaining, for example, historical events that may point to possible causal processes.²⁸

Such an approach it is conceded, may fall prey to the condition of 'equifinality,' which is present in many social phenomena, and reveals that the 'same type of outcome can emerge in different cases via a different set of independent variables.'²⁹ This is a real possibility due to the complex and interdependent nature of SSR processes; however, incorporating such alternative explanations may enhance an understanding of successful or failed SSR processes. Various other variables that may prove to be causal mechanisms, or simply intervening variables and hence contribute to explaining the outcome include but are not limited to: communication between external actor's and the local community, and an inclusive Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) aimed at initiating the mechanisms to address the root causes of the conflict. These factors may represent necessary components to engender trust and re-establish social capital and the active engagement of the local population in the reform process, with a particular emphasis of the centrality of local ownership in the success of SSR.

Hence, this study recognizes the need to discover different causal patterns that may lead to similar outcomes, and this would essentially be used to distinguish what impact this has on the leverage of the Social Constructivist theory. The ultimate aim of such methodology is to make inferences by narrowing or broadening the leverage of the IV(s) identified to be causally relevant. It is important to note that the Social Constructivism theory has scantily been applied to assess the practice and outcomes of SSR, as much of the literature approaches post-conflict reform with a focus on the individualism that governs neo-realism, whereas Social Constructivism focuses on collective learning of ideas and cultural norms and the role this plays in decision making.

This reality has additionally encouraged the need for the Method of Congruence to detect inconsistencies in this proposed theory development. 'Congruity refers to the similarities in the relative strength and duration of hypothesized and observed effects.'³⁰ This is particularly important

²⁵ George. A. L & Bennett. A, Op Cit, p 155.

²⁶ Ibid, p 157.

²⁷ Ibid, p 160.

²⁸ Ibid, p 210.

²⁹ Ibid, p 157.

³⁰ George. A. L & Bennett, Op Cit, p 183.

with regards to the existence and role of different causal patterns in determining the success or failure of SSR processes. This study seeks to take into account why the leverage of the IV(s) might be delayed, stronger or weaker than expected or have a temporal or permanent effect (through expectation effects).³¹ The Method of Congruence looks at the theory's prediction and actual outcome, and addresses the question of whether the independent and dependent variables are congruent. This helps determine if the independent variable and dependent variable 'vary in the expected directions, to the expected magnitude, along the expected dimensions, or whether there is still un-explained variance in one or more dimensions of the dependent variable.'³²

The limitations of this research include the reliance on desktop research, consisting of secondary sources as opposed to field visits which may limit the inferences. This is due to the fact that much of the literature on SSR does not focus on the role of ideas and cultural norms in decision making. The research will include findings from other relevant fields that may provide deeper insights on human behaviour, such as sociology and psychology to help illuminate how ideas and cultural norms influence decision-making, and explore how this can be integrated within SSR.

³¹ George. A. L & Bennett, Op Cit, p 183.

³² Ibid.

Theory

Social Constructivism is the International Relations theory which places a premium on the role of ideas and cultural norms in explaining actor's decision-making processes. It offers an alternative social theory of international politics, by moving away from the 'materialism' and 'individualism' based in neo-realist advocacy.³³ This makes the theory apt to provide the foundational framework for an analysis of how and to what extent ideas and cultural norms influence the decision making processes of actors involved in SSR. The principle proponent of Social Constructivism, Alexander Wendt, argues for an expansion of systemic theorizing to include a concern with processes of identity and interest-formation.³⁴

This research incorporates the Constructivist claim that ideas and cultural norms are essential in the analysis of actors and how they relate to other actors. The research posits that actors identities are acquired and shaped by the collective meaning that constitute the structures which inform our actions.³⁵ Acknowledging that material power and state interest are formed through social interaction and constituted by ideas is key to understanding not only the root causes of conflict in both Liberia and Sierra Leone but also to enhance the understanding how this impacts each country's post-conflict SSR process.³⁶

The core of the problem is that many crucial elements in the causation of social events are perception, only available in the words of the actors themselves, and there is no way, other than expressed evidence, to find proxies for sentiments and perceptions.³⁷ However, it can be deduced that the likely causes of the war, in Liberia were ethnic resentment (grievance) of government discrimination (greed), and in Sierra Leone youth alienation due to the lack of a viable future (grievance) because of government greed.³⁸ This paper argues that this presents or rather should present the framework with which to approach the post-conflict reform efforts, through an analysis of how, if at all identity, culture and norms influenced the greed and grievances that underpinned the conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone. The fundamental intent of SSR should entail a clear conscious awareness of the essential need to overhaul the orientation, values, principles and practices in the security sector, in association with all relevant stakeholders.³⁹

³³ Wendt. A, 'Social Theory of International Politics,' in Review of International Studies, Vol. 26, No. 1, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999, p 123.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Jackson. R and Sorensen. G, Introduction to International Relations: Theories and approaches, Third Edition, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, p 168.

³⁶ Jackson. R and Sorensen. G, Op Cit, p 169.

³⁷ Zartman. W. I, Op Cit, p 302.

³⁸ Ibid, p 303.

³⁹ N'Diaye. B, 'Parliaments and Security Sector Transformation in West Africa,' in Bryden. A and Olonisakin (Eds), Security Sector Transformation In Africa, DCAF, 2010, p 58.

In the African post-conflict context, the role that ownership plays in the success of SSR initiatives has been emphasised in much of the literature, but limited attention has been given to the inter-play between the ideas and cultural norms that affect the thought processes and decision making of external and internal actors in their interaction with each other. This research seeks to enhance such an understanding through insights from Ted Hopf another constructivist who asserts that the question of who are friends and enemies begins at home.⁴⁰

Persuasion and social learning this paper argues is expected to induce to a greater extent the likelihood of changes in attitudes and beliefs. A study of 'Europeanization' which refers to the process and outcome of European integration and the impact this has on the domestic structures of individual European member states is referred to in the explanation of the complex process of institutional change. Risse et al's study is broadly influenced by Historical Institutionalism and reveals the difficulties that may be experienced in the process of institutional change. He uses the example of how adapting to the European level of governance for existing domestic institutions is complicated due to the way in which institutions represent long-standing habits of doing things.⁴¹

Checkel's advancement and theorizing of the mechanisms of persuasion and social interaction shed light on the need to incorporate much more analytic rigour in the study of these modes of interaction. He emphasises the distinction between manipulative and argumentative persuasion. The former is an individualist and a-social form of interaction that focuses on strategic agency and the latter, a process of interaction concerned with changing perceptions about cause and effect without coercion.⁴² It is this kind of persuasion that this study deems necessary to ensure that the SSR process being carried out resonates with its recipients.

⁴⁰ Jackson. R and Sorensen. G, Op Cit, p 172.

⁴¹ Risse, Cowles, Caporaso, 'Europeanization and Domestic Change: Introduction,' in Risse, Cowles, Caporaso (eds) Europeanization and Domestic Change Transforming Europe, Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2001, p 3.

⁴² Checkel. J. T, Why Comply? Social Learning and European Identity Change, in International Organization, The IO Foundation and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2001, p 562.

Chapter two

SSR origins and prospects

The focus of this research is to identify the necessary and sufficient conditions that enabled the initiatives carried out during Liberia and Sierra Leone's SSR processes to be sustainable and successful. Considering the fact that SSR is a very broad term, this research deems it critically important to clearly define exactly what SSR is. Indeed the findings of the research may reveal that in fact SSR may mean something different, for different actors in different contexts. If this is revealed to be the case, the question posed is; how is this related to the norms, culture and identities of the actors involved in the SSR process?

This is perhaps one of major limitations of such an undertaking, because the assessment of post-conflict transformation through the prism of identities, culture and norms, may not induce an all-inclusive understanding of how and if at all SSR is normatively conceptualized. It is averred in the research that questioning traditional assumptions, such as the liberal peace idea, on post-conflict reform and reconstruction is vital to enhancing our understanding of what such processes should entail for all actors concerned. SSR in this research is contextualised within a mutually constitutive perspective, that highlights the identities, culture and norms of the external actors taking part in the reform efforts and particularly so for the local constituents and recipients of the reform.

The underpinnings of international efforts aimed at states that have emerged from conflict, and their subsequent SSR understandably are embedded within a discourse that implies a return to a system of good governance. Such an implication is averred from the plethora of words and phrases coined by international mediators that denote a sequential process, these include but are not limited to: reconstruction, reform, rebuild and revitalize. In certain contexts, for example the European context, this is considered to be appropriate and necessary jargon for a post-conflict environment and the ensuing need to 'rebuild' it.

Indeed, in contexts such as post-war Germany, Japan after the United States bombing and Vietnam reflected few if any persistent impacts of the war and the bombing on the local population or their economic performance. Research shows that the effects included only minimal destruction of capital, and these findings are consistent with the neoclassical growth model that predicts growth in the post-war period.⁴³ However, the neoclassical growth model does not offer any explanation about the impact of war on institutions, politics and social norms. It is indeed likely that the effects of war have more significant and longer lasting effects than physical capital investments impacts.⁴⁴

...wars historically promoted state formation and nation building in Europe, ultimately strengthening institutional capacity and promoting economic development. Yet different types of conflicts could also have varying legacies. For instance, international wars against a common external foe plausibly lead to more positive institutional legacies than civil wars that heighten social divisions. A broader

⁴³ Bellows. J and Miguel. E, 'War and local collective action in Sierra Leone,' in *Journal of Public Economics*, 93, 2009, p 1144.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

definition of institutions might include the social equilibrium reached by individual rational actors, including what some call social capital.⁴⁵

This chapter argues that in the context of Liberia and Sierra Leone such wording is inappropriate and should be considered a misnomer, because in both these states there were never any basic institutions before the wars to uphold good governance. The pressing need for SSR is particularly due to the legacies of authoritarian rule and conflict, and the subsequent decomposition of the state and its security structures.⁴⁶ A lack of formal state structures and institutions prior to the outbreak of war, needed to foment a culture of service and accountability to the 'citizenry' of both cases under study, is evident. This hinders well intentioned efforts for 'reform,' when rather the focus should be placed on creating and building new institutions that are cognisant of both a multi-stakeholder approach in each state and a strong policy and strategic framework. This can best be articulated if SSR takes into consideration the role that identity, culture and norms play in the decisions of actors. Certainly this would require a re-orientation of the interaction between the political authority and the citizenry in both countries.⁴⁷ This should form a fundamental aspect of SSR and its objectives.

SSR is a relatively recent concept, and has its origins in the police transformation that was facilitated by the United Kingdom (UK) government in the early 1990s in Sierra Leone. The police reforms had to be abandoned when a coup was carried out in 1991 by disgruntled soldiers that formed part of the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC) and led to the collapse of the state's governing structures.⁴⁸ SSR was a concept first coined by the Department for International Development (DfID) when in the late 1990s the development organisation and the UK government had to reconstitute the kind of support to give to Sierra Leone in a context where the country was experiencing continued conflict and state collapse.⁴⁹

SSR occurred at a very basic level of state-building and peace-making-cum-building in support of one of the primary markers of sovereignty: the monopoly of the means of violence. Police, broader justice sector development, and security sector reform as a whole were pre dominantly funded by the UK, and, by extension, led by UK policies and thinking at the time.⁵⁰

'All levels of Sierra Leone's SSR process, from concept and policy development to programming had an impact on the country's peacebuilding process and on future international SSR development approaches.'⁵¹ SSR is in essence is a fusion of both 'peace-building' and 'peacemaking.' The former

⁴⁵ Bellows. J and Miguel. E, Op Cit, p 1144.

⁴⁶ Fayemi. J.K, Op Cit, p 2.

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Albrecht. P. A, Transforming Internal Security in Sierra Leone: Sierra Leone Police and Broader Justice Sector Reform, Danish Institute for International Studies (DIIS) REPORT 2010:07, p 14.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ Ibid, pp 11, 12 & 19.

⁵¹ Albrecht. P. A, Op Cit , p 16.

referring to a United Nation's mechanism mandated to 'marshal resources and to advise on and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery,'⁵² and the latter which entails 'diplomatic means to bring hostile parties to agreement.'⁵³

Before the UK's African and Global Conflict Prevention Pools had been established, police reform in Sierra Leone was viewed as a necessary effort to build 'whole-of-government collaboration.'⁵⁴ The decision to rebuild the Sierra Leone Police (SLP) from scratch and to reintroduce basic policing was conceded by Adrian Horn, the Commonwealth Community Safety and Security Project (CCSSP) manager stating that "...there was a need for a complete restructuring of the police service in Sierra Leone. Restructuring necessitates not merely the drawing up of a new organisational structure, to achieve sustainable change, there has to be alteration in the attitudes and behaviour of all police officers, together with a critical shift in the management culture of the organisation."⁵⁵

The fundamental aim of officially establishing SSR as a concept was to incorporate the notions of security with development. The former, it was believed, was necessary to enforce the latter and vice versa. The DfID would after its apparent success in Sierra Leone, opt to disengage in defence and intelligence matters or matters relating to national security, owing to their rootedness in state sovereignty, and the fact that they are not seen as the 'core' business of UK international development programmes.⁵⁶

The fact that DfID today is talking about 'security and justice' rather than 'security sector reform' is an indication of its continued uneasiness with involvement in national security/sovereignty issues. This uneasiness notwithstanding, DfID is now conducting defence related programming in Sudan.⁵⁷

In Sierra Leone the true value of reform may only partially be realised owing to the necessary haste that was applied to the SSR process in Sierra Leone, a laudable attempt at stabilisation in un-charted waters. This haste in implementation of SSR initiatives in Sierra Leone may be attributed to the time factor that precluded a consideration of the need to link, not only security to development, but also to be cognisant of the underlying and mutually constitutive social formations of identity, culture and norms. It is important to note that despite being a wholly funded UK initiative, staff members from several Commonwealth countries helped produce a comprehensive needs assessment in advance of SSR implementation and conducted close collaboration with Sierra Leone security agencies, particularly the SLP.⁵⁸

⁵² The UN in Brief: What the UN does for Peace Peacebuilding, 2009, <http://www.un.org/Overview/uninbrief/peacebuilding.shtml>. Accessed 14/05/2012.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Albrecht. P. A, Op Cit, p 17. See appendix.

⁵⁵ Ibid, p 21.

⁵⁶ Albrecht. P. A, Op Cit, p 21.

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Ibid.

