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**POST-CONFLICT RECOVERY OF LIBERIA
WITHIN THE AUSPICES OF UN**

Diploma Thesis

Supervisor: Mgr. Lenka Dušková

Olomouc, 2010

I declare in lieu of oath that I wrote this thesis myself. All the resources I used during my work have been noted in the list of references.

Olomouc, 2010

.....
signature

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3. Role OSN v Libérii
4. Analýza současné situace – identifikace klíčových faktorů

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List of abbreviations

AFL	Armed Forces of Liberia
AU	African Union
DAC	Development Assistance Committee
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration programs
DPKO	Department of Peacekeeping Operations
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
HDI	Human Development Index
ICTJ	International Centre for Transitional Justice
IDPs	Internally Displaced People
IGNU	Interim Government of National Unity
INPFL	Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia
LDF	Lofa Defense Force
LNP	Liberia National Police
LPC	Liberia Peace Council
LURD	Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy
MODEL	Movement for Democracy in Liberia
NCDDR	National Centre for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NPP	National Patriotic Party
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PBF	Peacebuilding Fund
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
SC	Security Council
SSR	Security Sector Reform
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
ULIMO – J	United Liberation Movement of Liberians for Democracy – Johnson section
ULIMO – K	United Liberation Movement of Liberians for Democracy – Krahn section
ULIMO	United Liberation Movement of Liberians for Democracy
UN	United Nations

UNDDRC Centre	United Nations Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration Resource
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
UNMIL	United Nations Mission in Liberia
UNOCI	United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire
UNOL	United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Liberia
UNOMIL	United Nations Observer Mission in Liberia
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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1 INTRODUCTION

The number of armed conflicts in the world has risen exponentially since the end of the Cold War in the early 1990's. The international community represented by the United Nations responded by dispatching many peacekeeping missions in order to end those conflicts and to prevent them from happening. Despite the controversy and failures of some UN peacekeeping missions, peace treaties were eventually signed and armistice established. But peace is a relative and a general term. Signing a peace treaty is just the beginning of a long journey towards reaching stability and prosperity in the war-affected country.

There were numerous failures and outbreaks of violence in post-conflict countries as peacekeeping troops left the country too early or when their mandate was too weak. Therefore, the UN started authorizing multidimensional missions with more comprehensive mandates aimed at promoting peaceful and stable long-term social and economic development of war-torn countries. In other words, the UN assists war-torn countries to begin the rebuilding of some of the basic provisions such as justice, security, and educational systems.

Liberia is a living example of such a scenario, where a country has slipped back into the civil war after the inadequate UN-supported ECOWAS operation ended and the conflict lasted for seven more years. Finally, in 2003 the civil war ended, the country's was in the state of collapse, and a massive UN-lead post conflict reconstruction of Liberia has started.

While the UN post-conflict reconstruction encompasses a wide array of diverse tasks undertaken by various UN bodies, I will focus on a few of the key aspects and factors of the UN post-conflict reconstruction in Liberia as stated in the UNMIL mandate and in the official UN post-conflict reconstruction plans. The first chapter provides a summary of the complexities of Liberian history highlighting the significant events that preceded and happened during and after the civil war. Then, the second chapter describes the UN operational framework, the main UN bodies, and their initiatives that have taken part on the post-conflict reconstruction of Liberia since 2003. A major part of this thesis is a thorough description of UN post-conflict reconstruction and an evaluation of the progress and achievements in selected areas and their impact on the security situation. These include the 2005 presidential and parliamentary elections organized by the UN, the Disarmament,

Demobilization and Reintegration programs, and the Security Sector Reform. Significant part of the thesis discusses the role and importance of education in the post-conflict recovery as well as negative aspects of corruption. The last chapter offers summary of findings and opinions of by people who have experienced issues discussed in this thesis in Liberia first hand.

2 METHODOLOGY

Overall, this diploma thesis is a compilation of the various thoughts and ideas of other publications and analysts. The summarization of the progress and outcomes of the UN post-conflict reconstruction is based on perspectives, opinions, assessments, comments, evaluation reports, and a public survey by different authors as well as organizations such as International Centre for Transitional Justice, International Crisis Group, Centre for International Peace Operations, and also the official UN Documents. Overall, there are not that many publications and analysis that are comprehensively mapping and evaluating the progress of the post-conflict reconstruction in Liberia. So in order to obtain a more in information, I decided to create a short questionnaire and have it filled in by people with field experience from Liberia, who participated on the country's post-conflict reconstruction.

In theoretical sections, regarding history of Liberia and post-conflict reconstruction, I primarily used information derived from books by well-respected and widely published scholars such Jean Krasno, Stephen Ellis, Gabriel Williams or Tarnue Johnson.

In the description of the UN operational framework in Liberia, I worked especially with official UN materials and information available online. Other than that, some of the comments and opinions that I made in the conclusion and in the chapter dedicated to analysis of questionnaire, are based on the findings I made during my short study internship at the Czech UN mission in New York.

This thesis is written using the grammatical rules of American English and is using common academic citation rules.

3 LIBERIA

History of Liberia is marked by many dramatic events and turning points. This chapter aims to provide a brief survey of the complicated Liberian history, because it is important to know both the main historic events, that preceded the eruption of the civil war, and the significant events that happened during and after the conflict. The society of today's Liberia still faces the consequences of the historic events mentioned in the chapters below.

3.1 History of Liberia until 1980

The creation of the modern state of Liberia was initiated by the American Colonization Society (ACS) in an effort to help African-Americans, descendants of slaves, emigrate from the United States to coastal settlements in what is now Liberia and Sierra Leone (see map 1) (Williams 2002, p. 48-49).

Map 1 - Liberia



Source: United Nations Cartographic Department 2004.

In 1822 the ACS established a small colony at Cape Mesurado. In 1824 the colony was named Liberia, and its main settlement was called Monrovia. Joseph Jenkins Roberts, Liberia's first nonwhite governor, proclaimed Liberian independence in 1847 (Ellis 2004, p. 2).

The new republic became the U.S.'s closest ally in the region, maintaining strong mutual political and economical ties. Both Liberia's politics and economy were dominated mainly by U.S.-backed settlers, and as a result, Liberia soon became a prosperous state. Foreign companies began profiting from its rich natural and mineral resources, such as iron ore, timber, rubber, and diamonds. Liberia became a world leader in the registration of foreign-owned ships by charging low fees and performing no inspections, which brought massive revenues into the state treasury (Johnson 2006, p. 10). But the profits went only to the hands of the tiny ruling elite, the Americo-Liberians of the Congos.¹ As the members of the True Whig Party, they subdued indigenous tribes and did not permit any organized political opposition. Indigenous Liberians, who made up the majority of the population, were thus constantly underprivileged, restrained from the governance, and they lived in poverty. This socioeconomic division is considered as one of the primary causes of conflicts that later escalated into a civil war.

The ruling elites subjugated the largely peasant population with the help from the Liberian Frontier Force (LFF) created in 1908. The LFF was an army of predominantly indigenous troops led mostly by the Americo-Liberian leaders. The forces were originally set up to collect taxes and forcibly recruit laborers for public works² (Williams 2002, p.49 – 50).

Liberia's economic situation deteriorated steadily into the twentieth century. Liberians set up protective policy by outlawing international trade outside the main six port areas which caused a further decrease in financial revenues and, at the same time, prevented the indigenous population from participating in trade. These politics generated numerous revolts among underprivileged native tribes. To improve the economic situation,

¹ Americo-Liberians are direct descendants from the first settlers sent from the USA. The Congos are referred as the descendants of slaves from the Congo Basin area that were captured and set free in Liberia by the British and U.S. navies after being transported across the Atlantic by slave traders. They received a piece of land near Monrovia to settle. The freed Congo slaves were originally not permitted to mix with the Americo-Liberians, but they gradually assimilated into the Americo-Liberian culture. Congotown, the area where the ex-Congo slaves originally settled, became a high-class Monrovia suburb (Williams 2002, p. 22-23).