When SSR was introduced in Sierra Leone neither the international donors nor the officials from Sierra Leone had initially agreed on what SSR would and should entail, SSR as a concept evolved significantly from a process of trial and error. Initially definitions only highlighted defence and security management, there was no clarity on whether other institutions would also be included in the reforms, the police and the judiciary were not included in the early definition.⁵⁹

It was not until 2003, when Sierra Leone began the two-year process of producing a Security Sector Review, that definitions of the security sector would include institutions beyond the military and the police. Nonetheless, from the very outset of Sierra Leone's SSR process in the late 1990s, support to Sierra Leone was comprehensive – and unique. UK Assistance was tri-departmental, with funding coming from the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), DfID and Ministry of Defence (MoD).⁶⁰

In Liberia the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) was mandated to undertake most security sector related reforms. The UNMIL was established by Security Council Resolution 1509 of 19 September 2003 to support the implementation of the ceasefire agreement and the peace process; protect United Nations staff, facilities and civilians; support humanitarian and human rights activities; as well as assist in national security reform.⁶¹ UNMIL's efforts were to be focused on reforming and restructuring the Liberia National Police not the armed forces, this decision indicated a misfit of the missions' intentions and capacity with the demands of the security dynamics of the Liberian post-conflict environment.⁶² The responsibility to reform of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) was transferred to the US after they showed interest in taking undertaking the reforms and because the UN Charter precludes UN peace operations from undertaking reform of national armed forces.⁶³ In Liberia a key component of the 2003 Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) the basis upon which peace could begin to be built was the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) which was aimed at providing the catharsis for healing and reconciliation.⁶⁴ The recommendation by the TRC not to prosecute prominent and powerful members of Liberian society was criticised as a way to destabilise the fragile peace in the country at the time.⁶⁵ The failure of the TRC to lead to

⁵⁹ Albrecht. P. A, Op Cit, p 16.

⁶⁰ Ibid.

⁶¹ <http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unmil/>. The challenges experienced regarding implementation of the CPA are reflective of the lack of institutions capable of facilitating the processes required for sustainable peace and economic growth. The task of building such institutions is proving to be incredibly challenging, and whether or not some of the initiatives undertaken will be successful still remains to be seen.

⁶² Aboagye. F. B and Rupiya. M. R, 'Enhancing post-Conflict Democratic Governance through effective Security Sector Reform in Liberia,' Chapter Eleven, www.iss.org.za/uploads/TORTUOUSCHAP11.PDF, p 260

⁶³ Ibid, p 264.

⁶⁴ Gberie. L, 'Liberia: The 2010 election and building peace in the fragile state,' *Situation Report*, ISS: Pretoria, 5 October 2010, p 5.

⁶⁵ Ibid, p 6.

catharsis for civilians is likely to create the perception amongst civilians that the root causes of the war have not been addressed.

A significant development was the revelation that the 'US would outsource the restructuring, recruitment and retraining of the new AFL to DynCorp International a PMC as an implementing partner.⁶⁶ The emphasis in this paper that SSR should be responsive to the needs of the individuals, communities and states concerned is considered an essential component to ensure that the reforms being imparted can resonate with the recipients of the reform. However, in Liberia the involvement of PMSCs in the country's SSR process, it is argued, prove a hindrance in building the interactive social and communicative process that this paper deems critical for SSR. This is due to the confidentiality that governs PMSCs contracts, which thwarts the cultivation of local agency in Liberia. However the role of UNMIL has played and continues to play a more defining role in Liberia's post-conflict security and reform efforts, this is aided by the transparency evident in UNMIL operations, as opposed to those of PMSCs.

Liberia's SSR process, progressed in a distinct fashion to that in Sierra Leone, mainly because the process was carried out primarily by the UNMIL. The reforms were aimed at; disarming and demobilizing combatants to the on-going efforts to articulate a national security strategy and (re)build key security institutions, including the Liberia National Police (LNP), the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization and the Armed Forces of Liberia.⁶⁷ Until today, however, public trust in these institutions continues to be weak, for example it has been noted that the unprofessional conduct of some members of the LNP has undermined public trust in the service, while there are concerns about the disproportionate use of force against civilians when the police respond to public disorder.⁶⁸

The anticipated drawdown of UNMIL peacekeepers requires that Liberian security forces be equipped to maintain law and order, owing to the limited achievements to facilitate this transition, a Special report of the Secretary-General on the UNMIL recommends that due to the fragility of the prevailing peace, UNMIL reconfiguration and gradual drawdown should match the building of national capacity.⁶⁹ An assessment mission was led by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and comprised participants from, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Bank and UNMIL.⁷⁰ The assessment mission conducted a thorough threat assessment and examined the Government's capacity to respond to threats in its

⁶⁶ Aboagye. F. B and Rupiya. M. R, Op Cit, p 264.

⁶⁷ Peacebuilding Commission Statement of mutual commitments on peacebuilding in Liberia, Fourth session, Liberia configuration, 7, 29 October 2010.

⁶⁸ UN Security Council Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Liberia, 16 April 2012, p 9.

⁶⁹ Ibid, p 12.

⁷⁰ Ibid, p 13.

recommendations for the next stage of the Mission's military drawdown. The findings concluded that

on the basis of current and projected threats, none of which are of a military nature, that four infantry battalions and related enablers, comprising approximately 4,200 troops, could be repatriated in three phases between August 2012 and July 2015, leaving the Mission's military strength at approximately 3,750 troops, including battalions from ECOWAS countries and appropriate enablers.⁷¹

A key hindrance to this process is that UNMIL peacekeepers have come to represent a critical support system for the security sector in Liberia. However, without an effective social interactive process to capacitate Liberians to manage their own affairs, nor a concrete exit strategy and timeline, UNMIL efforts will have only spurred a national sense of dependency on foreign assistance. Advancing the rule of law in Liberia is fundamental to the country's peace consolidation efforts, but the likelihood of this is precarious at best, if the country continues to be confined to rigid and destructive identity and class structures. This is factor which will be elaborated on further in the paper, and is highlighted in the 2010 United Nations Peacebuilding Commission Statement of mutual commitments on peacebuilding in Liberia, which states;

Historically, parallel political, social and legal systems reflected the polarization of Liberians into settler and indigenous populations, creating conditions ripe for conflict and the means to perpetuate it. The current lack of capacity has resulted in concerns that the justice system does not provide an impartial service to all Liberians.⁷²

This study of the practice and outcome of SSR in Liberia and Sierra Leone seeks to examine whether adapting domestic institutions to proposed reforms is helped or hindered by the identity, culture and norms of societies in each state. This research believes that this process requires that there be a certain level of compatibility between the domestic institutions in Liberia and Sierra Leone and the proposed international standards intrinsic in the reform of a security sector emerging from a conflict.

This paper argues that for this to be realised it is imperative to establish a symbiotic relationship between the external actors engaged in imparting institutional reform and a tailored ownership by the internal actors and recipients of the reform project. The external actors are represented by the DfID, and the UK government in Sierra Leone and in Liberia the UNMIL and the Private Security Companies (PSC's) contracted by the US government to undertake SSR in that country. While internal actors are comprised of all members of Liberian and Sierra Leone society, ranging from the heads of state, parliamentarians, members of the each state's national military and police services and other corresponding state security related institutions, civil servants, teachers, chiefs, local community leaders and the citizens of each state.

⁷¹ UN Security Council Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Liberia, 16 April 2012, p 13.

⁷² Peacebuilding Commission Statement of mutual commitments on peacebuilding in Liberia, Fourth session, Liberia configuration, 7, 29 October 2010.

SSR in Liberia and Sierra Leone

In Liberia, pursuant to Article VIII of the country's Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) the UNMIL was mandated by the UN Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1509 to restructure the security sector, particularly the police and to consolidate its legal framework, this was to be combined with reform of judicial and correctional institutions.⁷³ In pursuance of its mandate UNMIL established the Human Rights and Protection Unit, comprising child protection, rule of law, transitional justice, and gender and trafficking advisors for advocacy on human rights.⁷⁴ The LNP academy was refurbished through bilateral US assistance while UNMIL and the National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL) undertook measures to ensure the vetting, training, recruitment and deployment of old and new LNP personnel.⁷⁵ The reform of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) including; restructuring, recruitment and retraining, was expected to be carried out by DynCorp International a private military company (PMC) contracted by the US government on a budget of US\$ 35 million.⁷⁶

There continues to be deficiencies facing the police including shortcomings in mentoring by UNMIL police advisers due to a shortage of specialist trainers and a funding gap to allow all security agencies to develop their infrastructure in the counties and districts and to provide sufficient equipment, transport and communications.⁷⁷ Despite the efforts of the UN Civilian Police (CIVPOL) inadequate correctional facilities continue to impede progress in the area of justice delivery.⁷⁸

In Sierra Leone the post-conflict government has advocated for a strong security apparatus to avoid a relapse into conflict. The SSR process has included attempts at restructuring the armed forces, DDR, police reform, parliamentary oversight, justice sector reform and the implementation of intelligence and national policy coordination.⁷⁹ A significant amount of DfID funds and expertise have concentrated on military training and assistance, funded jointly by the Sierra Leone government and the DfID (£ 1.9 million from the British government).⁸⁰ Measures have been taken to ensure that the material needs of the Republic of Sierra Leone Armed Forces (RSLAF) are addressed, these include;

⁷³ Aboagye. F. B and Rupiya. M. R, Op Cit, p 257.

⁷⁴ Ibid.

⁷⁵ Ibid, p 262.

⁷⁶ Ibid, p 263.

⁷⁷ UN Security Council Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Liberia, 16 April 2012, p 10.

⁷⁸ Aboagye. F. B and Rupiya. M. R, Op Cit, p 263.

⁷⁹ Gbla. O, 'Security Sector Reform under International Tutelage in Sierra Leone,' in International Peacekeeping, 13:1, 2006, p 82.

⁸⁰ Gbla. O, Op Cit , p 84.

improving the living and working conditions of the members of the RSLAF, optimizing the deployment conditions of units, refurbishment of existing barracks and building new ones.⁸¹

The Sierra Leone government played a primary role in the restructuring of the SLP. An emphasis was placed on a local needs policing paradigm aimed at enhancing the relationship between the people and the police, professionalism, human rights and building an accountable police service were also prioritized.⁸² Weaknesses in the strengthening of the judiciary, parliament and prisons have been observed, however, absence of a return to violence and increased transparency and accountability reflects the effectiveness of the renewed security institutions. The following seeks to illustrate the difficulty to and the potential for change in the efforts to (re)construct the societies of Liberia and Sierra Leone, state's shattered by their similar experiences of poor governance, war , post-conflict SSR and the ensuing challenges for local agency.

⁸¹ Gbla. O, Op Cit, p 84.

⁸² Ibid, p 86.

Chapter three

Historical background: The role of Identity, culture and norms

The post-conflict quandary permeates each post conflict setting irrespective of race, religion or creed. The aftermath of conflict creates conditions that offer the opportunity to conceive a new way to order society. Ideally that is the aim of post conflict reconstruction efforts and SSR. Fayemi asserts that legacies of violent conflict and the psyche of militarism etched in the ethos, values and actions of ordinary people can be eradicated.⁸³ The possibility of order, governance, security and statehood that lay in the wake of the conflicts in Liberia and Sierra Leone, were seemingly precluded principally because of the militarism of the psyche that existed in both states.

This research incorporates the Constructivist claim that identities, culture and norms are essential in the analysis of actors and how they relate to other actors. Indeed actors' identities are acquired and shaped by the collective meanings that constitute the structures which inform our actions.⁸⁴ Acknowledging that material power and state interest are formed through social interaction and constituted by ideas is key to understanding not only the root causes of conflict in both Liberia and Sierra Leone but also to enhance the understanding of how this impacts each country's post-conflict security sector reform process.⁸⁵

Neo-patrimonialism was exercised by successive rulers in both states. In Liberia it was a central feature of each successive administration. since the era of William Tubman that begun in 1944 up until Charles Taylor wrested power from Samuel Doe, in the beginning of the country's intermittent civil war, in 1989 until the official end of the war in 2003. In Sierra Leone similar rent-seeking practices were practiced by leaders of the different administrations, starting from the colonial era and carried on immediately after independence by Milton Margai between 1961-1971, only to be further institutionalised during Siaka Steven's administration from 1971-1985. Paramount chiefs in Sierra Leone, as will be discussed in further detail later in the paper, held (and continue to hold) a special 'middle-man' position that directly contributed to the strengthening of neo-patrimonialism in that country.

The survival of each regime was dependent on each leaders' clientelistic commitments and his ability to use pre-emptive strikes and brutal force on real and perceived enemies, while maintaining strategic alliances to define supporters.⁸⁶ Civil and human rights were a necessary sacrifice and the key factor to ensuring self-enrichment, particularly after the mid-1980s neo-liberal economic policies that were accompanied with strict conditionalities for aid.⁸⁷ The 1979 rice riots in Liberia, in protest

⁸³ Fayemi. J.K, Op Cit, p 16.

⁸⁴ Jackson. R and Sorensen. G, Op Cit, p 168.

⁸⁵ Ibid.

⁸⁶ Bøås. M, 'Liberia and Sierra Leone: Dead Ringers? The Logic of Neopatrimonial Rule,' in *THIRD World Quarterly*, 22(5), 2001.

⁸⁷ Reno, W, 'War, Markets and the Reconfiguration of West Africa's Weak States,' in *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 29, No. 4, 1997, p 494.

of the price increase of the staple food was testament to the lack of conventional state concerns,⁸⁸ which were essentially overlooked in the quest to establish a system of resource distribution based on abstract connotations of identity and belonging, constructed in favour of inequitable resource distribution. This trend emanates from the historical dependency on patrimonial rule that has been used to marginalise some groups while giving unwarranted privilege to others in each state.

Bøås' lucid interpretation of the consequences of neo-patrimonialism, are worth mentioning, especially with regards to understanding the root causes of conflict and the potential avenues for reform in both Liberia and Sierra Leone.⁸⁹ He notes that although neo-patrimonial states are only a mask of a real state, they do succeed in extracting and redistributing resources. However, detrimentally this is a process that is committed to diverting public goods and resources into the private domain.⁹⁰ The result is that

1. Power, instead of having the impersonal and abstract character of legal- rational domination, specific to the modern state, becomes personal power.
2. Politics becomes a kind of business, because it is political resources, which gives access to economic resources. Politics is reduced to economics.⁹¹

It is impossible to understand the post conflict states of Liberia and Sierra Leone without taking into account the power dynamics inherent in each state's formation. It is worth mentioning that the practice and execution of power in Sierra Leone, as was the case in most other post-colonial African states was characterised by an emulation of the colonial state. While Liberia's oligarchs were perhaps, emulating their slave masters, the basic feature of their rule appearing to be slavery in reverse.⁹² Nevertheless the approach to state security was the same, one exogenous to the wants and needs of the citizens of each state.

Reasons for emulation and assimilation can be said to have been somewhat impulsive and paradoxical, because the colonial state was the antithesis of a state, its principle objective was 'domination and hegemony over subject populations.'⁹³ The colonial state institutionalized its military character and found it imperative to create a mythology of irresistible power in order to substantiate its hegemony and concurrently extract from peasant economies the fiscal resources to pay for the conquest of their societies and its administration.⁹⁴

⁸⁸ Kieh. Jr. G.K, 'The Human Development Crisis in Liberia,' in *Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa*, Vol 9. No. 1, 2007, p 80-81.

⁸⁹ Bøås. M, Op Cit.

⁹⁰ Bøås. M, Op Cit, p 700.

⁹¹ Ibid, p 701.

⁹² Aboagye. F. B and Rupiya. M. R, Op Cit, p 250.

⁹³ Crawford Young, 'Patterns of Social Conflict: State, Class and Ethnicity,' in *Daedalus*, 111(2), 1982, p 75.

⁹⁴ Ibid.

An interrogation of the wars in these countries requires an inquest into the role of the state in reinforcing and constructing the structures of class and ethnicity.⁹⁵ The transformations within each of these spheres and the interplay between them have an influential role in the way in which the stage for violent conflict emerged and the brutality that characterised it. Throughout the African continent such permutations have been pronounced throughout political independence, but the history of Liberia and Sierra Leone are distinct from other states in the continent owing to the way in which these societies as 'modern states' were constructed. It can be argued here that the absence of a foundational ideology upon which both Liberia and Sierra Leone came about and the prominence of exogenous forces in the creation of both these states' are pivotal. Certainly, it is these characteristics present in the formation of both states' that presented the fundamental pillar upon which statehood rested, and would later provide the impetus for war to flourish.

Critically the state exists on a theoretical level and this is followed by an expression of a particular ideology. Indeed state ideology finds formal expressions in constitutions and jurisprudence, through which its structures are specified and its commands congealed into a code of prescriptions.⁹⁶ Underlying these manifestations of public doctrine are the philosophical assumptions upon which the supremacy of the state rests and according to which its legitimacy is asserted.⁹⁷ Needless to say, the formation of both states under study were not reflective of any process that seeks to consolidate the population of a territory under the collective of a nation inclusive of all the real and imagined notions of belonging that come along with it.

Liberia was created by the return of repatriated slaves as part of efforts by the American Colonization Society (ACS) between 1822 and 1861.⁹⁸ The existence of 16 major indigenous groups of people, each with its own traditions, customs, religions, philosophy and dialects and laws were relegated and marginalised by the repatriated slaves that established a republic in 1847 and a constitution patterned on that of the United States of America (USA).⁹⁹ The constitution asserted the freedom, independence and inalienable rights of all men but was adamant to ensure that the rights of the indigenous groups were kept at a minimum, and that the native tribes were not eligible for election or voting.¹⁰⁰ This strategy was the key to entrenching economic and political control of the new state.

Inequality was essentially legalised by the constitution and the seeds of hatred were sown. Political domination was further consolidated by the formation in 1870 of the True Whig Party (TWP) composed of a small percentage (3% - 5%) of the population made up of the repatriated slaves.¹⁰¹

⁹⁵ Crawford Young, *Op Cit*, p 72.

⁹⁶ *Ibid*, p 73

⁹⁷ *Ibid*.

⁹⁸ Bøås. M, *Op Cit*, p 702.

⁹⁹ *Ibid*.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibid*.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid*.

Liberia had become a one-party state ruled by repatriated slaves with little education and no governing experience and this was compounded by the political and social stratification between the 'civilised' self, and the 'savage' native other.¹⁰² The unequal and repressive governance structure that the repatriates imposed on the indigenous Liberians reflected a shadow of their former selves, as they became empowered by dis-enfranchising others and putting down revolts from the indigenous population with ferocious brutality.¹⁰³ In 1877 the settler elite of Liberian society established the Liberian Frontier Force (LFF) to protect them against any potential challenge; the force patrolled the territory's border to prevent British and French expansion, collected taxes, recruited labour and established political control over the indigenous ethnic groups.¹⁰⁴ The origins of Liberia's security force the LFF engendered unrest through its tactics and gained a reputation of brutality, corruption and indiscipline, the LFF formed the foundations for the AFL that was established in 1962.¹⁰⁵

Sierra Leone was composed of similarly brutish control, particularly because of the context within which the state emerged and was constructed. The adventures of an English botanist between 1771 and 1774 led him to the Caulkers, an Afro-European family based in the Banana islands who were the descendants of an English trader and the daughter of an African chief.¹⁰⁶ His stay with them culminated in his idea to form a similar settlement, where black and white people could live together equally and subsist on a plantation culture based on free labour and the principles of democratic liberalism.¹⁰⁷ In May 1787 an expedition arrived in Sierra Leone, the site demarcated by philanthropists that supported this cause, accompanied by 411 colonists made up of the Black Poor, a group of free marginalized Africans living in London, and a group of white people. A month after their arrival, their settlement was burnt down by a Temne chief in response to the earlier burning of his town by a British warship.¹⁰⁸

The same British group formed a new association known as the Sierra Leone Company, whose aim was to garner support from the British government to form a more organized colony and re-settle a group of black people living on Nova Scotia.¹⁰⁹ In January 1792 1200 blacks were transported from Nova Scotia to Sierra Leone and established a settlement called Freetown.¹¹⁰ Unlike the first group of

¹⁰² Bøås. M, Op Cit, p 702.

¹⁰³ Ibid.

¹⁰⁴ Aboagye. F. B and Rupiya. M. R, 'Enhancing post-Conflict Democratic Governance through effective Security Sector Reform in Liberia,' Chapter Eleven, www.iss.org.za/uploads/TORTUOUSCHAP11.PDF, p 258.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, p 258 and 259.

¹⁰⁶ Bøås. M, Op Cit, p 705.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.

¹⁰⁸ Ibid.

¹⁰⁹ Ibid.

¹¹⁰ Ibid.

settlers the 'Nova Scotians' aspired to own land and have political influence, but this was restricted by the British government, who eventually assumed control of the settlement in 1808 and turned it into a Crown Colony, due to the rebellion, war and financial ruin that characterised the territory.¹¹¹

The formation of a Creole community in Sierra Leone had begun with the advent of British colonial rule, through interactions between the original black group of settlers and Africans rescued from slave ships and the Europeans who came to administer and trade in Sierra Leone.¹¹² The Creoles built up Freetown and became prominent members of society. They had established a social identity of their own, and would prove to be a formidable group in society, especially as economic and political competition between the Temne and the Mende progressed.¹¹³ The hinterland of Sierra Leone is made up of two prominent indigenous groups, the Temne in the north and the Mende in the south of the country, each group has a strong unifying agency, the former due to a belief in a common ancestor and the latter through their male secret society- the Poro.¹¹⁴

¹¹¹ Bøås. M, Op Cit.

¹¹² Ibid.

¹¹³ Ibid, pp 705-706.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, p 706.

The colonial experience and identity formation

Class structure in Africa, as well as ethnic categories are reinforced and made manifest through the state as both these social constructs are incorporated into the public doctrine of each state and their values are defined by the agents of the dominant groups of each society.¹¹⁵ Notions of the nation state are captured by the definition of the self, and embodied by the dominant group in society, citizenry and the rights entitled therein, are typically reserved for this dominant group. Noteworthy is the fluidity of the self-versus-other relationship, and the concomitant multi-layered and interpenetrating identities that govern cultural pluralism.¹¹⁶

For any individual, the 'other' is a set of collective representations that are perceived as having some objective existence. The 'we' however, is an intensely subjective category, and is likely to be accompanied by affective attachments. The groups are not defined by innate, permanent cultural characteristics...the set of customs associated with a particular group may change appreciably over time, while the identity of the group persists...Consciousness, however, is what [fundamentally] defines ethnos. Common cultural traits and linguistic similarity provide the potential for subjective affinity, but the ethnic group only becomes an actuality when its members grasp the meaning of 'we-ness.'¹¹⁷

The process of establishing identities in both Liberia and Sierra Leone were in effect imputed from without rather than from within, as was the case in most other African state formations, as years of colonial assimilation succeeded in highlighting an aggravated ontological uncertainty that was a key off-shoot of colonial practice. This is in reference to the way colonial administration re-ordered patterns of social stratification and ethnicity and through the Imperial quest for control and revenue all Africans were precluded from means of acquiring wealth.¹¹⁸ New identities were emerging as classification for the purposes of colonial administration was undertaken.

The construction of new boundaries particularly in the administration of the rural communities was linked with the use of intermediaries with 'presumed knowledge over who had authority over whom, with a frequent presumption that political affiliation and ethnic affinity were identical.'¹¹⁹ The urge for classification was most pronounced in the British, informed by their experience in India where distinctions in communities, language and religion proved expensive for their system of governance.¹²⁰ The problem was that this classification process sought to apply an alien logic to the overlapping and complex cultural affinities of African communities. This was further compounded by the crystallization of stereotypes attributed to each particular group.¹²¹ Stereotypes included

¹¹⁵ Crawford Young, Op Cit, p 73.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, p 73-74.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, p 74.

¹¹⁸ Ibid, p 77.

¹¹⁹ Crawford Young, Op Cit, p 79.

¹²⁰ Ibid.

¹²¹ Crawford Young, Op Cit, p 79.

‘industrious or lazy; receptive or antipathetic to the imported culture of the colonizer; faithful allies or rebellious adversaries to colonial authority.’¹²² These stereotypes obtained a life of their own, and became assimilated into the particular groups’ self-image, in extreme cases the British actually created new categories of identity, for instance, certain ethnonyms¹²³ in East Africa would not have been encountered in that region a century ago.¹²⁴

Following the logic of establishing local boundaries, the colonial state created a pattern of unequal distribution of resources, such as the location of a town or the route that a railway or road followed, according to a particular group’s elites who acquiesced to colonial norms, culture and identity.¹²⁵ As a result, ethnic self-consciousness was on the rise, particularly amongst those groups who realized that they were classified as being ‘primitive.’ Some of these groups, following such a classification, began to mobilise themselves ‘socially and politically to claim their share of the ‘national cake.’”¹²⁶ The role that the colonial state has had on the structure of the post-colonial state is therefore worth considering in establishing a fuller understanding of the construction and deconstruction of identities, cultures and norms. How this has explicitly influenced the understanding of power, domination and security in the post-conflict states of Liberia and Sierra Leone is particularly useful in this investigation of the contemporary efforts aimed at reforming the security sectors of both states.’

Indeed in the African post-conflict context, the role that ownership plays in the success of SSR initiatives has been emphasised in much of the literature, but limited attention has been given to the inter-play between the ideas and cultural norms that affect the thought processes and decision making of external and internal actors in their interaction with each other. This research seeks to enhance such an understanding by using insights from Ted Hopf, a constructivist who asserts that the question of who are friends and enemies begins at home.¹²⁷ World politics, he states, has subcultures that can only be understood by examining how states constitute themselves in their societies, and states’ identities and interests are produced not only through interactions with other states but in interactions with its own society.¹²⁸ Furthermore, Hopf’s emphasis on state identity being expressed through its key decision makers presents an appropriate conduit through which to analyse how the security sectors in Liberia and Sierra Leone were unresponsive to their citizens needs and how this has impacted the practice and outcomes of SSR. The conflicts in both states

¹²² Crawford Young, Op Cit, p 79.

¹²³ The proper name by which a people or ethnic group is called or known.

¹²⁴ Ibid.

¹²⁵ Crawford Young, Op Cit, p 80.

¹²⁶ Ibid.

¹²⁷ Jackson. R and Sorensen. G, ‘Social Constructivism’ in Introduction to International Relations: Theories and approaches, Third Edition, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, p 172.

¹²⁸ Jackson. R and Sorensen. G, Op Cit, p 172.

were characterized by the authoritarianism and militarisation of their security sectors, and were further compounded by the spill-over of conflict in the region.¹²⁹

Dunn notes how political identities and issues of belonging can be thrown into flux, through political liberalisation, as key questions emerge such as: who can vote? Where can they vote? And who can stand as a candidate?¹³⁰ These questions were prevalent from the onset in 19th century Liberia and culminated in the marginalization of all indigenous groups of that country. Moreover this form of (mis)governance underpinned by the need to monopolize power for economic and political purposes led to the entrenchment of neo-patrimonial networks that were employed to redefine citizenship, exclude 'non-citizens' and thus codify political identity.¹³¹

Hence the pervasiveness of neo-patrimonial networks in post-colonial Africa play a significant role in the formation of the nation-state, because of the construction and de-construction of identities based on class and ethnicity during the colonial period. In Sierra Leone colonial administration was formally adopted in 1896 when the British declared a Protectorate over the territory, indirect rule had been a central feature of the colonial state through the use of paramount chiefs.¹³² The emergence of democratic principles, ushered in the wake of independence for Sierra Leone, were simply an unsustainable mechanism for self-governance, a notion which had previously been distorted in favour of chiefdoms and played a key role in establishing the structure of neo-patrimonial networks in that country.

The challenges emanating from the use of chiefdoms for indirect rule by the British in Sierra Leone, the subsequent manifestation of neo-patrimonial networks and how this affects the country's SSR process will be discussed in more detail below. In Liberia, the formation of a nation state was precluded by the Americo-Liberian oligarchs that were the founding and dominant members of the Liberian state and also engaged in neo-patrimonial practices in efforts to maintain the status quo in their favour. This paper will demonstrate how in Liberia and Sierra Leone the history of predation by state institutions on citizens has implications for the country's SSR process. To what extent the SSR outcomes in both Liberia and Sierra Leone are congruent with each state's process of social identity formation and learned cultures and norms forms the one of this paper's central arguments.

¹²⁹ Fayemi. J.K, Op Cit, p 2.

¹³⁰ Dunn. K, 'Sons of the Soil and Contemporary State Making: Autochtony, Uncertainty and Political Violence in Africa,' in Third World Quarterly, 30(1),2009, p 117.

¹³¹ Ibid.

¹³² Bøås . M, Op Cit, p 706.

Chapter four

The post-colonial experience and endemic state malaise

In both Liberia and Sierra Leone, different rulers, before and during the war were interested in self-preservation and '...developed alternative and rational forms of political organization and political survival suited to Africa's marginal position in the changing global political economy.'¹³³ Reno highlights how in both states, the juncture between shifting priorities after the end of the Cold War and the introduction of strict conditionalities from European aid donors in the 1980s led to the destruction of bureaucracies in favour of self-aggrandizement as successive leaders blatantly discarded conventional state concerns.¹³⁴ If in the past there was a tendency to look outwards to establish various machinations of power and wealth, the emphasis for SSR is that to move forward and achieve peace, stability and development, there must be a keen awareness to embolden state structures from looking within.

The following seeks to show how the prevailing identity, culture and norms of Liberian and Sierra Leonean societies, due to poor state and governance structures have affected the cultivation of local agency needed to spearhead genuine and legitimate reforms in the post-conflict environment. In some instances there have been strides made in the achievement of certain benchmarks defined by external actors, while in other instances the local agency needed to restore credibility to public institutions is found to be wanting. Alternative variables have been uncovered in the research to explain the variance in the expected outcomes.

In Liberia, under the Tubman and Tolbert administrations, peripheral capitalist formation took place under a social class instrumental in the political and bureaucratic apparatus of the public sector, the dynamics of which were shaped by power relations, rather than production.¹³⁵ Essentially, belonging to the Americo-Liberia elite made up of repatriated slaves was the basis upon which unlimited access to political and economic power was determined, not through genuine ownership of the means of production. As Crawford Young notes the state bourgeoisie was a group whose existence depended on their ability to remain within the established political authority, as opposed to being rooted in control of property, wealth or productive facilities.¹³⁶

The Liberian state overtly created the conditions for future war by fomenting a privileged position for the settler Americo-Liberians and marginalizing the indigenous groups of that country. As noted

Politics within the settler oligarchy was extremely corrupt, and incumbent presidents used every resource available to stay in power. The motive behind the fraud and bending of the rules was to secure one's position-because Liberia's financial affairs were conducted in similar way: there was a

¹³³ Reno, W, 'War, Markets and the Reconfiguration of West Africa's Weak States,' in Comparative Politics, Vol. 29, No. 4, 1997, p 493.