² In 1962 the LFF was renamed the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) (Williams 2002, p. 49).

Liberian government took many high interest loans, which they were later unable to pay off, and the country went to the bankruptcy several times (Williams 2002, p. 49, 61).

The political, social and economic situation of the country started to improve when William V.S. Tubman took presidential office in 1944. His so called “Open Door” policy attracted huge foreign investments to Liberia. The highest revenues came from the rubber and mining industries. At that time, Liberia was Africa’s first, and the world’s third largest exporter of iron ore. Other increases in the country’s revenue were coming from ship registrations, as Liberia had, at the time, the largest registered merchant fleet in the world (The Open Door Policy of Liberia: An Overview 2006).

Despite the countrywide development which Tubman had initiated, the gap between the rich minority and the poor majority kept widening. Tubman was known as an autocrat repressing his opposition, and anti-communist serving U.S. interests in the area. Tribal hostilities toward the government and among ethnic groups continued. Alarming situation in the country forced him to grant the indigenous population an amount of political and economic involvement. In 1963, he finally enfranchised 95% of people who were previously denied the vote. William V.S. Tubman ruled for 27 years until 1971 (Williams 2002, p. 24, 62 – 63).

His successor William R. Tolbert Jr. took presidential office on July 23, 1971. He sought to implement policy that would bring the indigenous Liberians the right to participate in the country’s government and development (Dennis 2006, p. 2). Although Tolbert had good intentions, and aimed to improve the living conditions of indigenous Liberians, his initiative he did not succeed, because he had to face strong opposition within his own administration, The True Whig Party. The predominately Americo-Liberian True Whig Party had been the only ruling party since 1870 and strongly opposed any form of indigenous Liberian involvement in the governmental process (Bekoe 2008, p.95).

Anti-government activities kept going and new social and political movements rapidly attracted masses calling for broader political reform and generating public unrest. According to Williams, the biggest civil rebellion occurred when the government attempted to increase rice prices in April of 1979, because Tolbert’s family had a state monopoly on this commodity. Tolbert was also accused of corruption and at the end of his reign; he even lost the support of the powerful elite (Williams 2002, p. 62 – 65). Tolbert was executed on April 12, 1980 during the coup led by a Krahn tribesman Samuel Doe, following an establishment of military junta. The Doe’s military regime committed atrocities on former Americo-Liberian government officials and supporters of the previous

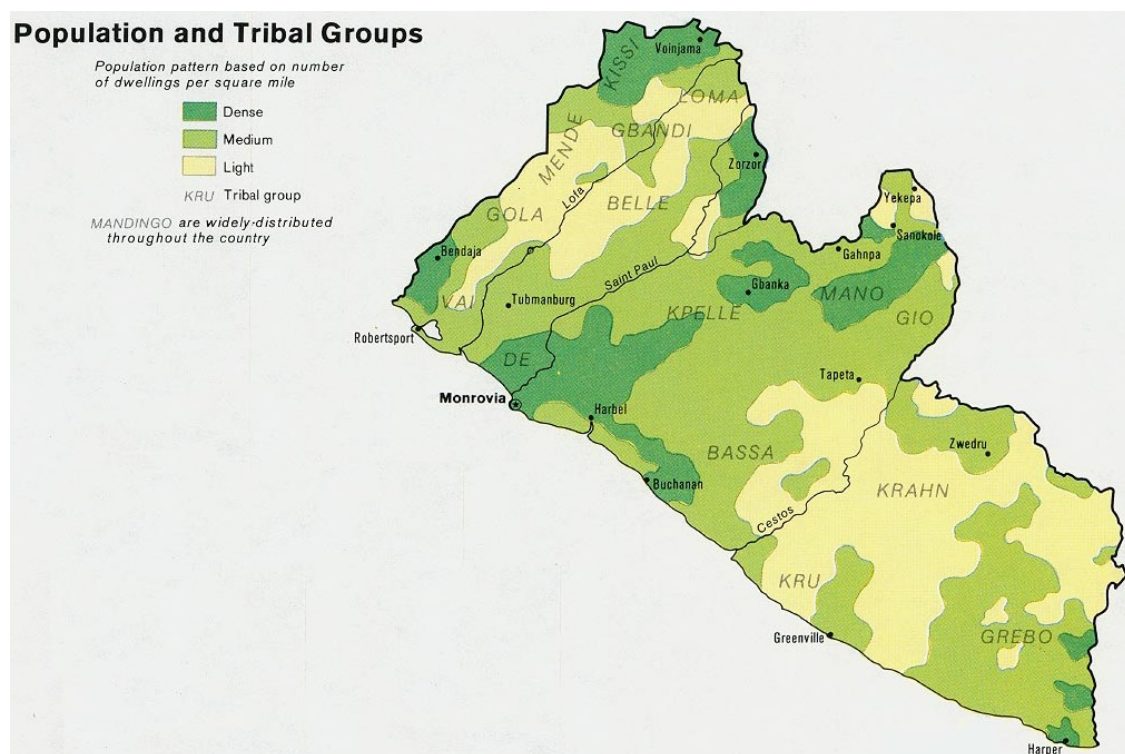
regime and plunged country into the state of lawlessness. Among the many Liberians that fled the country was then-Minister of Finance and current president of Liberia – Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf. The majority of the population initially greeted the coup with enthusiasm as Doe promised to cease discrimination of indigenous people and establish an equitable distribution of national resources, but the junta soon banned all political and civic activities, eliminated the freedom of expression, and terrorized all Liberians (Liberia: Past and Present of Africa's Oldest Republic 2006; Williams 2002, p. 62 – 87). The United States and Nigeria massively supported the Doe government. United States always viewed Liberia as having some strategic importance during the Cold War era; Doe's regime expelled the soviet diplomats and allowed the US to install facilities of strategic importance such as broadcasting towers etc. Nigeria sought to make allies with Anglophone states in the sub-region in order to compete against continuing French dominance in West Africa. These intentions displayed continuing traditional colonial rivalry among the Francophone and Anglophone territories. Howe notes that remarkably Côte d'Ivoire and its president Houphouët-Boigny intensely disliked the Doe's regime, because ... "the youthful and semi-literate Samuel Doe, who violently seized power and then executed former Tolbert's officials including president's brother. His widow, Daise Tolbert, was Houphouët-Boigny's god-daughter, who later married Blaise Campaore, president of Burkina Faso. Not coincidentally, both Houphouët-Boigny and Campaore helped Charles Taylor, Doe's major opponent, to fight against government forces." (Howe 1997, p. 148)

3.2 The first Liberian civil war (1989 – 1997)

On December 24, 1989 the Libyan-trained National Patriotic Front (NPFL) led by Charles Taylor invaded Liberian Nimba County in the north (see map 1), a home of the Gio and Mano ethnic groups (see map 2), and the long-term civil war erupted. Doe's Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL), dominated by Krahn tribesmen, promptly attacked the area of Nimba County committing atrocities against the Gio and Mano ethnic groups, who were considered supporters of Taylor's NPFL invasion. On the other hand, the NPFL troops systematically killed those of Krahn ethnic groups (see map 2) in neighboring regions such as Grand Gedeh (see map 1) who were regarded as the president's supporters. The hatred between the ethnic groups was deeply rooted. Wealthy Americo-Liberians lost their power after Doe's coup terminated their domination of the country and suffered during his reign. To regain their former influence, they initially supported the NPFL

invasion. The Gio and Mano wanted to revenge against the Doe's Krahns for the killings committed by Doe's AFL forces on their people. Many of these anti-Taylor refugees formed ULIMO (United Liberation Movement of Liberians For Democracy) in May 1992. ULIMO later split into two forces: the mostly Mandingo ULIMO-K and the mostly Krahn ULIMO-J. Other rebel group active during the civil war was called the Liberia Peace Council (LPC) – predominately Krahn organization - which served as a proxy force for the government AFL in the battle against NPFL in southeastern Liberia to gain control of timber and rubber resources; and Lofa Defense Force (LDF) which attacked positions of the ULIMO-K in Lofa County close to Guinean borders. All the warring factions that participated in the civil war constantly terrorized civilians committing serious human rights abuses (Howe 1997, p. 156; Ellis 1999, p.33-34).