¹³⁴ Ibid, p 494.

¹³⁵ Crawford Young, Op Cit, p 81.

¹³⁶ Ibid, p 82.

budget, but it was never adhered to because there was no system of accountability for public funds.¹³⁷

Other newly independent states in Africa, undertook measures to build the nation, for example under Houphouët-Boigny the Ivory Coast was termed an 'African miracle' by international observers due to the system of ethnic quotas' aimed at establishing a balance between different regions and ethnic groups within state institutions.¹³⁸ Promoting the idea of a nation was meant to transcend the collective belonging and attachment of the different ethnic groups and form a new forum for solidarity.¹³⁹ In Liberia the stranglehold on power was evidently flagrant. The lack of accountability amongst Americo-Liberian settlers was entrenched through the grip on economic and political power by institutionalising themselves as the dominant group they were able to control the indigenous 'other.'

Patron-client alliances were made with 'lieutenants, clients and henchmen,' and a stigma of productive labour was attached to the 'other,' which constituted the prime distinction between those that could avoid labour and those that could not.¹⁴⁰ The Americo-Liberians, owing to their inhibited capacities during slavery, and considering their newly found freedom and power, were less interested in sustenance and comfort but rather venerated patterns of ornate and opulent consumption that enhanced their status, or the perception of it.¹⁴¹ It is with this same 'rationale' of accumulation and monopoly of power that William Tubman ascended to the Presidency in 1944.¹⁴² His cult of personality permeated Liberian public life and through a strategy of engaging in clientelistic commitments and using brutal force on real and perceived enemies, he managed to ensure the survival of his regime.

William Tolbert succeeded Tubman, after the latter's death in July 1971, his term in power was characterised by corruption and the continued misappropriation of public funds for his private benefit, even while publicly affirming improved management through an anti-corruption commission.¹⁴³ His tenure was short-lived mainly due to his lack of foresight with regards to his regimes dependence on patron-client networks for its survival.¹⁴⁴ It was under his tenure that emergency power was enforced to imprison leaders of the opposition that challenged him and put

¹³⁷ Bøås . M, Op Citp 703.

¹³⁸ Langer. A, 'Horizontal Inequalities and Violent Conflict, Côte d'Ivoire Country Paper', in Human Development Report Office Occasional Paper, 2005, p 3.

¹³⁹ Crawford Young, Op Cit, p 84.

¹⁴⁰ Bøås . M, Op Cit, p 703.

¹⁴¹ Ibid, pg 703-704.

¹⁴² Ibid, pg 704.

¹⁴³ Bøås . M, Op Cit, p 704.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid.

down the infamous rice riots of 14th April 1979 sparked by demonstrators protesting the state's agricultural policies and the arbitrary price increase of rice, the country's staple food.¹⁴⁵

Kieh lambasts the various regimes in Liberia from Roberts to Taylor for the insistent rhetoric of the importance of human development as key to national development, while never turning this into practice. He notes that the Americo-Liberian elites have never had development, human or otherwise on the national agenda.¹⁴⁶ Accountability to the public was precluded by the introduction of legislation that sought to maintain law and order while attracting foreign investment for the private accumulation of capital. Despite the boom in economic growth rates in the mining, rubber and forestry sectors, there were no policies that fostered job creation. This phenomenon has been referred to as growth without development.¹⁴⁷

The extractive industry strengthened the economy based on exclusive land tenure and taxation of the indigenous population, even as they were excluded from the structures of power.¹⁴⁸ The result was a three tiered economy with the settlers at the apex, economic immigrants (from the Middle East) in the middle and indigenous people at the bottom of the hierarchy.¹⁴⁹ The state adopted a repressive and rent-seeking character through policies that hindered accountability to the public, such as the 1978 Sedition Law that made the criticisms of public officials a crime and the Emergency Law that gave President Tolbert carte blanche for arrest and detention for anyone who was deemed a national security threat.¹⁵⁰ 'Throughout the period, Liberia's rule of law was predicated on a culture of uninhibited impunity.'¹⁵¹

Tolbert was murdered in the 1980 coup that ushered Samuel Doe to power, the latter a member of the Krahn indigenous group.¹⁵² Following the coup, Doe won an election by massive fraud and soon after ensured that the AFL was over-represented by members of his ethnic group. The reprisals by the Krahn dominated AFL against real and perceived enemies, set the stage for the civil war, culminating in the surprise attack on 24th of December 1989 by the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) led by Charles Taylor. Soon the country descended into a conflict that highlighted the ethnic tensions, between the Gio's and Mano's supporting Taylor, while the Krahn's and Mandingo's supported Doe.¹⁵³ The minority Americo-Liberian oligarchy that had dominated life in Liberia for a

¹⁴⁵ Bøås . M, Op Cit, p 704.

¹⁴⁶ Kieh. Jr. G.K, 'The Human Development Crisis in Liberia,' in Journal of Sustainable Development in Africa, Vol 9. No. 1, 2007, pp 78 and 80

¹⁴⁷ Ibid, p 81.

¹⁴⁸ Aboagye. F. B and Rupiya. M. R, Op Cit, P 253.

¹⁴⁹ Ibid.

¹⁵⁰ Kieh. Jr. G.K, Op Cit, p 81.

¹⁵¹ Aboagye. F. B and Rupiya. M. R, Op Cit, p 253.

¹⁵² Bøås . M, Op Cit, pg 704 and 709.

¹⁵³ Ibid , p 709.

century and a half were subsequently displaced revealing that the problem had indeed been rooted in the country's historical and political past.¹⁵⁴ The civil war in Liberia can be seen as one unit in a long chain of events focused on replacing the old political establishment with a new order.¹⁵⁵

The argument presented here is that it is important to assess how the societies of both cases under study operated before the conflict in order to gain a fuller understanding of why the reforms enshrined in SSR may result in success or failure. For example, in Liberia the history of corruption should have drawn attention to the potential for abuse that existed, by both the administrators and the participants in the DDR process.¹⁵⁶ DDR (which will be discussed in more detail below) follows the cessation of hostilities, its effective execution this study asserts, determines the practice and outcomes of SSR in general. DDR represents the independent variable in this study.

The corruption in the DDR process in Liberia centred on complaints by ex-combatants about the payment of monthly stipends, there were either prolonged delays, or some money was missing when it was eventually paid out. The corruption in the post-war efforts presented a significant hindrance in the reform project. This is because it replicated the same power relations and experiences of marginalization from pre-war and wartime society, the shortfall in the monthly stipends was alleged to have been appropriated by administrators of the programme.¹⁵⁷

Historically the role of Paramount chiefs in Sierra Leonean society was critical for political support of the colonial regime in a mutually reinforcing way. The chiefs were counted on for social solidarity and also formed the lowest unit of the British administration.¹⁵⁸ The chiefs' responsiveness to both systems of governance demonstrated their skill in making the patrimonial and bureaucratic forms of administration coexist.¹⁵⁹ Furthermore, reliance on the chiefs increased as the British started to interact directly with the hinterland, consequently displacing the dominance of the Creoles in these communities.¹⁶⁰ The Creoles had historically employed the logic of patrimonial rule as an attempt to secure the self and affirm their identity, both the chiefs and the Creoles made up the two dominant groups in Sierra Leone society in the competition for resources and trading rights.¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁴ Sesay. M. A, 'Civil War and Collective Intervention,' in *Review of African Political Economy*, No. 67, 1996, p 37.

¹⁵⁵ Ibid, p 37.

¹⁵⁶ Jennings. K. M, 'The Struggle to Satisfy: DDR Through the Eyes of Ex-combatants in Liberia,' in *International Peacekeeping*, 14: 2, 2007, p 215.

¹⁵⁷ Jennings. K. M, *Op Cit* , p 210.

¹⁵⁸ Bøås. M, *Op Cit*, p 706.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, p 707.

In the 1940s the momentum for political organization and freedom from British colonial control was led by a small but expanding trade union movement, made up of elites from the urban educated Creoles and other educated elites, typically the sons of chiefs or their close clients.¹⁶² The 1951 Legislative Council consisted for the first time of a black majority, and in 27 April 1961 the Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP) ushered the country into independence under Sir Milton Margai, whose rule depended on patron-client networks with chiefs and British officials.¹⁶³

Authoritarianism under Margai was followed by a one party state under Siaka Stevens of the All People's Congress (APC) party, which in 1967 had initially been a party that appealed to a wide range of dissidents, and specifically young people, who felt marginalized by the Creole elite and the Chiefdom elite.¹⁶⁴ Donor enforced cut-backs in the mid to late 1980s, undermined the influence of patrimonial elites and debilitated further the crumbling public services left, leaving many young people were unable to find work, complete their education, marry and build a family.¹⁶⁵ Due to the lack of employment opportunities in the private sector, the only option for graduates was to find work in the public sector, which was suffering from a shortage of funding and dependent on political patronage and loyalty to the party in power.¹⁶⁶ In Sierra Leone the decrease in the size of the civil service, was exacerbated by the economic decline in the 1980s of the economy, and Steven's increased reliance on aid to pay for the country's debt and support his neo-patrimonial networks.¹⁶⁷ As Dunn notes, in the immediate post-colonial era neo-patrimonial networks could contribute to a modicum of stability, even as they 'produced 'strong' regimes in 'weak' states.'¹⁶⁸

Bøås points to the need for a post-colonial ruler to be able to secure the survival of his state and his power through pre-emptive strikes that neutralise his enemies while, simultaneously establishing alliances. Indeed a clever ruler that aims to cling to power for longer, needs to establish alliances, even with his enemies.¹⁶⁹ Joseph Momoh, Stevens' successor lacked the strategic prowess required to court both patrimonial networks and bureaucratic systems. Nevertheless he did garner some support from the IMF for instituting policies such as decreasing government spending on education. Soon spending on education was one-sixth of what it had been five years prior, he went on to

¹⁶² Bøås. M, Op Cit, p 707.

¹⁶³ Ibid.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Fanthorpe. R and Maconachie. R, 'Beyond the 'Crisis of Youth'? Mining, Farming and Civil Society in Post-War Sierra Leone,' in African Affairs, Vol. 109. No. 435, 2010, p 252.

¹⁶⁶ Kposowa, A, 'Erosion of the Rule of Law as Contributing Factor in Civil Conflict: The Case of Sierra Leone,' in Police Practice and Research: An International Journal, Vol. 7. No. 1, 2006, p 43.

¹⁶⁷ Bøås. M, Op Cit, p 708.

¹⁶⁸ Dunn. K, Op Cit, p 118.

¹⁶⁹ Bøås. M, Op Cit, pp 699-700

declare that education was a privilege and not a right.¹⁷⁰ His inability to demonstrate a command of neo-patrimonialism was further exacerbated by the fact that he had inherited a state in crisis from two decades of misrule, the economic hardships that characterised the country were telling.

According to the 1993 UNDP Report Sierra Leone in 1990 had the second lowest human development ranking in the world and the government's failure to invest in public services such as education and the creation of employment opportunities played a critical role in the conflict.¹⁷¹ In 1991 this was exacerbated by the imposition of a harsh Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) by International Financial Institutions (IFI's) that sought to ensure that the size of the state was rolled back and led to 40 percent of the public sector being dismissed, in favour of servicing foreign debt.¹⁷² It is no wonder that government corruption and official neglect of soldiers was one of the key grievances that was later highlighted in the coup that overthrew President Momoh in 1992.¹⁷³ It was in this climate that the civil war started as the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) led by Foday Sankoh, arrived in eastern Sierra Leone on the 23rd of March 1991 from Liberian territory controlled by Charles Taylor.¹⁷⁴

The legacy of neo-patrimonialism exposes a learned culture that regards clientelism as the norm and continues to affect the viability of reform efforts in Sierra Leone. The current President Ernest Bai Koroma has been in power since 2007 and was recently, in November 2012 re-elected for a second term.¹⁷⁵ The President had to issue a press statement, weeks after the start of an emergency electricity initiative, in 2008 after a newspaper printed a damning letter purportedly from the World Bank, questioning the sustainability of the project that was estimated to cost the country \$5 million per month and only break even if the tariff on consumers was doubled, and 250 workers were dismissed at the National Power Authority (NPA).¹⁷⁶ The President alluding to the culture of clientelism that persists in the country that leads people to regard electricity as their reward for voting for the government stated,

[E]lectricity is not free. Ensuring power in the future depends on customers paying their bills. Without revenue, the system cannot be sustainable. This is another aspect of the change in attitudes for which I have called. Patriotic Sierra Leoneans who want this country to succeed need to know that to sustain

¹⁷⁰ Hanlon. J, 'Is the International Community Helping to Recreate the Precondition for War in Sierra Leone?' in Round Table, 94(381), 2005, p 460.

¹⁷¹ Bellows. J and Miguel. E, 'War and Institutions: New Evidence from Sierra Leone' in The American Economic Review, vol. 96, No. 2, 2006, p 395.

¹⁷² Reno, W, 'War, Markets and the Reconfiguration of West Africa's Weak States,' in Comparative Politics, Vol. 29, No. 4, 1997, p 502.

¹⁷³ Ibid, 503.

¹⁷⁴ Bøås. M, Op Cit, p 709.

¹⁷⁵ www.bbc.co.uk/...world-africa-20472962.

¹⁷⁶ Sierra Leone: A New Era of Reform, Africa Report No. 143, International Crisis Group, 2008, p 15.

progress in the provision of services, they will have to pay for them. This is the contract between the people and the state.¹⁷⁷

In Sierra Leone through state sponsored patronage, norms, culture and identity have over the years been socialized into the society and rationalised through an ominous sense of detachment by citizens from the political, economic, social and administrative processes at the centre. This provides an enabling mechanism that leads people to believe that public service are redeemable for a vote, instead of a duty that should be provided by the state regardless of political party affiliation. Ordinary citizens can hardly be blamed for thinking this way after suffering years of taxation, legal and illegal, and seeing little in return except steadily eroding services and infrastructure. If it achieves nothing else, the emergency electricity initiative will set a useful precedent for negotiation of the state-society contract.¹⁷⁸ The entrenched culture of patronage in Sierra Leone society has played a significant role in the country's SSR process, particularly due to the pervasive and sometimes inimical reliance on the chiefdom system.

The paper has argued for a consideration of the mutually constitutive nature of the identity, culture and norms in both the Liberian and Sierra Leonean states. The way state structures in both cases have used class and ethnicity to shape the understanding of identity, culture and norms makes it difficult to confine the analysis of the causal processes that lead to the dependent variable to a single variable, represented by DDR. It is conceded that eliminating variables not seen to have a variance in the dependent variable has its flaws. Indeed the use of Mill's method does acknowledge that there 'are few nontrivial theories in the social sphere strong enough to support general claims of necessity or sufficiency for single variables, and it is conceded that many social phenomena in the social sciences are complex and lack nontrivial necessary or sufficient conditions.'¹⁷⁹ Hence this paper asserts that the influence that state-sponsored neo-patrimonialism has had in constructing identity, culture and norms of the Liberian and Sierra Leonean society is worth considering. Patronage politics, due to the role it has played in constructing identity, culture and norms in both cases, presents a nontrivial variable that has a significant impact on the ability for the post-conflict societies of both these states to reform.

¹⁷⁷ Sierra Leone: A New Era of Reform, Africa Report No. 143, International Crisis Group, 2008, p 15.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid, p 16.

¹⁷⁹ George. A. L an Bennet. A, Op Cit, p 157.

Chapter five

DDR: creating the conditions for sustainable SSR

Most of the challenges experienced in both countries post-conflict SSR, it is argued here, have their foundations in the genesis and structure of the state. State sponsored patronage compounded by poor governance and authoritarianism has defined social identity formations and imposed a culture of patron-client networks as the norm. In both Liberia and Sierra Leone political, economic and social survival was associated in one way or another with clientelistic commitments and predation. This research posits a clear link between the challenges of DDR, particularly the challenge of re-integrating young male and female ex-combatants into Liberia and Sierra Leone society, and the ability to create the conditions for successful SSR. The assumption embedded in post-conflict SSR is that it will transcend notions of regime security to instil a culture of democratic civil-military relations, based on respect for human rights that is influenced by professional leadership.¹⁸⁰ As Aboagye and Rupiya emphasize, the reform or transformation of a post-conflict society should reflect a similar drive to transform and modernise the state in Africa.¹⁸¹ However, the DDR achievements in Liberia did not create the conditions for such a transformation and modernisation of the state;

the voluntary disarmament of 101, 449 ex-combatants, coupled with the removal from circulation by December 2003 of about 27, 894 weapons and some 33,000 rounds of heavy munitions and seven million rounds of small arms ammunition was a laudable achievement for UNMIL.¹⁸²

Jennings account claims that by November 2004 there were 92, 714 ex-combatants registered as demobilized, she asserts that the high number of ex-combatants registered as disarmed and demobilized reflects the programmes primary failings.¹⁸³ The claim that DDR had been a success by the former head of UNMIL Jacques Klein because the registered number of 100,000 ex-combatants were higher than expected did not factor in the surge in enrolments and the gap between the numbers of disarmed versus weapons collected.¹⁸⁴ Furthermore funding gaps and limited spaces in reintegration programmes meant that many of the disarmed were unable to access programmes for months or years and sometimes never.¹⁸⁵ This reflects serious shortcomings in the DDR process in Liberia which has had compounding effects for the SSR process in that country. Indeed these shortcomings cannot be said to necessarily emanate from the identity, culture or norms of the external actor's nor the internal actors involved in the DDR process. However, it does reflect a deficit in the communicative processes between international donors and the necessities on the

¹⁸⁰ Aboagye. F. B and Rupiya. M. R, Op Cit, p 271.

¹⁸¹ Ibid, p 266.

¹⁸² Ibid, p 269.

¹⁸³ Jennings. K. M, Op Cit, p 208.

¹⁸⁴ Ibid, p 209.

¹⁸⁵ Ibid.

ground. The Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration that took place in Liberia came to represent a fragile peace as a result of a negotiated settlement between the undefeated armed factions.¹⁸⁶ The hasty and early start to the first phase of the DDRR program on the 7th December 2003 was intended to ensure that the security situation in Monrovia would stabilize, instead the high turnout of ex-combatants overwhelmed UNMIL troops leading to violence and looting at cantonment sites.¹⁸⁷ The process had to be aborted, just ten days later due to a lack of preparation, insufficient security and inadequate sensitization for ex-combatants, stakeholders and community members to the process.¹⁸⁸

For example, instead of following the policy guidelines that stipulated that the disarmament process should start simultaneously with all three factions, the UN personnel decided to start with the pro-government fighters. Upon hearing this, fighters from the remaining two factions, LURD and MODEL, decided to participate and overwhelmed the registration sites, perhaps out of concern that they would be left out of the process.

To use Mills' method of difference the temporal delays and organizational mishaps experienced at the initial stages of DDRR may be eliminated as they comprise variables that do not impact the variance on the Dependent Variable (DV)¹⁸⁹ which is SSR that reveals learning, resonance has been imbued and impacted the mutual delivery and reception of the reform initiatives. These variables do however represent a marked shift in the execution of the Independent Variable (IV) which is a successfully implemented and executed DDR programme.

As noted earlier, during the DDR process in Liberia there was indeed a return to pre-war and wartime experiences through corruption of the process intended to facilitate the transition back into civilian society for ex-combatants. Owing to the persistence of the 'big man' phenomenon in Liberian society and power structures, it is safe to deduce that the war had been an opportunity for young men to redistribute power from the 'big men' to themselves.¹⁹⁰ Conversely the Liberian DDR programme reinforced the same pre-war power structures and resulted in the exploitation of powerless youths, by older powerful men, who controlled and enriched themselves through the resources intended to help the youth.¹⁹¹ This makes the prospects for reform of the security sector and other institutions vital for the restoration of integrity into Liberian society very questionable. 'Many ex-combatants expressed frustration, even anger while others seemed resigned explaining that; Liberia has always been and will always be like this.'¹⁹²

¹⁸⁶ Jaye. T, 'Transitional Justice and DDR: The Case of Liberia,' International Centre for Transitional Justice, 2009, p 11.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid, p 12.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid.

¹⁸⁹ George. A. L & Bennet. A, Op Cit, p 155.

¹⁹⁰ Jennings. K. M, Op Cit, p 210.

¹⁹¹ Ibid, p 210.

¹⁹² Ibid.

A critique of the DDRR process in Liberia was the lax criteria used to determine entry into the program, which encouraged a large number of people to register for the program even though they were not ex-combatants. There are reports that commanders would register their relatives and their own children, owing to UNMIL's decision to give former child soldiers a cash payment as an incentive to enter into the DDRR process.¹⁹³ This practice allowed commanders to exploit the process for their own gain which led to the exclusion of some genuine ex-combatants.¹⁹⁴ This is a reflection of the fact that local recipients of the DDRR and overall reform initiatives had indeed developed and become de-sensitized to norms that excused and even in the post-conflict period reinforced putrid beliefs. This meant that one's identity or local perceptions about that identity may negatively or positively impact access to DDRR and reform programs.

As a result, this became a hindrance to reintegration into an already emotionally and psychologically scarred society due to the atrocities carried out during the war and families inability to support ex-combatants due to their own economic deprivations.¹⁹⁵ Jaye asserts that for ex-combatants, this was further complicated by the legacies of ethnic tensions and compounded by UNMIL's criteria for DDRR benefits, that 'as of April 2004 included the need for commander's to be able to properly identify his or her ex-combatants.'¹⁹⁶ The final decision was delegated to the commanders who were responsible for confirming who did and did not belong.¹⁹⁷

Another difficult aspect of the DDR programme in Liberia was the regional scope of the war and subsequently the various options for entrepreneurial initiatives. For example, UNMIL was offering US\$ 300 as the first instalment while in Côte d'Ivoire ex-combatants were being offered US\$ 900, with no restraining nationalistic ideologies ex-combatants after accepting the retrenchment package in Liberia, moved to Côte d'Ivoire to join the war in that country.¹⁹⁸ The instability in the Manu River Union (MNU) which includes Liberia, Sierra Leone, Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea created what Jennings refers to as a 'market for ex-combatants.' Not only did combatants move from conflict to conflict to access the most profitable disarmament package, but the label of 'ex-combatant' became attractive, owing to a conceptual flaw of DDR programming that portrays ex-combatants as deserving of special assistance, more than civilians.¹⁹⁹ Many non-combatants registered as ex-combatants in order to accrue whatever benefits they could from the programme. The perception of DDR as 'free benefits

¹⁹³ Jaye. T, Op Cit, p 14 and 15.

¹⁹⁴ Ibid, p 14.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid, p 8.

¹⁹⁶ Ibid, p 8 and 14.

¹⁹⁷ Ibid, p 14.

¹⁹⁸ Aboagye. F. B and Rupiya. M. R, Op Cit, p 261.

¹⁹⁹ Jennings. K. M, Op Cit, p 211.

for the willing' points to an oversubscribed programme, insufficiently broad in design to have a wider developmental impact at the community level.²⁰⁰

This ultimately reveals that equally the external actor's involved in the overall reform process and particularly the critical DDRR process are as complicit and responsible for the kind of outcome that emanates from reform initiatives. UNMIL's initial actions demonstrates the use of a 'one size fits all' approach due to a 'failure to reach out and incorporate local perspectives and knowledge,' highlighting the importance of a communicative approach. This should be informed by an understanding of the differing demands of each post-conflict environment and the need to acquire and deliver accurate information. UNMIL must be commended for quickly adapting to the reality on the ground and engaging in a public information campaign to convince ex-combatants to participate in the second round of the program in April 2004, five months after the aborted start.²⁰¹

Meanwhile, in Sierra Leone Fayemi asserts that despite the successes of disarming 72,500 ex-combatants, and the skills training and assistance provided for finding jobs thereafter, the opportunities for employment are still not available to the youth of Sierra Leone.²⁰² The attainment of good governance, socio-economic development, human rights, justice and reconciliation, security and co-ordination, management and resource mobilisation will require a serious commitment to addressing the issue of a restive youth. In 2003 the then UN Secretary General Kofi Annan asserted that

[T]he larger number of unemployed youths, mainly concentrated in urban and mining centres throughout the country, present another long term issue. In addition to being a security problem, they are regularly interfering in diamond mining. Some youths appear to enjoy political patronage, and the Sierra Leone police seem to be reluctant or unable to challenge the undermining of state authority by these groups.²⁰³

According to Conteh, the recommendation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in Sierra Leone has contributed to the 'relative' success of the SSR process, through the outcome of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP).²⁰⁴ However, despite the perception of progress, this mechanism continues to have major shortcomings. This is partly because Britain is a major donor for the initiative and a key requirement for the former to maintain its aid is that the government of Sierra Leone adhere to the IMF's Poverty Reduction and Growth Facility. This mechanism calls for

²⁰⁰ Jennings. K. M, Op Cit, p 212.

²⁰¹ Jaye. T, Op Cit, p 13.,

²⁰² Fayemi. J.K, Op Cit, p 7.

²⁰³ Hanlon. J, Op Cit, p 470.

²⁰⁴ Brig (rtd) Conteh. K, 'Sierra Leone Case Study: Local Ownership of the Security Sector Review and Transformation Processes,' in Nathan. L, 2007, 'No Ownership, No Commitment: A Guide to Local Ownership of Security Sector Reform,' Security Sector Reform Strategy of the UK Government's Global Conflict Prevention Pool, University of Birmingham.

continued maintenance of macro-economic stability.²⁰⁵ These quantitative performance criteria contribute to poorly paid public servants that are demotivated, perform poorly and are unlikely to reform, are one of the key causes of corruption in the public service.²⁰⁶

The TRC in Sierra Leone cannot be considered as an intervening variable as initially claimed in the methodology and is indeed one of the variables eliminated because it does not affect variance in the dependent variable. The TRC made no fundamental difference in the post-conflict reform efforts in that country and in fact may have led to weaker promotion of transitional justice. By establishing the TRC in conjunction with the Special Court the international community aimed to promote both restorative and retributive justice, however the concurrent establishment of the two institutions created confusion and limited public participation.²⁰⁷ This calls into question if indeed post-conflict reform depends on the compatibility of norms between the external actors imposing reform measures and the internal actors and recipients of reform.

In this context there is a need for clarification and conceptualization of what exactly SSR is, and what it means for Liberia and Sierra Leone in particular, given the social, political and economic context within which their wars emerged and their post-conflict reform has been carried out. This research conceives of SSR as a much broader and more encompassing concept when analysed through the notion that identity, culture and norms play a determining role in how post-conflict transformation is carried out. It is argued, that this affects its subsequent outcome. This is illustrated by the IMF spending caps that limit the important expansion of education and indirectly spurs corruption in the civil service through the requirement of low salaries. Also the lack of sufficient training means that ex-combatants are not properly reintegrated into society. Failure to emphasise the importance of job creation, reveals a different set of priorities for donors and the government and means that the youth remain uneducated, unemployed and disempowered as they were a decade earlier.

Nevertheless there was a major stride made in the SSR efforts in Sierra Leone. This was related to the reform of the SLP and particularly the personal and interactive nature of the reform process. From October 1999, DfID had been funding Keith Biddle (who had arrived in Sierra Leone initially to lead the Commonwealth Police Development Task Force (CPDTF)) as the Inspector General of Police (IGP) and had been appointed to this position from 1999-2003 by the former President Ahmed Tejjan Kabbah himself. The IGP position essentially meant that Biddle was the head of the police force and head of operations.²⁰⁸ Sierra Leone's first post-war IGP was a retired UK police officer, Albrecht argues that this reflected the President's interest in ensuring substantial police reforms, as

²⁰⁵ Hanlon. J, Op Cit, p 463.

²⁰⁶ Ibid, pg 461.

²⁰⁷ Lambourne, W, 'Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding after Mass Violence,' in The international Journal of Transitional Justice, Vol. 3, 2009, p 39.

²⁰⁸ Albrecht. P. A, Op Cit, p 25.

the British IGP would not have the political and historical baggage that a Sierra Leonean might in the same position.²⁰⁹

The assertion in this paper is that SSR presents an opportunity to compliment traditional peacebuilding and peacemaking initiatives, because it is linked to the kind of social norms and political cultures that existed before and during the war and the normative prescriptions tentatively being applied in contemporary reform efforts. This study holds that reform, when it is efficiently implemented and upholds the central notion that reform must be symbiotic, and resonate with its recipients can produce sustainable progress in reform efforts. Investigating to what extent norms, identity and culture matter in the decision making processes of those trying to 'teach' SSR and similarly how the culture, norms and identity of the recipients of the reform influence their ability to 'learn' lessons from the SSR process, is indeed critical.