Map 2 – The Density of Population and Distribution of main Tribal Groups in Liberia



Source: Texas University, 2004.

Furthermore, the conflict was fueled by contributions from abroad. Libya, Côte d'Ivoire and Burkina Faso backed the NPFL, and, on the other hand, the Doe's AFL was supported by Nigeria.

In March 1990, the NPFL split into two groups. The breakaway fraction was called Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL), and was led by Prince Y.

Johnson, a Libian-trained Gio soldier. In July 1990, the two hostile fractions entered Monrovia and fought with the AFL. The capital was soon divided into many battle zones; thousands of civilians were trapped in the street fighting and were killed. Additionally, several thousands died from starvation and diseases. The hostilities all over the country continued. Nimba County, one of the richest and the most populated areas was in ruins. Taylor's NPFL and Jackson's INPFL soon gained dominance over the capital and country.

The situation in Liberia alarmed other West African countries as the conflict was gradually destabilizing the entire region.³ The Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) established the ECOWAS Monitoring Observer Group (ECOMOG), which consisted of troops from Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Guinea and Gambia. Initially, the UN was reluctant to engage in the conflict, and therefore the UN Security Council fully supported actions of ECOMOG and left the regional peacekeeping operation to manage the crisis. From the beginning of the intervention, the ECOMOG troops were under heavy fire from the NPFL and lost many soldiers. The NPFL leader Taylor opposed the ECOWAS peace operation which was promoted mainly by the Nigerian initiative, because the Nigerian president openly supported Doe's regime during the war. On September 9, 1990, Doe was killed on his way to the meeting with ECOMOG commanders, but even after his death the conflict kept going (Bekoe 2008, p.100- 102, Call 2008, p.65).

In November 1990, ECOMOG managed to negotiate a fragile ceasefire which reduced the killing and created conditions for humanitarian activities and further peace negotiations. They also declared an Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU). A state of relative peace ended in 1992 when Charles Taylor's NPFL attacked Monrovia, ECOMOG defended the capital and negotiated the Cotonou Agreement in July 1993. This treaty was between the NPFL, IGNU and Doe's remaining supporters from the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO). After signing the Cotonou Agreement, the UN finally joined the peacekeeping efforts and started to operate alongside with ECOMOG (Pugh and Sidhu 2003, p. 235-237). In September 1993, the UN launched the UN Observer Mission in Liberia (UNOMIL), which lasted till September 1997 (UNOMIL 2001). In July 1997, Charles Taylor won presidential multiparty elections organized by United Nations Peace-building Support Office in Liberia (UNOL). Charles Taylor got 75% of the vote. Some have speculated that he won because many citizens believed that electing him was the only way to end the war (Dennis 2006, p.7)

³ The concerns were confirmed in early 1991 when the NPFL invaded neighboring Sierra Leone, supporting the Revolutionary United Front, which terrorized Sierra Leone in the same way as the NPFL did in Liberia. There were also numerous reports of rebel activities in Guinea (Williams 26).

3.3 The second Liberian civil war

Despite the efforts of the UN to consolidate peace after the July 1997 elections, Liberia was still in disorder. The presidency of former rebel Charles Taylor again devastated the country. The government could not agree on various key issues and opposition parties were constantly harassed as were political activists and journalists. There were numerous reports that paramilitary groups supported by government terrorized people of the Krahn tribe. Hundreds of thousands of refugees refused to return out of fear of further violence. Fighting and clashes started all over again between the government and various dissident forces whose members participated in the first civil war (1989 – 1997) such as ULIMO-K (renamed as the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy, LURD), a faction headed by Alhaji Kromah. LURD had their bases in the region bordering Guinea, the Lofa County (see map 1), and were allegedly backed by the Guinean government. In the end of 2002, the second rebel group - the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) – emerged in the south and started to fight next to the LURD forces to overthrow Taylor's tyranny (Bekoe 2008, p.96; Williams 2002, p.228).

Reportedly, Taylor's regime was massively fueled by illegal economic activities such as arm and diamond smuggling and drug trafficking. Charles Taylor substantially supported and cooperated with the Revolutionary United Front (RUF), a rebel group that participated in the protracted civil war in Sierra Leone. The RUF controlled the Kono District, the Sierra Leonean eastern province bordering with Guinea. This prosperous territory is the largest resource base for diamonds in West Africa. Both Charles Taylor and the RUF used the diamond revenues to buy arms and other equipment for their guerrillas. The Security Council repeatedly imposed embargo and sanctions on arms imports and timber exports in effort to prevent the proliferation of the conflict which constantly destabilized the whole sub-region. Later, Charles Taylor was accused of the crimes against humanity and brought before an international tribunal (Williams 2002, p. 228 - 230).

After numerous peace talks facilitated by the UN, ECOWAS, and the United States, the warring parties promised to cease their activities and signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Charles Taylor resigned on August 11, 2003, and went into exile to Nigeria (International Centre for Transitional Justice 2010). The United Nations Mission in Liberia was established on September 19, 2003 and a massive post-conflict reconstruction of Liberia has begun (Report of the Secretary General to the Security Council on Liberia 2003).

3.4 Liberia after the 14-years civil war

The Liberian civil war officially ended in 2003 by signing the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in Accra. As a result of the devastating era of conflict, more than 250,000 people were killed, the conflict generated refugees who escaped from the country, and internally displaced persons (Johnson 2006, p.11). After two consequent civil wars, there were estimated 60,000 fighters left aimless, jobless, mostly non-educated. Besides that, there were more unregistered arms in the country than ever before (Jaye 2003, p. 3). At that time, the country with no government fit into the category of “failed states” and with no social-security system, it stayed at the bottom of all major socio-economic indexes (UN Office of the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs 2010).

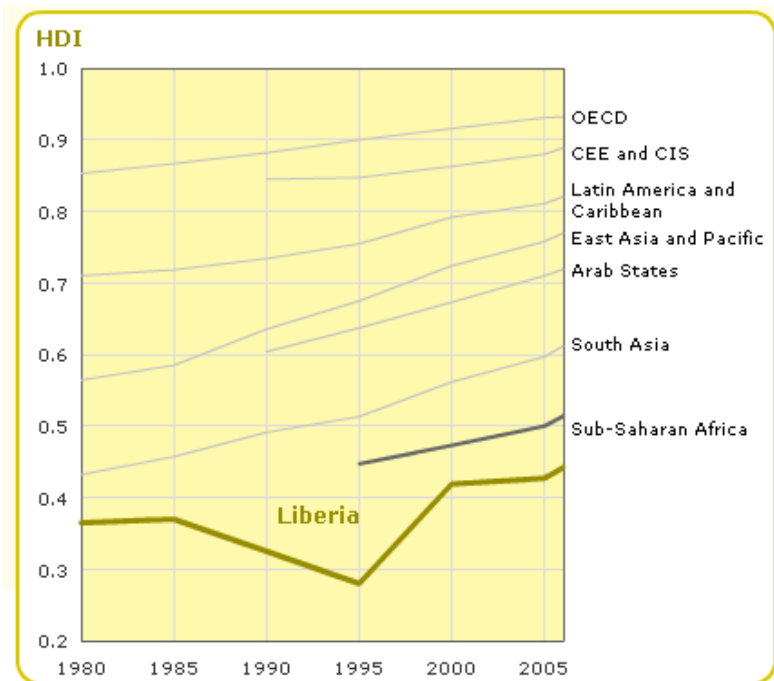
The economic situation of the country has been constantly improving since 2003, and the country has been experiencing a stable growth of real GDP each year. The only decrease of the real GDP was in 2009 due to economic crisis, when the revenues from mining and timber industries dropped and the volume of remittances had dropped as well. For the fiscal years 2010 and 2011, the GDP is estimated to rise again (African Economic Outlook 2010). However, it is important to note, that Liberia’s economic progress is measured from a very low base and the numbers should not hide the reality that the country has started recovering from the point of total destruction (Carter 2008, p. 2). So, despite many signs of economic recovery, Liberia still belongs with 18 of the world's poorest countries, with as many as 80 percent of the population living on less than one U.S. dollar a day (UN Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs 2010). The Human Development Index (HDI) has risen since 1995, but still the HDI of Liberia is one of the lowest in the world and is even below the average HDI of the Sub-Saharan Africa, which is the least-developed region of the world (see Figure 1) (Human Development Report 2007).