It is argued that the ability to impart lessons about SSR depends to a significant extent on the ability of the 'learner' to resonate with the proposed reforms. The argument is that resonance is confined to the learned norms, culture and identity of society and the ability to resonate to reforms can only be identified when the reforms match or fit a pre-existing way of doing things. Successful reform of the SLP is epitomised in the role played by Biddle in the imparting the organizational and management principles that should be intrinsic in police training. The strides made by his successor IGP Brima Acha Kamara in establishing more efficient and effective policing after Biddle's departure points to a discursive communicative process between Biddle and SLP leadership during his tenure. However, Osman Gbla has put forth the argument that despite the gains made in the reform of the SLP the predominance of foreigners in senior positions diminishes the credibility of the reforms and their sustainability due to the programmes failure to incorporate the country's socio-cultural values.²¹⁰

According to a 2009 assessment of SLP figures, it is noted that "the SLP senior management team at Police Headquarters in Freetown appear confident, having a firm understanding of the reform agenda and its associated processes."²¹¹ In this instance the correlation between the SLP's reforms, the leadership role played by Biddle and the resonance of officials in the SLP with the reforms, indicates that institutions and actor's preferences can be altered. Also it shows that even though the identity, culture and norms of the recipients of the reform do not match those of the senders of the reform message, through a communicative process based in argumentative persuasion actor's preferences can be altered for sustainable SSR. This reflects resonance with the principles underpinned in the reforms, despite a history of an authoritarian and repressive security sector in Sierra Leone. This reveals that through local agency can occur, albeit through a different variable or perhaps a combination of different variables. This aspect of SSR in Sierra Leone can be said to have been relatively successful.

²⁰⁹ Albrecht. P. A, Op Cit, p 20.

²¹⁰ Gbla. O, 'Security Sector Reform under International Tutelage in Sierra Leone,' in International Peacekeeping, 13:1, 2006, p 89.

²¹¹ Albrecht. P. A, Op Cit, p 28.

Chapter six

External actors and persuasion

Establishing a clear line of communication between the different actors that play a defining role in the implementation of reform efforts has certain drawbacks that must be considered,

[The] potential for an agent's ideas and arguments to alter the interests of other actors is what comprises a constructivist's definition of persuasion that is the effective attempt by advocates to 'change the utility functions of other players to reflect some new normative commitment.' However this depicts a linear and reactive communicative process, such an outcome, devoid of explicit social processes is not possible. Rather a more non-linear explanation of how actor's preferences are formed and changed in discursive situations is more in line with George Herbert Mead, a social psychologist whose ideas posit communication as a recursive transaction between sender and receiver (s). This means that message senders are also simultaneously receivers, and vice versa.²¹²

It here that Checkel's work becomes relevant and can contribute to shedding light on the most effective way of transposing and implementing new ideas and concepts in post-conflict societies, albeit the research must be interpreted and applied with context-specific considerations. He emphasises the distinction between manipulative and argumentative persuasion. The former is an individualist and a-social form of interaction that focuses on strategic agency and the latter, a process of interaction concerned with changing perceptions about cause and effect without coercion.²¹³ It is this kind of persuasion that this study deems necessary for the ability to ensure that the reform process being carried out resonates with its recipients. It is conceded that persuasion literature is limited, as it does not develop the scope conditions under which argumentative persuasion leads to the change of perceptions or preferences.²¹⁴ In this study, the focus of resonance with the proposed reforms in the SSR process is deemed imperative to the successful outcome of reform, the following scope conditions for this to occur are outlined below.

Determining how external actor's involved in the advice and training of recipient state's security sectors and other relevant institutions are conducted is important to understanding, what the key lessons they seek to impart are. For example, how did the DfID, offer advice and assistance to recipient countries engaged in drawing up defence policy reviews, provide financial management support and advice on civil-military relations?²¹⁵ Uncovering these scope conditions is needed to operationalize these variables or uncover new variables to better understand the relationship between the external actors imparting the reform and the local reception of reform.

²¹² Payne. R. A, Op Cit, p 42.

²¹³ Checkel. J. T, Why Comply? Social Learning and European Identity Change, in International Organization, The IO Foundation and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 2001, p 562.

²¹⁴ Ibid.

²¹⁵ The Defence Advisory Team (DAT) is one of the main instruments of the UK's SSR Strategy. Ball, N, The Security Sector Reform Strategy, Evaluation of the Conflict Prevention Pools, Bradford University Channel Research Ltd, PARC and Associated Consultants, 2004. Available at: <http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/59/52/35096612.pdf>.

In certain SSR measures owing to a variety of different factors such as time, donor funding, spoilers, shortcomings in local agency and the lack of a communicative process between the donors, SSR practitioners and the local community it can be deduced that the 'toolkit international donors bring to post-conflict transitions were not designed for peacebuilding.'²¹⁶ It is interesting to note that SSR in Sierra Leone, despite being led and funded by one country still experienced difficulty in coordinating the reform efforts from the three UK departments the (FCO, MoD and DfID). For example, the DfID with the necessary financial resources was unwilling to take orders from the UK High Commission, and ultimately coordination was gleaned from how individuals on the ground cooperated with each other.²¹⁷

The fact that there was no sense of urgency around a comprehensive approach to SSR in the late 1990s and early 2000s, made personal interactions and relationships of the actors engaged in the reform efforts in Sierra Leone, even more important. According to Albrecht 'this was linked with on-going turf wars among advisers within host government institutions that were in the process of being established.'²¹⁸ In Sierra Leone interactions between individuals from the different international agencies involved in the reform initiatives it can be argued was related to the identity, culture and norms of various stakeholders in the governments and agencies involved in the reform efforts. A lack of collaboration and trust-building may have impeded information sharing that would otherwise have contributed to a SSR process that was more responsive to Sierra Leonean local community. Fundamentally governments are ruled by political imperatives and national interests and subsequently the international aid agencies that depend on government funding exist in an environment of competitive funding processes and shrinking resources.²¹⁹

This paper argues that in order for social learning to be substantive and translate into organic conceptions of reform that can be diffused and infused through domestic application into the different strata of society it has to be communicated using argumentative persuasion. It is assumed that an agent will be convinced and thus learn through the kind of processes of communication and persuasion that occur during the interaction between a persuader and persuadee.²²⁰ The assumption is that variables such as the language used for persuasion and the institutional setting matter and 'agents with less historical/cognitive baggage in more insulated institutional settings will be more open to argumentative persuasion, and thus to norm-driven resonance and reform.'²²¹ A good example of this is the concept of 'local needs policing' used by retired British police officer Keith Biddle who was involved in the reform of the SLP.

²¹⁶ Ricigliano. R, 'Networks of Effective Action: Implementing an Integrated Approach to Peacebuilding,' in Security Dialogue, 34:445, 2003, p 449.

²¹⁷ Albrecht. P. A, Op Cit, p 24.

²¹⁸ Albrecht. P. A, Op Cit, p 24.

²¹⁹ Ricigliano. R, Op Cit, p 457.

²²⁰ Checkel. J. T, Op Cit, p 564.

²²¹ Ibid, p 564.

Put simply persuasion is “an activity or process in which a communicator attempts to induce a change in the belief, attitude, or behaviour of another person... through the transmission of a message in a context in which the persuadee has some degree of free choice.”²²² As stated earlier, this is reflective of a linear and reactive communicative process, unlikely in most social processes, nevertheless constructivists emphasise, theoretically, the potential for an agent’s ideas and arguments to alter the interests of other actors.²²³

This is the foundation of the argument presented in this paper, that has endeavoured to show that the identity, culture and norms of Liberians and Sierra Leoneans and the respective identity, culture and norms of the external actors’ involved in each state’s SSR process is vital for its outcome. This it is argued can best be assessed through the communicative process and in particular by using persuasion as a tool to impart reform. Hence the argument maintains that genuine reform must be in response to successful persuasion, and reflective of local culture and needs, however this may not always be the reason for a given state’s, local actor’s or community’s change of preference. This is due to the fact that...

Theoretically...observing state practices alone is a poor way of evaluating the persuasiveness of normative ideas. Consider, for example, the realist notion that powerful states can threaten weaker states to get them to adhere to behavioural standards. The result of coercive measures does not reflect authentic persuasion as constructivists should understand it. Put simply, target state preferences were not likely influenced. If the state could act freely, it would not comply with the standard. A similar shortcoming of this criterion is illuminated in the neo-liberal argument that an institution can remind states of their common interests so that they can bargain or cooperate to achieve it... [Critically] target state preferences do not change and are not endogenous to the interaction.²²⁴

Although Payne uses international norm entrepreneurs and their potential for using coercion instead of persuasion to alter state interests and practices, the same motif is applied here to analyse the material levers that may be employed by norm entrepreneurs interacting with different stakeholders in post-conflict states. As Lambourne asserts in her work on transitional justice and peacebuilding after mass violence, transformative justice requires the involvement of local citizens to develop mechanisms that are consistent with local customs, culture and needs.²²⁵ Certainly in Liberia and Sierra Leone there is a need to cultivate institutions that can play a more prominent role in creating new and more equitable ways to relate identity, culture and norms to the distribution of power, resources and information in the SSR process. It is critical that conflict participants be subjects rather than objects in the design and implementation of transitional justice mechanisms so as to counter

²²² Checkel. J. T, Op Cit, p 562.

²²³ Payne. R. A, Op Cit, p 42

²²⁴ Ibid, p 41.

²²⁵ Lambourne, W, ‘Transitional Justice and Peacebuilding after Mass Violence,’ in The international Journal of Transitional Justice, Vol. 3, 2009, p 47.

claims of cultural imperialism.²²⁶ The importance of this is highlighted in this following scenario of SSR initiatives in Sierra Leone in which case,

[T]he DFID-supported the ENCISS (Enhancing Interaction and Interface between Civil Society and the State to improve poor people's lives) program was originally designed to strengthen civil society, but after the Kabbah government objected, it was watered down to "enhancing the interface and interaction between civil society and the state". While it has had some success conducting public opinion surveys, producing databases on local development activity, hosting workshops and radio discussion programs and resolving local disputes between citizen groups, it has yet to develop a broader strategy for state-society engagement.²²⁷

This example does not reflect a genuine process of persuasion, nor does it indicate social interaction. Ideally this should be characterised by a genuine inter-subjective interpretations of a discursive exchange whereby the donors, civil society and the state are prepared to have their understanding of a situation challenged and mutual meanings agreed.²²⁸ Indeed, with respect to Sierra Leone, the DfID's executive decisions were made in London, as it did not have an office in-country until 2005. In this context, the external actors (DfID) did not extend their message for more meaningful state and civil society engagement, through a communicative process to persuade the government of what would be mutually beneficial for the state and its society. Hence the local actors that would make up civil society continue to be side-lined from participating in critical state decisions that affect them.

In Liberia the exclusion of local actors bore challenges for the ability to feasibly learn or resonate with the different activities being carried out by the various UN agencies, programmes and funds. This is expressed in the criticism levelled against the actors mandated to coordinate and implement SSR activities. It is noted in the Audit Report that the UNMIL support to the Security Sector Reform Programme was plagued with considerable challenges that negate the tenets of the Constructivist theory used in this paper highlighting the centrality of a persuasive communicative process in the implementation of SSR activities. Key challenges noted included the lack of authority of the SSR advisor to coordinate the SSR activities implemented by the sections headed by more senior level staff.²²⁹ Furthermore, periodic coordination meetings of staff involved in SSR support activities were never held, despite the recommendations by the SSR advisor.²³⁰

This research incorporates the Constructivist claim that ideas and cultural norms are essential in the analysis of actors and how they relate to other actors. This research avers that this also relates to, in the context of the post-conflict environment, the external actors engaged in the reform efforts. The research posits that actors identities are acquired and shaped by the collective meaning that

²²⁶ Lambourne, W, Op Cit, p 47.

²²⁷ Sierra Leone: A New Era of Reform, Africa Report No. 143, International Crisis Group, 2008, p 13.

²²⁸ Payne. R. A, Op Cit, p 43.

²²⁹ Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), Internal Audit Division, Audit Report: UNMIL support to the Security Sector Reform Programme, 2 May 2012, Assignment No. AP2011/626/08, p 3.

²³⁰ Ibid.

constitute the structures which inform our actions.²³¹ It has been established that many crucial elements in the causation of social events are perception, only available in the words of the actors themselves, and there is no way, other than expressed evidence, to find proxies for sentiments and perceptions.²³² This is also the case with the external actor's responsible for the implementation of SSR activities. In Liberia the likelihood of this is negated by the fact that priority activities, identified by the SSR advisor are not reflected in their work plans, namely:

Implementation of the County Security Mechanism to ensure more effective information flow on security matters between [the] central government and the counties; drafting and adoption of the new police reform act; [defining] the role of the AFL at the border; and [the] development of effective coordination mechanisms between the police, prosecution and the courts.²³³

It is difficult to assert with confidence whether the SSR processes in Liberia and Sierra Leone have been successful due to the fact that the root causes of each state's civil war have not been addressed. In Liberia the prospect for a reasonably cohesive and functioning state is questionable in a country where there was massive destruction and everybody fought, unemployment has been estimated at 85 per cent, there are few functioning institutions and poor infrastructure impedes the prospects for reform.²³⁴ In both Liberia and Sierra Leone as efforts continue to rebuild governance, serious questions need to be raised about the kind of governance structures that are being recreated, indeed social institutions do not decay without reason and recreating these structures would be counterproductive in the pursuit of institutions to ensure good governance.²³⁵

Intentions for post-conflict SSR in Liberia and Sierra Leone should be approached with an understanding of the absolute abuse of power that was experienced by their citizens and meted out by state authorities and an array of non-state armed groups, during the war. The emphasis here is that there can be no progress in reform and reconstruction efforts if responsibility is not accepted by external actors of the role they play in the SSR process. Fundamentally though, local ownership by internal actors of the role expected of them in the SSR to attain a more peaceful and equitable society is essential. Certainly local actors have a critical role to play in correcting the assumptions of

²³¹ Jackson. R and Sorensen. G, Introduction to International Relations: Theories and approaches, Third Edition, Oxford University Press, New York, 2007, p 168.

²³² Zartman. W. I, Op Cit, p 302.

²³³ Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), Internal Audit Division, Audit Report: UNMIL support to the Security Sector Reform Programme, 2 May 2012, Assignment No. AP2011/626/08, p 3.

²³⁴ Jennings. K. M, Op Cit, p 213.

²³⁵ Fanthorpe. R, Op Cit, p 30.

international actors, whose diagnoses from afar never comport fully with the needs, perceptions and desires of the local community.²³⁶

An example from reports of Liberia's SSR that concurs with this analysis is the May 2012 audit report of the UNMIL support to the SSR programme, conducted by the Office of Internal Oversight Services. The audit report covered the period from 1 January to 30 June 2011 and concludes that 'UNMIL's governance, risk management and control processes were [only] partially satisfactory in providing reasonable assurance regarding the effective implementation of the SSR programme.'²³⁷

It was noted that SSR activities were implemented by the following substantive components of the Mission namely: the United Nations Police, Military, Legal and Judicial System and Support Division, Corrections Advisory Unit, Reintegration, Rehabilitation and Recovery Unit, Human Rights and Protection Section and the Office of Gender Advisor.²³⁸ The lack of clarity and the failure to structure the programmes of each respective unit led to a weak identification of appropriate SSR activities that were related to each other and that could be supported by UNMIL.²³⁹ This 'reduced the Mission's ability to plan and implement appropriate mechanisms for the achievement of the mandate.'²⁴⁰ The OIOS audit report recommended that UNMIL clarify the role of its substantive components in the SSR of Liberia and clearly identify support activities that could be fostered through programmatic linkages.²⁴¹

Conversely, in Sierra Leone, a project to support civil society and non-State actors has been able to cultivate resonance and ensure a communicative process that proves that through persuasion, learning can occur and impact greatly on the outcomes of SSR in this state. The Tenth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone (UNIPSIL) and covering the period from 1 September 2012 to 28 February 2013 outlined recommendations for the residual drawdown and exit strategy.²⁴² It can be argued that these recommendations were facilitated by the achievements and major developments made by UNIPSIL together with the relevant stakeholders and the Sierra Leonean society at large. Resonance in this context has been elicited through voter education processes that were intensified during the reporting period using

²³⁶ Ricigliano. R, Op Cit, p 452.