Pham provides a summary of the Liberian demographic data to emphasize the conflict’s devastating impacts: “...In fact, by 2003 the average Liberian was, by most socio-economic indices, worse off than he had been at the start of the civil war. Life expectancy in July 1990, for example, had been 54 years for men and 58 years for women; by August 2003, those same values for the 3.3 million Liberians were estimated to be 47.03 and 49.3, respectively. In its annual survey of the world, The Economist magazine awarded Taylor’s Liberia the dubious distinction of being “the worse place to live in 2003.” (Pham 2004, p.12) It is estimated that at the time when the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed in 2003, there were 30 doctors in Liberia for a population of 3

million people, whereas before the civil war in the 1980's there were 400 of them (Jaye 2003, p. 5).

In October 2003, the UN completely took over peacekeeping operations from ECOWAS and established the UN Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). In the years that followed, active disarmament, demobilization, reintegration, and post-conflict reconstruction unfolded under the auspices of the UN (Sessay et.al 2009, p.45 - 46). The National Transitional Government of Liberia was formed in 2003 when Charles Taylor went to exile to Nigeria and the first democratic elections in Liberia were organized by UNMIL (Bekoe 2008, p.103).⁴

Figure 1 – Trends of Human Development Index of Liberia



Source: Human Development Report 2009.

⁴ A more detailed description and evaluation of the aforementioned UN activities in Liberia is in the following chapters of the thesis.

4 POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION OF LIBERIA UNDER THE AUSPICES OF UN

Overall, the UN is the largest donor and stakeholder in the post-conflict reconstruction of Liberia. Since 2003, it has been closely cooperating with Liberian government bodies to implement the UNMIL's mandate as well as design various development programs. This chapter offers a survey of the major UN undertakings in the post-conflict reconstruction of Liberia, followed by description and evaluation of the progress in the selected areas of the post-conflict reconstruction done under the auspices of UN.

4.1 UN in Liberia – a brief description of organizational framework

The main actor of the post-conflict reconstruction of Liberia is the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL). Besides this large multidimensional UN mission with a comprehensive mandate, there is the UN Country Team (UNCT) comprising of 16 specialized agencies and funds, such as the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Educational, Scientific, Cultural Organization (UNESCO), and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), which are present to support humanitarian and development efforts in the country (United Nations Liberia 2010). All UN programs in Liberia follow the goals of the national Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSP) (Poverty Reduction Strategy of Liberia 2008). The initiatives have started based on the Liberia government's four main general pillars: enhancing national security; revitalizing the economy; strengthening governance and rule of law; and rehabilitating infrastructure and basic social services (United Nations Liberia 2010).

In order to complement the PRSP of Liberia, the UN formulated the UN Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF), which describes the individual steps how the UN will support concretely these national pillars and ideally, helps the country to reach positive progress towards the Millenium Development Goals. The specialized UN agencies such as UNICEF, UNESCO, UNDP, and others continue to carry out a diverse range of programs such as the development of educational systems, child protection, support of agriculture and food production, building health care provisions, and many others (United Nations in Liberia 2010).

Besides the UNMIL's core objective of maintenance of stability and security in Liberia, Liberia became eligible for the UN Peacebuilding Fund in 2007, which is a 15-million dollar grant for various post-conflict reconstruction programs to be undertaken by UN agencies, the Government of Liberia, and NGO's. In general, its main objective is to ensure that there is no violent conflict and implementing programs focused on the conflict prevention. It is in compliance with UNMIL activities, as well as Liberia Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (United Nations Peacebuilding Fund 2010).

One of the favorite tools that UNMIL and the Government of Liberia use as a service to public is the UNMIL Radio. It has been operating 24 hours a day since January 2004 and has been helping to spread important information even to the very remote parts of the country (UNMIL Radio 2010).

4.2 UNMIL (United Nations Mission in Liberia)

4.2.1. UNMIL description and mandate

UNMIL was launched in 2003 when the major fights were over and the Comprehensive peace agreement was signed. Neither of previous UN and ECOWAS missions in Liberia had had such comprehensive mandate as UNMIL (Sessay et. al 2009, p. 65). UNMIL is a large multidimensional peacekeeping operation. Its core objective is to maintain stability and promote sustainable peace. UNMIL was officially established by Security Council resolution 1509 (2003) of 19 September 2003. Its core mandate since its beginning is to support the implementation of the ceasefire agreement and the peace process; protect United Nations staff, facilities and civilians; assist the Government of Liberia to organize the 2011 elections; coordinate the DDR programs; support humanitarian and human rights activities; as well as assist in the security sector reform, including national police training and formation of a new, restructured military (UNMIL Mandate 2003).

Currently, UNMIL has over 14,000 staff including more than 11,000 international troops and 1,100 police advisors (UNMIL 2010) (see Figure 1). The Liberian National Police is being trained by the UN to take over civil protection duties, while the Armed Forces of Liberia are also being recruited and trained with the assistance of U.S. State Department and hired security companies (International Centre for Transitional Justice 2010).

Table 1 – UNMIL – Major Facts and Figures

Authorized Strength: September 2003 – July 2005	Up to 15,000 military personnel, including up to 250 military observers and 160 staff officers, 1,150 police officers
Authorized Strength: July 2005 – March 2008	Up to 14,875 military personnel; 1,240 police officers,
Authorized Strength: March 2008 – to July 2009	13,586 total military personnel, 196 military observers; 1,148 police; 512 international civilian personnel, 940 local staff and 238 UN Volunteers
Authorized Strength: July 2009 - present	9,644 total uniformed personnel (8,226 troops and 124 military observers); 1,294 police; 441 international civilian personnel; 989 local staff; 207 UN Volunteers
Approved budget (1 July 2009 - 30 June 2010):	\$561.00 million

Source: UMMIL 2010.

<<http://www.un.org/en/peacekeeping/missions/unmil/facts.shtml>>

Besides this, the mission would include innovations such as an installation of international, professional technicians into key government positions, such experts from International Centre of Transitional Justice, who would help create non-corrupt institutions, and train the Liberians to be able to take over their tasks in future (Howard 2007, p. 312). Furthermore, this peacekeeping operation was launched under the provisions of Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which allows the use of coercive measures (Charter of the United Nations 2010). Therefore, UNMIL’s troops were authorized to deploy a force lest the terms of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement were violated. The UN forces consist mainly from soldiers from Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nigeria and are deployed throughout all the country (see Map 3).

Map 3 – UNMIL Deployment, January 2010

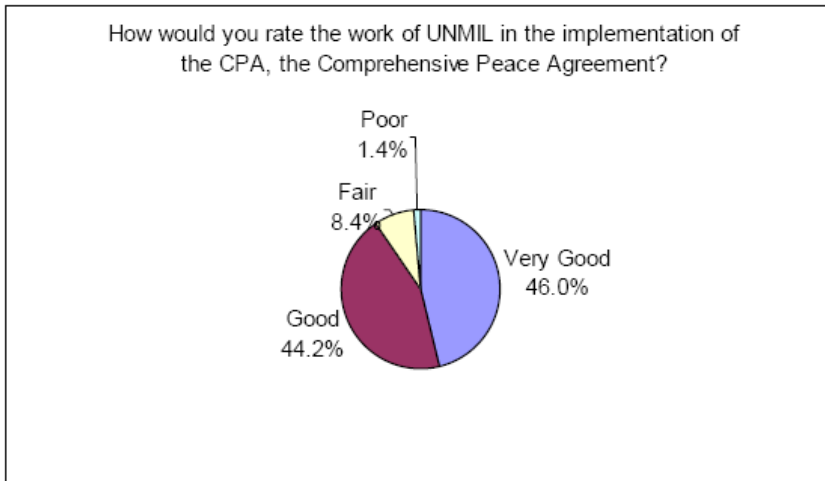


Source: UNMIL 2010.

4.2.2 UNMIL’s performance as supporter of ceasefire agreement and security provider

Provision of security in Liberia has been the core mission of UNMIL as mandated. In 2003, the CPA was signed and UNMIL was mandated to implement the ceasefire and according to its mandate, peacekeepers were permitted to use force in case the ceasefire is broken. UNMIL was very successful in managing to hold the ceasefire (Bekoe 2008, p. 127). The countrywide report prepared by Yale scholar Dr. Jean Krasno confirms this statement. 90% of respondents stated that UNMIL had done a very good or good job implementing the CPA (see Figure 2) (Public Opinion Survey of UNMIL’s Work in Liberia 2006).

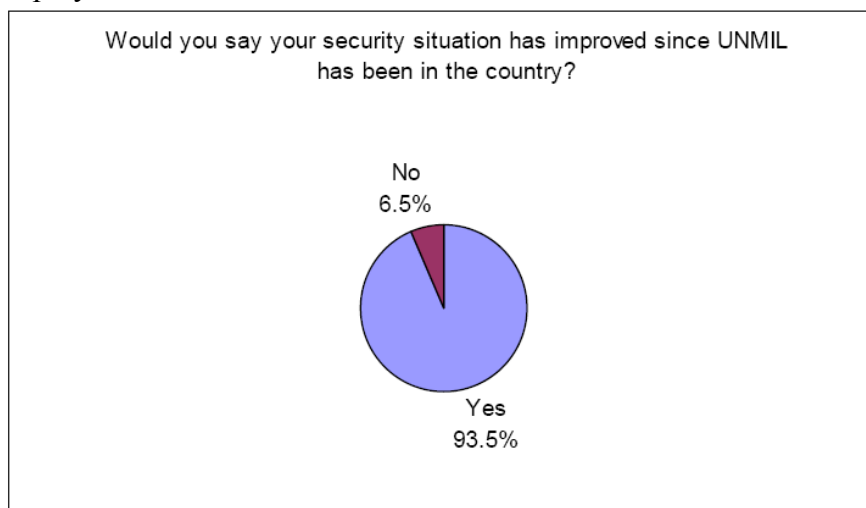
Figure 2 – Public Opinion Survey on the UNMIL’s implementation of the CPA



Source: Public Opinion Survey of UNMIL’s Work in Liberia 2006

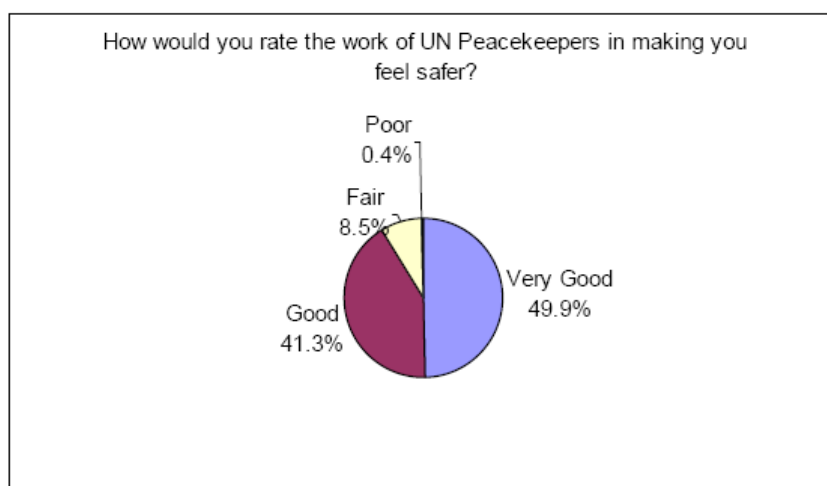
Overall, the surveys confirm that UNMIL presence is welcomed by locals and it is highly legitimate as a security provider (see Figures 3 and 4) (Report of OIOS; Sessay et.al 2009).

Figure 3 – Public Opinion Survey on improvement of security situation since UNMIL’s deployment



Source: Public Opinion Survey of UNMIL’s Work in Liberia 2006.

Figure 4 – Perception of safety among Liberians



Source: Public Opinion Survey of UNMIL’s Work in Liberia 2006.

The Czech police officer who worked in Liberia for UNMIL in the beginning of 2005 and then in 2008, also experienced the significant improvement of security situation: “In 2005, there were still weapons among the population, every week you could hear shootings the streets. When I came back in 2008, I never heard any kind of shooting when there were disputes among tribes (land disputes) or during street riots. In 2005 the guns were used, whereas in 2008, people would use „only“machetes, sticks, or stones when a skirmish happened.” (Questionnaire 2, Attachment 1)

4.2.3 The 2005 UNMIL-led presidential and parliamentary elections

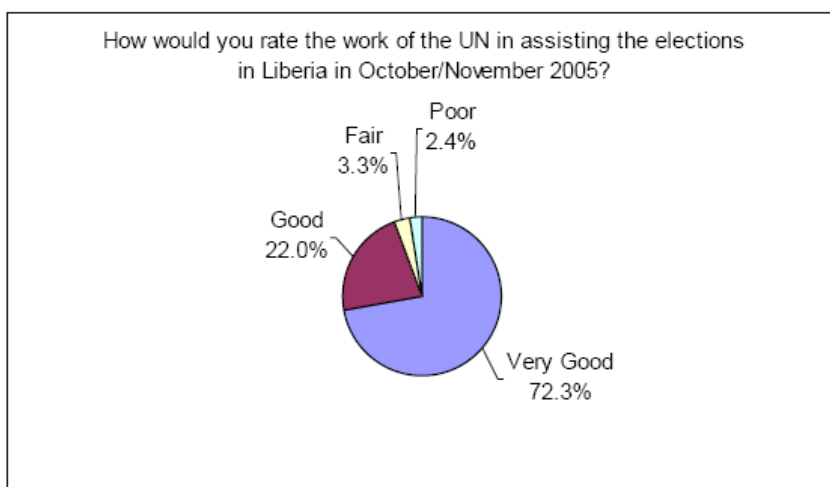
One of the principal tasks of the UNMIL was to conduct presidential elections. UNMIL’s support of the National Elections Commission included providing logistical support, ensuring maximum security before, during and after elections, deploying experts on post-conflict elections, training 22,000 Liberians for the voter registration and polling activities, assisting in campaigns to educate the voters, etc. (UNMIL 2008).

Highly observed elections took place on November 8, 2005 between ex-footballer George Weah and Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, a Harvard graduate and a former World Bank

economist. Johnson-Sirleaf won and became the first ever elected female president in Africa (Bekoe 2008, p. 44; UNMIL 2010).

Finally, a total of 1,352,730 eligible Liberians were registered and the elections were held within the established time frame and were conducted in a secure, non-violent environment. The population survey done by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) indicated that the outcome of those activities was positive: 74 per cent of respondents stated that they perceived the elections as free and fair (Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services 2006, Sessay et. al 103). Another countrywide public opinion survey shows similar data as OIOS: “A full 94% of the Liberian participants expressed their belief that the UN did a good or very good job in ensuring that the October and November 2005 elections in Liberia were free and fair, with 72% describing the work as very good.” (see Figure 5)(Public Opinion Survey of UNMIL’s Work in Liberia 2006)

Figure 5 – Public opinion on the 2005 UN-led elections



Source: Public Opinion Survey of UNMIL’s Work in Liberia 2006

Finally, most local and international observers, including the Carter Centre, considered the 2005 election organized by the UN to be free and fair (Sessay et. al 2009, p. 103; Johnson 2006, p. 12).