²³⁷ Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), Internal Audit Division, Audit Report: UNMIL support to the Security Sector Reform Programme, 2 May 2012, Assignment No. AP2011/626/08, p 2.

²³⁸ Ibid.

²³⁹ Ibid.

²⁴⁰ Ibid.

²⁴¹ Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS), Internal Audit Division, Audit Report: UNMIL support to the Security Sector Reform Programme, 2 May 2012, Assignment No. AP2011/626/08.

²⁴² United Nations Security Council (UNSC), Tenth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone, S/2013/118, 27 February 2013.

radio jungles and dramatic sketches, this was facilitated by the National Electoral Commission and the UN Development Programme (UNDP) managed Elections Basket Fund.²⁴³

Furthermore, UNIPSIL through consultations with civil society and non-State actors was able to cultivate norms of political tolerance and non-violence during the Sierra Leone's recent election process. In all 112 constituencies in the country UNIPSIL helped develop and disseminate audio and video peace messages in all local languages using ex-combatants.²⁴⁴ The commitment by UNIPSIL to engage with local recipients of the reform initiatives in Sierra Leone has enabled the norm(s) that underpin principles of participatory democracy to elicit some modicum of legitimacy. This is because of an observed understanding by members of the external actors and local relevant stakeholders of the need to express and ensure communication regarding the reforms that are being undertaken and the corresponding agency and commitment to reform by local actors. This can be said to, as highlighted above by Payne, reflect a social process and reflect genuine social understanding.²⁴⁵

²⁴³ United Nations Security Council (UNSC), Tenth report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Integrated Peacebuilding Office in Sierra Leone, p 3.

²⁴⁴ Ibid, p 4.

²⁴⁵ Payne. R. A, Op Cit, p 39.

Local agency and sustainable SSR

Determining if resonance through argumentative persuasion has occurred requires assessing whether the newness of ideas are more effective when they are delivered in a language that the persuadee can understand? What difference it would make if the reform was conducted in a private or community setting? And whether the recipient of the reform recognizes and acknowledges the need for reform of their prior beliefs about the structure of society? With regards to language it has already been revealed how the concept of 'local needs policing' used in the reform of the SLP played a major role in the resonance of the reform efforts by officials in the SLP. Moreover in Sierra Leone the proposed reforms were communicated to local partners, including chiefs that represent stakeholders in society, particularly with regards to local governance in the rural areas where the central authority in Freetown does not have such influence. It is noted that struggle for power at the centre has long been imbricated with struggles over chieftaincy and that chiefs continue to play a vital role because they and by implication not the state, know a person's customary rights that establish local citizenship.²⁴⁶ The chiefs are entrusted with the authority and allocated the resources and information to redistribute equitably in the post-conflict environment.

However, in Sierra Leone (as in Liberia) the pervasiveness of corruption and the culture of patronage have hindered progress in SSR. A fitting example of this is the finding of one of the consultations of the Paramount Chiefs Restoration Programme (PCRP) carried out by the DfID to assess perceptions about chieftaincy restoration in Sierra Leone. It was alleged that a deputy minister in Freetown had threatened to remove the Senior District Officer (SDO) from his post unless action was taken to ensure equality in the local distribution of food relief.²⁴⁷ It was revealed that the deputy minister was a member of a chiefly family and was objecting to the fact that a rival chiefly family had been put in charge of the distribution of relief aid.

Meanwhile in Liberia during the DDR process a dichotomy was observed between the 'desires of the individual ex-combatant, to get a job and live peacefully and the 'forced' action of the collective, ex-combatants claimed that the actions of other may make them behave as troublemakers...a common notion expressed by ex-combatants was 'if they want to treat us like ex-combatants, we'll show them what 'ex-combatants really means.'"²⁴⁸ There are no reports of the above informants receiving counselling during the reintegration process, of which there is a clear need, particularly due the tendency for ex-combatants to group together administratively and socially.

At such a critical juncture poor communicative process hinders the creation of conditions needed to bring about progress regarding the reform of the security sector and other institutions crucial for the creation of a functioning and stable Liberian society. Continued intransigence by some ex-combatants may not necessarily be a product of poor communication, but rather may reflect the dissatisfaction of ex-combatants. The credibility of the international community is damaged by

²⁴⁶ Fanthorpe. R, 'On the Limits of Liberal Peace: Chiefs and Democratic Decentralization in Post-War Sierra Leone,' in *African Affairs*, 105: 418, 2005, pp 40 and 44.

²⁴⁷ Fanthorpe. R, *Op Cit*, pp 31 and 41.

²⁴⁸ Jennings. K, *Op Cit*, 212.

creating inflated expectations to the detriment of the recipients of reform and the entire SSR process.²⁴⁹

The desire for change was evident in both Liberia and Sierra Leone, more importantly the emphasis has been on the need for local power structures to change. In Sierra Leone for example, reports from ex-combatants indicate anger towards the failure of patrimonial politics and particularly for the youth, and the role this played in the loss of families and educational prospects. It was noted that 'patrimonial politics sent a few to study to the highest level overseas and denied that opportunity to a majority, not on merit but on grounds of political favouritism.'²⁵⁰ In Sierra Leone a rural consultation held to conduct needs assessment, identification of project beneficiaries, policy dissemination, feedback and civic education found that ex-RUF fighters, non-combatants, ex-CDF fighters and even village elders emphasized the need to root out the inequalities of traditional governance.²⁵¹

Understanding how the undercurrent of identity, culture and norms influenced the political, economic and social circumstances that led to the outbreak of conflict in Liberia and Sierra Leone helps explain the kind of response to reform measures and the kind of international efforts that were directed at each state. Constructivist theory holds that states' subcultures are constituted within their societies, and their identities and interests are produced not only through interactions with other states but in interactions within each states internal society.²⁵² Indeed, Hopf's assertion that defining who are friends and enemies begins at home,²⁵³ is apt considering the two cases under investigation, due to the processes of identity formation and the culture (particularly of violence) that characterized the civil wars in both Liberia and Sierra Leone. In both states, elite greed and unresolved societal grievances were exploited to disproportionate standards they were mobilized and drawn from primordial and contextual identities, and contributed to fuelling the conflict.

Reform efforts should therefore focus on how to influence the interests of the various states, actors, local communities, donors, aid organisations, and foreign investors that have a stake in the outcome of the peacebuilding and in particular SSR measures underway. In Liberia and Sierra Leone this should reflect an informed and mutually beneficial outcome, sustained by inter-subjective practice, guided by a process of mutual learning.²⁵⁴ Regulations should be enacted to ensure that the companies that stand to benefit from the resources that abound in the said states, adhere to prescribed standards for corporate social responsibility, given the immunity that characterised the 'investments' of foreign firms during the civil wars in both states.

²⁴⁹ Jennings. K, Op Cit, p 216.

²⁵⁰ Peters. K and Richards. P, 'Why We Fight: Voices of Youth Ex-combatants in Sierra Leone,' in Journal of International African Institute, Vol. 68, No. 2, 1998, p 187.

²⁵¹ Fanthorpe. R, Op Cit, p 38.

²⁵² Jackson. R and Sorensen. G, Op Cit, p 172.

²⁵³ Ibid.

²⁵⁴ Wendt. A, Op Cit, 1992, p 183.

Prospects for reform in Liberia

The political culture of elite greed in both states was compounded by the lack lustre or imprudent management of state structures and fostered, in both states, the marginalization of groups in society that could easily be pooled and mobilised for war. The dearth of effective traditional institutions in Liberia and Sierra Leone before the war point to the entrenchment of defective culture of neo-patrimonialism in the societies of both states, albeit defined and reinforced through very different hierarchies. In Liberia rent seeking behaviour by that country's elites was dispersed through the social structures that were keen on establishing the dominance of the settler Americo-Liberian elites. The legacy of Americo-Liberian dominance led to the exclusion of indigenous communities and fostered much resentment against the country's elites, while later during the civil wars ethnicity was used to mobilize different groups to fight against each other.

The link between political structures and management and reform of the security sector, N'Diaye asserts, has been blurred due to the marginalization of key democratic institutions in this process, such as parliaments, and only delays the inevitable restructuring of dysfunctional security systems.²⁵⁵ In Liberia, however, through capacity building and awareness raising there has been some progress in changing long-held attitudes and beliefs of the parliament in relation to the state authority in Liberia.

As Jaye and Ebo document, the defence and security commissions of the house and senate of the Liberian parliament, led by people who had benefitted from training offered by the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces (DCAF) and the African Security Sector Network (ASSN), rejected a National Security Act that was elaborated without consultation by the executive. The commissions and their leadership also tried to exercise effective oversight over the role of a private military company that was hired in non-transparent conditions to train the Liberian military at a particularly sensitive period. Although their bid was not entirely successful, they raised awareness of the need for the executive to involve the parliament in decision-making on these critical aspects of the security of the country. Ultimately, they were able to obtain clarification on the presence, mission and obligations of DynCorp, the US-based private military company in question.²⁵⁶

The TRC in Liberia drew attention to the perpetual concessionary system that played a major role in feeding the war economy, PMSC continue to flourish under this concessionary system. Foreign actors continue to maintain a grip on Liberian security sector. The challenges with regards to the handing over of this role to Liberian agencies makes it difficult to assert with confidence if the SSR process in that country will be able to engender the kind of learning that is needed in post-conflict reform measures to ensure the sustainability of peace and good governance.

Moreover reform of the public sector will be a defining factor in the ability to institutionalize changes associated with good governance. This is a key concern due to the neo-colonial constitution of the Liberian state that in the past collected taxes but failed to provide basic social services, used

²⁵⁵ N'Diaye. B, Op Cit, pp 56 and 57.

²⁵⁶ Ibid, p 62.

brutish force to promote gross inequalities in income and wealth in favour of the ruling class.²⁵⁷ According to the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) neo-liberal package that prescribes the 'rolling back of the state,' the post-conflict Liberian state under the leadership of President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf has implemented a project to reduce the government workforce.²⁵⁸ The attempt to 'right size the public bureaucracy' by creating a small and efficient public service, although laudable, reflects an insensitivity to the needs of ordinary Liberians, that emerged from civil war with a national unemployment rate of 85 per cent and inadequate opportunities for employment in the private sector.²⁵⁹ Transparent and equitable distribution of national resources remains a serious issue. The current government has declared its intention to take action against corruption by establishing an administrative code of conduct for the executive branch, however, the capacity of government institutions to provide effective oversight of public corporations needs to be enhanced.²⁶⁰

Prospects for reform in Sierra Leone

In Sierra Leone the British colonial system in that country that co-opted Paramount Chiefs from different regions for purposes of indirect rule was developed in the post-colonial period for a similar convenience of indirect rule. When aid agencies began their operations after the end of the war it was clear that the chieftom system and patriarchy had declined in influence. In fact poor farmers made it clear that they did not trust the chiefs and village elders to be responsible for the equitable redistribution of aid.²⁶¹

It is therefore questionable, the decision by the British government and DfID to rebuild the paramount chief system, the insistence of the immediate post-war President Kabbah, reflects a lack of consideration about the wants and needs of the very people that are most likely to be directly affected by this system. Poor governance of the chieftom system was a major cause of the war. Indeed their abuse of power through high fines in customary courts and forced labour, enticed young men to flee to the diamond fields or rebel groups.²⁶² The complaints by chiefs that their houses built by the British are not grand enough for their esteemed status, reveals the chiefs blatant abuse of their position.

The DfID in 2002 conceded that there was a need for a new relationship between the chiefs and their people, to stop the abuses that had been prevalent in previous decades, this however, has not

²⁵⁷ Kieh. Jr. G.K, Op Cit, p 89.

²⁵⁸ Ibid, pp 82 and 90.

²⁵⁹ Ibid, p 90

²⁶⁰ UN Security Council Special report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Liberia, 16 April 2012, p 6.

²⁶¹ Fanthorpe. R and Maconachie. R, Op Cit, p 253.

²⁶² Hanlon. J, Op Cit, p 462.

yet happened.²⁶³ Indeed it was acknowledged that the chiefdom system had been a key factor in the exile of many young people from the yoke of custom in the rural areas and into Freetown's slum quarters and artisanal diamond mining camps, in their quest to realize themselves as consumers long before the fighting started, in this case the slums and in some cases the ranks of the RUF became places of refuge.²⁶⁴

Security in Sierra Leone revolves around more than just traditional state security agents. The dependencies created by the neo-patrimonialism system entrenched in all levels of government even at the community level, increasingly need to be overhauled, but are often overlooked in the SSR process. In much of Africa, states are not able to assure internal peace and security or establish law, order and good governance as a result of diminished legitimacy, capacity and foresight over the importance of maintaining a monopoly on the legitimate use of force.²⁶⁵

In Sierra Leone studies by Bellows and Miguel in 2006 investigated the relationship between local war violence against civilians and the impact this had on the local economy and institutions and exposed a positive relationship between war violence and greater post-war local mobilization and collective action.²⁶⁶ Improved and higher quality national representative data collected in a subsequent study in 2009 included data on household experiences of war violence, immediate post-war political, collective action behaviours and standard socio-economic questions. The more recent study is able to posit that a direct relationship between victimization and post-war behaviour exists. For example, former soldiers that experienced violence during the war rather than perpetrated it were more likely to vote.²⁶⁷ New institutions emerged among local communities who organized Civil Defence Forces (CDF) during the war as a response to RUF attacks, their formation is a sign of the resilience of Sierra Leoneans during and after the war, and their ability to form new institutions rather than cower in resignation.²⁶⁸

In Sierra Leone the loss of the control of the monopoly on violence and subsequent emergence of non-state actors to provide security was significant especially at the community level. The experience of the Civil Defence Forces (CDFs) which became a source of insecurity for Sierra Leonean's is significant. This explains the trepidation towards the community watch teams that have emerged in the post-conflict period to fill the gap left by the state's inability to maintain the monopoly on violence, due to the history of mistrust engendered between the various security

²⁶³ Hanlon. J, Op Cit , pp 462 and 463.

²⁶⁴ Fanthorpe. R and Maconachie. R, Op Cit, p 253.

²⁶⁵ Gacond. J and Uzoechina. O, 'Operationalising Norms for SST: The Role of Codes of Conduct,' in Bryden. A and Olonisakin (Eds), Security Sector Transformation In Africa, DCAF, 2010, p 119.

²⁶⁶ Bellows. J and Miguel. E, Op Cit, 2006, p 397.