As oppose to the presidential elections, the parliamentary ones generated some concerns, many voted politicians had dubious human rights violation records from the past

(Dennis 2006, p.5). The most controversially voted politicians according to Peter Dennis from International Centre of Transitional Justice include:

Table 2 – The most controversially voted politicians in the 2005 parliamentary elections

Prince Johnson, former leader of the INPFL who tortured and murdered former president Samuel Doe in 1989 and ravaged the country, recently elected as a senator in Liberia
Jewel Taylor, former wife of Charles Taylor
Adolpho Dolo, former general of the Taylor’s NPFL
Edwin Snowe, former son in law of Charles Taylor and currently under a UN travel ban
Kai Farley, former general in MODEL
Saah Gboillie, former NPFL commander and former Liberian police officer
Edward Slinger, former AFL general accused of atrocities in the Doe regime
Zoe Pennue, former top official of MODEL

Source: Dennis 2006, p. 6 – 10.

The 2005 presidential and parliamentary elections in Liberia were by far the most successful in Liberian history, and are generally viewed as a cornerstone and an essential pre-condition of the post-conflict reconstruction of Liberia (Carter 2008).

Under Security Council resolution 1885 (2009), UNMIL is also mandated with assisting the Government with the future 2011 presidential and parliamentary elections. It authorizes the mission to provide logistical support, particularly to facilitate access to remote areas, coordinating international electoral assistance, and supporting Liberian institutions and political parties (UNMIL 2010). The UN Envoy Ellen Margrethe Løj has emphasized the importance of the 2010 elections: “Liberia is at a cross-road,” she said, adding that the 2011 elections provide a “unique and special opportunity for Liberia and Liberians to show the international community that Liberia has indeed chosen the road towards prosperity, peace and development.” (UNMIL Press Release 2010)

As emphasized by experts from ICTJ, there is a concern that people who were highly ranked figures during the atrocious civil war could regain their power in the 2011 elections. Senator Prince Johnson, whose units committed numerous human rights violations in 90’s, has already announced his candidacy for the 2011 presidential elections (Liberian Observer).

As a part of its mandate, in order to support promotion of human rights, UNMIL launched the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC). Its main task is to promote and implement the transitional justice process as a tool to deal with the consequences of the civil war. Generally, it is a response to the widespread human right violation by recognizing victims and investigates perpetrators. It is an important step towards reconciliation and democracy in the post-conflict country (International Centre for

Transitional Justice 2010). ICTJ has been cooperating with the TRC and collected nearly 20,000 statements and heard nearly 800 testimonies and suggested a number of recommendations on the processes for the country. However, despite the evidence, the process of implementation of the TRC recommendations is very slow. Barring human rights abusers from public offices is highly recommended, but not implemented in practice. The candidacy of the highly controversial politicians for the next 2011 elections proves it. The main obstacle of the process of investigating human rights violation and prosecution of villains is, paradoxically, besides the lack of resources, the fear that the “...pursuit of justice could derail the peace process (ICTJ Liberia 2010).

4.2.2. Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (DDR) programs in Liberia

This chapter provides description and thorough evaluations of the achievements of the DDR programs in Liberia conducted mainly UNMIL and its partners - UNDP, National Commission of Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (NCDDRR) and other agencies. Did the DDR programs help to improve the security situation? Were they successful? These are some of the questions discussed in the following chapters.

4.2.2.1 Defining the DDR programs

The DDR program represents a typical first step of the post-conflict reconstruction in the war-torn countries across the world. In practice, their goal is to collect weapons in order to reach sustainable ceasefire and support the peace process, while assisting ex-combatants with their reintegration into the society. UN bodies, namely the Department of Peacekeeping Operations (DPKO) with collaboration of other UN agencies and funds, conduct the program as whole, and it is currently being implemented in 14 countries across the world (Castillo 2008, p. 43 – 44). The overall objective of the DDR, according to the United Nations Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration Resource Centre (UNDDR), is to contribute to security and stability in a post-conflict country and therefore, provide the basic preconditions for further development of a country.

The three phases of the DDR are: disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. The disarmament phase consists of the process of collecting weapons from ex-combatants, the demobilization phase aims at disengaging them from the military structures, and the

reintegration phase assists ex-fighters to reintegrate into the society and find a job by providing various trainings and educational programs (UNDDR Resource Centre 2009).

4.2.2.2. DDR programs in Liberia

The core business of UNMIL in Liberia is the implementation of disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (DDR) programs as mandated by the UN Security Council Resolution 1509 (UNMIL Mandate 2003) in order to support and reach a complete ceasefire in the country. The programs for ex-combatants were launched on 7 December 2003 in Camp Schefflein, then, they had to be interrupted due to complications in management resulting in street riots (more in chapter 4.2.2.3). After a few new cantonment sites around the country were built, they were launched again. After the riots, other cantonment sites were built around the country, and on 31 October 2004, the first phase of demobilization and disarmament officially ended. Between December 2003 and October 2004, the total number of former combatants disarmed and demobilized was 101,495 (out of the total, there were 22,370 women, 8,523 boys and 2,440 girls) (UNMIL 2008). The disarmament sites collected and destroyed 28,314 weapons, 6,486,136 small ammunitions and 33,604 heavy ammunitions. Despite the official end of the DD phase, UNMIL had continued to collect weapons in several sites and by August 2007, there were additional 748 weapons, 1390 of unexploded ordnance and 99,980 rounds of ammunition (Report of the Office of International Oversight Services 2010).

While the disarmament and demobilization part has ended, the reintegration part of the programs had continued until mid-2009 (Report of the Office of International Oversight Services 2010) and its impact on the population and achievements have been continuously mapped and evaluated (more in chapter 4.2.2.3). By August 2007, 90,000 former combatants had undergone the reintegration programs, but whether the outcome of reintegration was successful is questionable and hardly measurable in short-term (Child Soldiers Global Report 2008).

The reintegration phase started in June 2004. As oppose to the DD phase, which was entirely sponsored and controlled by the UNMIL, 67% of the reintegration phase is conducted and funded mainly by the UNDP through its Trust Fund such as UNICEF. Various donors such as the European Union, US Agency for International Development (USAID), and other partners conduct the remaining 33% (UNDDR Resource Centre 2009).

In practice, the reintegration phase in Liberia was focused on four major sectors, which were designed based on the preferences of its beneficiaries. So ex-combatants

participated in the following sectors: formal education (41 percent), vocational and skills training (55 percent), agriculture (2 percent), and public works, job placement and empowerment (1 percent) (Caesar 2007, p. 33-34).

4.2.2.3 Evaluation of the DDR programs

A well-completed implementation of DDR programs is regarded as the first important step to end the conflict and help prevent it, and it is a basic precondition to achieve sustainable peace and stability (Refugees International 2004). There are number of studies and articles describing the DDR programs in Liberia and evaluating them. Generally, the disarmament and demobilization (DD) phases are described and evaluated separately from the reintegration part (R).

The DD phase has serious organizational and resource problems immediately during the initial phases. They were not prepared to respond to the number of ex-combatants willing to join the program and they had let significant number of the ex-combatants wait until four new cantonment sites were built, which resulted in a wave of riots among ex-combatants in December 2003 (Caesar 2007, p. 37) “Serious problems in communication, organization, control and coordination within the newly launched UNMIL appeared between the UN, local population and other UN agencies.” (International Crisis Group 4) Critics say that the DD part started without proper preparation and thorough evaluation of the situation in the region. The program experienced serious complications, because the expected turnout of the ex-combatants was four times higher than expected. Also, the ex-combatants were supposedly told that they would not receive immediate payment in return for their weapons (Child Soldiers 2008). As a result, there were thousands of armed and frustrated soldiers waiting by the facility to join the program, which resulted in riots, killings and property destruction (Daboh et. al 2010, p. 13; Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services 2010; Bekoe 2008, p. 129).

As for collecting the weapons, there are certain disproportions in numbers and statistics, which can be very misleading in this case. There is no reliable data on who and how many Liberians actually participated in the civil war. There are reports that ordinary civilians often joined the programs, bringing a weapon or the required quantity of ammunition just in order to receive cash. Sometimes, they obtained these arms or ammunition from ex-combatants or dealers, participated in the programs and then gave part of the cash back to the mediators, mostly their ex-commanders. These practices were very common and especially children got involved in them, because they were easily

manipulated and unlike adults, they did not even have to stay in the camps for five days (Paes 2005, p. 253 – 254, Call 2008, p.71). Also, there are discrepancies in terms of a proportion weapons collected to the number of combatants. When comparing the number of combatants with the number of weapons collected, the ratio is about three combatants to one weapon. There are two possible reasons explaining such disproportion. First, the threshold to join the programs was only one firearm or 150 rounds of ammunition, which could lead to decrease in the collection of small arms and light weapons (Pugel 2007, p. 44).

Furthermore, heavier equipment used by rebel groups was largely absent among the disposed arms, and allegedly the heavier weapons were transferred to neighboring Côte d'Ivoire for a more lucrative price than paid by UNMIL. While UNMIL paid \$300 for heavy weapon, the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) paid \$830 in its disarmament program. So it provided the incentive to keep the weapon and cross the Liberian border. The two consequently running UN mission in the region should have communicated more in order to avoid that (Daboh et. al 2010, p. 10 - 11). That is why the number of collected weapons was lower than expected.

Also, there is supposedly evidence which proves that former combatants took away the weapons of fighters, which completely prevented them from joining the DD process and subsequently benefit from the R process.

But overall, despite the aforementioned complications and shortcomings in organization of the DD process, all the bibliographic and electronic resources point out that the DD phase was more or less successful.

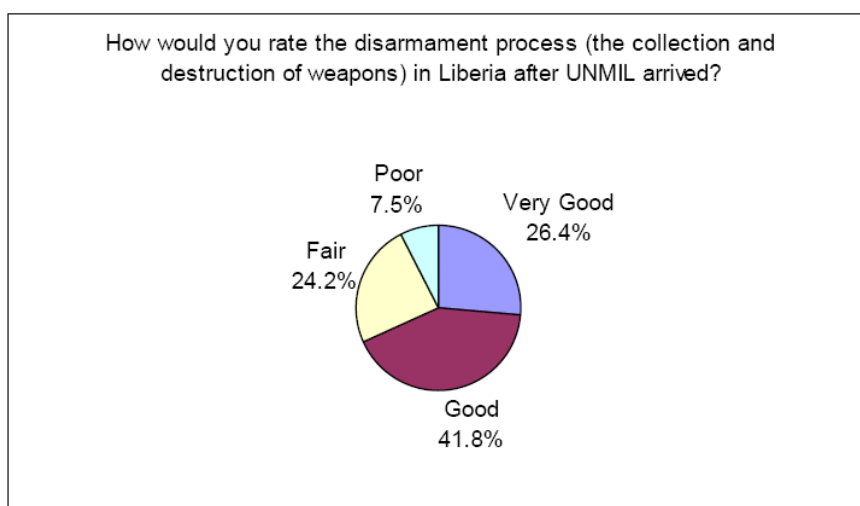
According to the country wide research done by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS)⁵, 97% of respondents stated that programs "... had helped to end the war and 78% noted that that they were confident that UNMIL was capable of preventing fighting among armed groups." (Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services 2010) Also, 85% of combatants noted that they felt safe from the attack from opposing factions while staying at the regrouping sites (Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services 2010).

In addition to the OIOS report, the External Public Opinion Survey of UNMIL's Work in Liberia conducted by Dr. Jean Krasno provides information about the outcomes of

⁵ The OIOS survey used a mix of qualitative and quantitative methods. The respondents were comprised of international and national staff of UNMIL, United Nations Volunteers and senior military, United Nations police staff, Liberian government staff, UN agencies representatives, DPKO Headquarters staff, civilians, ex-combatants, and other stakeholders (Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services 2010).

DDR program.⁶ As for the DD phase, many, 68% of respondents stated that UNMIL did a very good or good job in disarming the fighters, whereas 32% of respondents stated that the disarmament process was only fair or poor (see Figure 6) (Public Opinion Survey of UNMIL's Work in Liberia 2006).

Figure 6 – Public opinion on the disarmament process



Source: Public Opinion Survey of UNMIL's Work in Liberia 2006

Finally, Daniel Bednář who worked for UNMIL for 2 years and experienced the transition of the country confirmed the long-term outcomes of the DD to be very positive (Questionnaire 2, Attachment 1).

The second essential part of the DDR programs is the reintegration phase, which should follow immediately after the disarmament and demobilization part. While the DD phase was formally over in 2004, the Reintegration phase is still ongoing. While the outcomes of the DD part was generally considered successful, the reintegration phase has faced many challenges and substantial criticism from external various experts as well as from the UN itself.

⁶ The survey was conducted in January 2006. Researchers were dispersed throughout most of the country, covering 13 of the 15 counties, selecting random sample of the population. Nearly 800 Liberians responded including an age range from 13 to 18 year olds to over 65, who had various occupation, but over 62% said they were unemployed. 61 percent were male and 39 female (Public Opinion Survey of UNMIL's Work in Liberia 2006)

The first difficulty arose in terms of funding. While the DD part component of the program was financed by UNMIL, coordination of reintegration activities is still complicated, because they rely on highly unstable support by multiple donors such as EU, USAID and others (Paes 2005, p.258). The smooth and effective running of these programs depended on the ability and interest of various international humanitarian and developmental organizations, which did not work well. The funding of reintegration programs has never been sufficient, which results in significant delays in implementation (Eighth Progress Report of the SG on UNMIL 2005). In practice, the reintegration was meant to follow shortly after disarmament and demobilization, but it did not due to donor fatigue, which started after the period of emergency right after the end of conflict was over (IRIN Africa 2007).

As a result of the shortcomings in funding, UNDP and other agencies did not manage to establish enough short-term jobs and facilities for various training programs, so several thousands of disarmed ex-combatants without any job opportunities had to wait for months to be placed in the programs. Also, there were some delays in paying the initial allowances that the ex-combatants should receive after absolving the DD phase (Caesar 2007, p. 33). The complications in funding led to serious riots and looting among the ex-fighters in Monrovia in 2007. They complained that the promises are not kept by the Liberian government and the UN (IRIN News 2007).

Also, Sessay et. al (Sessay et.al 2009, p.49 - 50) argue that the reintegration activities did not reflect the current needs on the job market. For example, there were trainings that generated hundreds of drivers, which could not then find a job. On the other hand, acquiring skills for the work in agriculture is the most common and needed in rural areas, but the programs did not focus enough on agricultural sectors with only 2 percent of participation (Sessay et.al 2009, p.49 - 50).

Furthermore, experts emphasize that the overall and long-term success of DDR in Liberia can impact the entire region. The programs should also include other mercenaries of different nationalities fighting not only in Liberia but also in the entire sub-region to ensure that they will not keep fighting in other parts of the unstable region. These include areas such as Guinea (Guinean paramilitaries supported LURD in the civil war) and Côte d'Ivoire (which has allegedly supported MODEL) (Call 2008, p. 89; Caesar 2007, p. 38).

Overall, Liberia's unemployment rate is around 75% makes it as one of the highest unemployment rates in the world (Liberia PRSP 2008). UNMIL simply can not generate thousands of fulltime jobs in a short period of time, nor can the Liberian government. It is

long term goal whose completion depends on overall recovery of the Liberian economy. The high level of unemployment causes widespread frustration among the ex-fighters in Liberia which leads to a greater risk of the eruption of violence and conflict (Castillo 2008, p. 61). In addition, the economic crisis brought a serious decline in the remittances sent by the large Liberian diaspora living abroad (Liberian Observer 2010).