²⁶⁷ Bellows. J and Miguel. E, 'War and local collective action in Sierra Leone,' in Journal of Public Economics, 93, 2009, p 1145.

²⁶⁸ Bellows. J and Miguel. E ,Op Cit ,2009 ,pp 1146 and 1147.

forces and citizens.²⁶⁹ An emphasis is however placed on the potential that such community watch teams could have in effective security provision, but this would have to be contingent on the oversight of their composition.²⁷⁰

Smith-Höhn's research reveals the emergence of a myriad of non-state security actors after the withdrawal of the UNAMSIL, these findings were based on what different respondents perceived to be most important for their personal safety, they included; the ECOWAS Monitoring Group (ECOMOG), the CDFs, family, God, Rebels, the President, youth groups, foreign troops (general), traditional authorities (paramount chief/village authorities), private security companies, the British led International Military Advisory and Training Team (IMATT), secret societies, Ghetto Boys, Bike riders and the West Side Boys.²⁷¹ Despite the existence of an array of domestic, regional and international non-state actors that emerged in the post-conflict period and the ability to integrate into the security arena this did not reduce citizen's expectations towards the state for security provision.²⁷²

During the war in Sierra Leone attacks on civilians by youth opposed to neo-patrimonialism due to their exclusion from the patronage system, was seen to have a didactic purpose to 'demonstrate to society the anger and frustration of those whom patrimonialism did not benefit and as type of political speech to derestrict the orders of patrimonial privilege and exclusion.'²⁷³ It is in this same vein that there was a successful campaign by the RUF of targeting members of traditional authority (chiefs) households that were visible and the closest equivalent to a local elite, the aim was to 'bring down the corrupt existing social order that chiefs represented.'²⁷⁴

Cognisant of the civil war's symbolic rejection of Sierra Leone's political structures, international agencies have emphasised the importance of governance reform enshrined in the 2004 government democratic decentralization programme, aimed at opening up spaces for public participation in state processes.²⁷⁵ Not only has the post-conflict Sierra Leonean state been more open about democratic participation, but society too has been able to adopt behaviours that reflect a desire to engage more in civic activism and be accountable of the future of their state, a sign of significant progress in achieving that much touted ideal of local ownership. This signals an awareness of the role that vigilance and participation at the community level, and in time may spur a spill-over of a participatory approach to decision-making at different levels of society.

²⁶⁹ Smith-Höhn. J, Op Cit, pp 103 and 104.

²⁷⁰ Ibid.

²⁷¹ Smith-Höhn. J, Op Cit, pp 100 and 101.

²⁷² Ibid, p 104.

²⁷³ Fanthorpe. R and Maconachie. R, Op Cit, p 253.

²⁷⁴ Bellows. J and Miguel. E, Op Cit, 2009, p 1150.

²⁷⁵ Fanthorpe. R and Maconachie. R, Op Cit, 254.

Post-war civic activism bodes well for the creation of grass-roots organisations that are capable of developing and articulating a stance on the future of their communities and is illustrative of the potential this has for creating the impetus for increased political participation. A recent World Bank study of social capital in Sierra Leone finds that local cooperative associations (which have historically been a central feature in both urban and rural communities, notably in the form of labour companies and rotating credit clubs) are embracing a more interest-based character and specializing in sport, entertainment and religious based activity.²⁷⁶ The increased political mobilization may also lead to increasing the agency and ownership of citizens and produce more local public goods in line with sustainable reform. This is demonstrated by the normalising of community relations represented by the increased attendance at community meetings, membership in youth groups, increases in the number of people registered to vote or have voted in elections and participate in road brushing, a locally organized activity to keep bush paths between villages passable.²⁷⁷

However there is a concern that the culture of violence that was prevalent before and during the civil war will continue to rear its ugly head when young people involved in social activism feel that their voices are being ignored. This emanates from a 2007 incident where the group known as Affected Property Owners Association supported by other Civil Society Organizations (CSO) held a protest outside Koidu Holdings the largest diamond mining company in Kono district demanding more appropriate compensation for environmental damage and less intrusive blasting times.²⁷⁸ The protest which started out peacefully turned into a riot and two people were killed with several injured. This led the government to open a Commission of Inquiry that resulted in a government White Paper establishing a new regime of corporate social responsibility.²⁷⁹

Meanwhile there is a dangerous notion emerging from rural civilians. Noticing the special treatment ex-combatants received in post-war development support like education and training, some rural civilians perceive that attention from aid agencies and subsequent reform can be gained by fighting or the threat of fighting.²⁸⁰ Fanthorpe argues against taking such discourse and associating it with the emergence of grassroots agency and a demand for reform, rather he asserts that post-war aid intervention has created a moral economy of needs assessment that rural people are desperate to influence to their advantage.²⁸¹ This reflects an off-shoot of aid and its consequences, arguably this can be attributed to the limited interactive process between the donors and recipients of aid, indeed reflecting that 'the central issue is not whether aid will have a political impact, but what that impact will be.'²⁸² If post-war democracy fails to meet expectations, no amount of civic education and

²⁷⁶ Fanthorpe. R and Maconachie. R, Op Cit, p 259.

²⁷⁷ Bellows. J and Miguel. E, Op Cit, 2009, pp 1151 and 1153.

²⁷⁸ Fanthorpe. R and Maconachie. R, Op Cit, p 267.

²⁷⁹ Ibid, p 257.

²⁸⁰ Fanthorpe. R, Op Cit, p 39.

²⁸¹ Fanthorpe. R, Op Cit, p 40.

human rights sensitisation will prevent a return to patronage networks and violent political mobilisation along ethnic or regional lines.²⁸³

Poverty, while being a hindrance for citizens to engage in political action in some instances, may in other circumstances be considered irrelevant in favour of awareness of political information as a survival strategy. Farm shelters, family verandas, palm wine “corners”, marketplaces, lorry parks and city pavements and bars are frequently sites of lively debate about social and political issues. Government’s particularly those of states that have experienced violent conflict should endeavour to engage directly in these debates through every available medium. In Sierra Leone the Koroma administration’s bold reform agenda has declared its goal of renewing the social contract between the state and the people. It aims to create better state-society dialogue by enhancing policy dissemination and engaging in public debate.²⁸⁴

²⁸² Ricigliano. R, Op Cit, p 447 (footnote 7).

²⁸³ Sierra Leone: A New Era of Reform, Africa Report No. 143, International Crisis Group, 2008, p 22.

²⁸⁴ Sierra Leone: A New Era of Reform, Africa Report No. 143, International Crisis Group, 2008, p 12.

Conclusion

Acknowledging that SSR may represent a didactic, sequential and dynamic process, and that reform cannot be time bound or confined to any specific rules is critical. It is the main argument of this paper that SSR should be approached as an instructive and learning process, which may present the key to instilling the tools to sustainable peace and good governance. An analysis of the identity, culture and norms that underpin the societies of Liberia and Sierra Leone has been emphasised as a critical point of departure with which to examine the progress and shortcomings of the SSR processes in these two post-conflict states. Establishing that there needs to be a more interactive communicative process between the external actors' involved in the SSR process has been emphasised while acknowledging the need for the recipients of the reform to resonate with the proposed reforms.

The history of authoritative security structures in both Liberia and Sierra Leone suggests a continued marginalization of citizens' needs by their security sector's as a factor that has affected the processes of SSR in both countries. There is generally in Africa a negative perception of the security sector as a state within a state, a direct result of the institutional culture, actions and conduct of security actors, past and present in relation to economic and political class formation of society.²⁸⁵ This perception engenders a disconnection between security actors and society. The insistence by international agencies and some powerful states regarding post-conflict reconstruction, to focus on rebuilding the security sector in states, such as in Liberia, that have emerged out of conflict seemingly ignores the fact that the African post-colonial state has played a critical role in causing and promoting the escalation of violence.²⁸⁶ The changes for citizens from being subjects of authoritarian security sectors and regimes to being active participants in the reform process should start from a change in mind-sets. For example, the formation of horizontal, interest based business cooperatives or occupational groups in Sierra Leone could facilitate the liberation of young men and women from village landowning elders.²⁸⁷

This paper examined the origins of SSR as a concept and highlighted the close association between the implementation of SSR and the UK commitments to reform the SLP, even before the civil war in that country had started. The evolution and broadening of the scope of SSR was instructively developed according to the context within which the UK and more prominently the DfID engaged with Sierra Leone. In Liberia, the paper has highlighted that SSR was primarily co-ordinated by the UNMIL and ultimately the responsibility to reform the AFL was passed on to PMSCs contracted by the US government. UNMIL involvement carries on until today and concerns have been raised about the ability for the Liberian security services to take up the role of primary security provider.

The paper has emphasised how the state formations of Liberia and Sierra Leone have distinctly exogenous origins that has a direct bearing on the political, economic and social cleavages that gave rise to the outbreak of conflict in each state. The legacies of poor governance are also highlighted.

²⁸⁵ Gacond. J and Uzoechina. O, Op Cit, p 117.

²⁸⁶ Smith-Höhn. J, Op Cit, p 90.

²⁸⁷ Fanthorpe. R and Maconachie. R, Op Cit, pp 256 and 260.

Indeed neo-patrimonialism and the socio-economic polarization of the Liberian and Sierra Leonean societies through a different set of social identity formations, have contributed to the challenges regarding the SSR processes in each state. In the former, class distinctions were constructed by the repatriated Americo-Liberian settlers and used to ensure the marginalization of the indigenous populations of Liberia through a culture of neo-patrimonialism. In the latter ethnic/tribal divisions were instrumental in the fragmentation of society. However, further analysis reveals that the true culprit in the breakdown of social capital in Sierra Leone was the greed and grievances that neo-patrimonialism spurred. In both Liberia and Sierra Leone a culture of violence was prevalent in creating the conditions for the outbreak of war.

It is argued that a culture of violence was instilled in the Liberian and Sierra Leonean societies due to the authoritarianism of successive leaders and the militarization of the security sectors, that sought to use brutal force on real and perceived enemies of the state. Furthermore a crisis of unrequited expectations by the young citizens of each state was a major frustration, particularly for the young men and women of Liberia and Sierra Leone and was a key factor in the swelling up of the rebel organization that made the civil wars in both states' so significant.

DDR represents the independent variable in this study, and it has been noted that the shortcomings in DDR in both state's plays a significant role in the perceptions of local recipients about external actor's role in the reform process and SSR in general. The comparison of the superior DDR process and subsequent SSR outcome between Liberia and Sierra Leone it is conceded reveals that DDR as causal factor related to the dependent variable in this study did not lead to similar outcomes, such an explanation is incomplete and leaves a gap in the understanding of the causal factor in the analysis. This means that in both cases the distinct way DDR was conducted resulted in different outcomes and perceptions about the overall reform agenda. In Liberia pre-war power structures were reinforced through DDR and in Sierra Leone DDR did lead to a broad developmental impact, despite its relative success. In both cases DDR has not resulted in successes in SSR, however, the reform process in Sierra Leone has led to the emergence of more progressive local ownership of local communities political participation, albeit this is related to the different identities, cultures and norms in that country.

This paper highlights the limits of using Mills's method of difference to eliminate variables not considered to be causally related to the dependent variable. This flaw is rectified by considering other nontrivial variables which are related to the outcome of SSR practices. The practice of neo-patrimonialism is considered an alternative and has been included in the analysis of how success or degrees of success in the outcome of SSR are attained. In addition an examination of external actors and the role of persuasion as a mechanism to alter actor's preferences also contribute to affecting the variance in the dependent variable. Process tracing has been used to uncover different variables or indeed combination of variables that have an impact on the outcome of SSR initiatives. This approach has been necessary due to the limits in measuring political and governance issues, socio-economic development, human rights, justice and reconciliation, security and co-ordination, management and resource mobilisation in the short period which Liberia and Sierra Leone have had to consolidate reform initiatives.

The emphasis in this paper is that for there to be a legitimate, genuine and purposeful reform of post-conflict states and particularly their institutions, material factors as well as normative concerns must be taken into consideration. An understanding of the communicative process that characterises such an interaction between the receivers of the prescriptions in the proposed reforms and the senders of the mechanisms needed to facilitate reform is essential. However local organic agency has seemingly begun to take root in Sierra Leone, despite the lack of real employment opportunities, there is a clear desire to leave behind the patronage based dependencies that contributed to much of the frustrations before the war. Strides in SSR in Sierra Leone, particularly in the reform of the SLP, this paper had argued has a clear link with the personal relationships between the actors involved in the reform process in that country.

In Sierra Leone the irony that war time victimization can lead to post-war political mobilization, changes the understanding of the potential for reform and reconstruction of security and other state and non-state institutions in a post-war environment, and reveal that social norms and values can change or new and more effective ones be created. Certainly reform and a change in mind-sets can occur through argumentative persuasion by the external agents of reform and then institutionalised through organic local agency. This highlights that the link between identity, culture and norms and SSR practice and outcomes is observable. Indeed as in Sierra Leone ethnic or class identities, a culture of violence and neo-patrimonialism and destructive social norms can be unlearned and open up opportunities for peace to grow. Regarding the overall experiences of post-conflict reform, the case of Sierra Leone shows that ultimately success in SSR is critically dependent of the willingness to learn and understand each mutually reinforcing perspective, between the executers of the reform initiative its recipients. Actor agency is revealed to be most valuable when driven by an organic resonance and learning mechanism of the local actors.

This research maintains that these interactions are characterized by idiosyncratic ideas and identities, social structures and cultural norms of both societies, which form a crucial component of assessing the impact of SSR. It is asserted that successful SSR can only be the outcome of the conscious ability of the local communities of a post-conflict state, to come to terms with the stark reality that real reform can only come from within and not from without. This is the key argument that this study deems critical to sustainable peace in Liberia and Sierra Leone. A concession by the recipients of reform that SSR cannot be donor-driven despite the critical role that donors play with regards to facilitation of the process is the only way real impact on the accountability and performance of security institutions can be assured.²⁸⁸ It is pivotal that this be infused with the understanding and interpretation that the agency required for such a process must be tailor-made to fit the wants and needs of each context at the national, sub-national, local and even personal levels.

²⁸⁸ Luckham. R and Hutchful. E, 'Democratic and War-to-Peace Transitions and SST in Africa,' in Bryden. A and Olonisakin. F (Eds), in Security Sector Transformation In Africa, DCAF, 2010, p 39.

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Appendix:

The Africa Conflict Prevention Pool (ACPP) was established in April 2001. At the same time, a second pool, the Global Conflict Prevention Pool, was created to address conflict prevention outside of Africa. The purpose of the ACPP is to draw together the work of the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), the Ministry of Defence (MOD) and DFID. Before the formation of ACCP, these departments acted in areas of conflict prevention independently, according to their specific expertise. The effect of working together has been to maximise the impact of UK supported interventions in Africa.²⁸⁹

²⁸⁹ http://www.ssrnetwork.net/document_library/detail/4122/the-africa-conflict-prevention-pool-an-information-document-a-joint-uk-government-approach-to-preventing-and-reducing-conflict-in-sub-saharan-africa