Unemployment and general frustration from the situation is considered the very security threat in Liberia. Not only that ex-combatants find it hard to find jobs, there are many unemployed people in general. Such a frustration can lead to the loss of the government's and UN's credibility. The worst scenario would be the regrouping of the former warring factions, which could start fighting again (International Crisis Group 2010).

As of today, it is estimated that many unemployed ex-combatants have started working for companies illegally exploiting diamonds and gold. Also, they migrate to neighboring countries, mainly to Guinea where they join paramilitary factions (Fifteenth Progress Report of the SC on the UNMIL 2007; Castillo 2008, p.61).

Furthermore, the reintegration progress is seriously undermined by continuous clashes over land ownership. Land disputes have been historically common in Liberia, when ethnic groups fought against each other. Throughout the 20th century, ruling elites and other allied ethnic groups maintained the traditional system that created sharp class-distinctions between new-comers and land owners (Call 2008, p.121). The situation further worsened during and after the civil, when many people had to leave. Refugees, IPDs and ex-combatants keep coming back which repeatedly results into serious tensions and fights over the land (Johnson 2006, p.19).

International Crisis Group labeled the land disputes as "...the most explosive issue in Liberia". (International Crisis Group 2010) Today, the UNPOL with LNP contingents are dispersed throughout the country, but they do not have enough capacities to control and contain the clashes in this area.

The Program evaluation of the performance and the achievements of results by the UNMIL conducted by the Office of Internal Oversight Services (OIOS) provide empirical data to emphasize the failures of the reintegration phase: Only 37% of ex-combatants had gone through the program and many of them dropped out from trainings. On the other hand, it is important to note that according the survey, the social reintegration had some positive results: "...77% of ex-combatant respondents spent most of their time with "family and friends", as opposed to "friends from faction"." (Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services 2010)

Besides men and women, there were 11, 780 children demobilized. UNICEF conducted the reintegration activities of children. Children were provided with programs that were targeted on psychological recovery, providing psychological counseling. According to UNICEF, 99 percent of demobilized children were reunited with their families (UNICEF 2008). Out of 11, 780 children who participated, 4,929 were enrolled in skills training and 2079 have graduated from skills training (Caesar 2007, p. 33)

As for the child soldiers, child protection agencies claim that many of them still stay with their commanders and are used as a source of cheap labor outside of UNMIL and government control, especially in the remote hardly accessible areas. Furthermore, there are reports that \$300 allowance given to children during the DDR program exposed them to exploitation by their former combatants. There are still thousands of vulnerable children living in streets who are prone to exploitation. Also, many of the former child soldiers still have a strong tie with their former commanders, since they spent most of their life serving them, and have no family to come back to (Child Soldiers Coalition 2006). Amnesty international stresses, that only 11,353 had been processed by UNMIL, while the estimated number of children in fighting forces was between 20 and 25,000 from 1997 – 2003 (Amnesty International 2004).

5 UNMIL'S SUPPORT FOR SECURITY SECTOR REFORM IN LIBERIA

After the devastating civil war, there has been an urgent need to restore security and justice institutions as a pivotal condition for achieving stable economic growth of Liberia.

Support for the security sector reform is a part of UNMIL’s mandate. The aim of this chapter is to monitor and describe progress of the reform and describe its main challenges and shortcomings, which could eventually undermine the post-conflict reconstruction of Liberia and worsen its security situation.

5.1. Defining the Security Sector Reform (SSR)

Eliminating disorder, crime, violence, and maintaining security in the country is commonly agreed to be the fundamental step towards initiating sustainable economic and social development of a war-torn country.

The Security Sector Reform (SSR) is a commonly used term for an array of actions done in the post-conflict country in order to help restore security and build necessary country’s institutions such as army, police, and justice system, which are mostly very weak or even non-existent after a violent conflict.

Development Assistance Committee (DAC) of OECD defines the overall objective of international support to SSR processes as “...Increasing the ability of partner countries to meet the range of security and justice challenges they face in a manner consistent with democratic norms, and sound principles of governance and the rule of law.” (DAC Guidelines on SSR 2010)

The main objectives and actors of the SSR are summarized in the following Tables 3 and 4:

Table 3 – Actors of the SSR

CORE SECURITY ACTORS	MANAGEMENT AND OVERSIGHT BODIES	AND	JUSTICE AND THE RULE OF LAW	AND	NON-STATUTOR Y SECURITY
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			FORCES
Police service, Gendarmeries, Presidential Guards, Coast guards, Border guards	Executive, national security bodies, and legislative select committees	Judiciary and justice ministries	Liberation armies
Intelligence and security services (both military and civilian)	Ministry of defense	Prisons	Guerilla armies
Customs authorities	Ministry of internal affairs	Criminal investigation and prosecution services	Private security companies
Reserve or local security units (civil defense forces, national guards, militias)	Ministry of foreign affairs	Human rights commissions and ombudsmen	Political party militias
Army	Customary and traditional authorities	Customary and traditional justice systems	
	Financial management bodies (finance ministries, budget officers, financial audit and planning units)		

Table 4 – Four main objectives of the SSR

- Establishment of effective governance, with oversight and accountability in the security system
- Improved delivery of security and justice services
- Development of local leadership and ownership of the reform process
- Sustainability of justice and security service delivery

Source: OECD/DAC Handbook on SSR 2007

5.2 Importance of the Security Sector Reform in the post-conflict Liberia

The Security Sector Reform is one of the major pillars of post-conflict reconstruction in Liberia. “Restructuring and reforming security institutions are central to Liberia’s national security.” (Liberia PRSP 2008) Besides that, well-functioning security forces are critical precondition to development of other crucial areas such as economic development, education, security, and other key sectors (Carter 2008, p.2).

Due to the long-term oppression of the majority of indigenous Liberians by the ruling elite, descendants of settlers from the 18th century who controlled Liberian politics and economy, Liberians lost trust in state institutions. Institutions providing security and justice were connected to former autocratic regime and to the warring factions during the civil war. They were biased and corrupt. Liberians associated police and army with repression and fear, rather than with protection (Call 2008, p. 78).

In order to regain the impartiality and professionalism of the security forces as basic providers of security, Liberian police and army have to be reformed from scratch (Castillo 2008, p.17). UNMIL in the cooperation with Liberian government and the US Department of State launched extensive Security Sector Reform in order to create effective and professional institutions (UNMIL mandate 2003).

5.4 The Security Sector Reform in Liberia

The SSR process has been ongoing since 2003. UNMIL oversees the reconstruction of the Liberian National Police (LNP) and two private military companies contracted and paid by the US government are in charge with training the new army. Therefore, Security protection of civilians is completely under the conduct of UNMIL and its partners. Both UNMIL and US Agencies cooperate with the Ministry of Defense and the Ministry of Justice of Liberia (Liberia PRSP 2008).

5.4.1 Reform of the Liberia National Police (LNP)

Reform of the Liberia National Police (LNP) started in 2003 under the Security Council Resolution from 2003, which mandated UNMIL with its implementation. After the civil war, the LNP was in poor condition and did not provide any service to Liberian

citizens unless they bribed them. UNMIL started the reform by the complete dissolution of nearly 6,500 of LNP personnel, followed by their vetting. It was found that only 10 percent of them have a college education, and less than 23 percent of them have completed any kind of specialized training. Many of these personnel were demobilized and paid a retirement allowance, and the rest of personnel had to reapply and start training again (Samukai 2007, p.19).

In practice, training of the LNP is conducted by UNMIL’s police component called the United Nations Police (UNPOL). Their personnel consist of police officers from 38 countries, a few dispatched by the Ministry of Interior of the Czech Republic. The authorized strength of the mission is 498 UNPOL Advisors, 32 Correction Advisory Officers and 7 Formed Police Units. The official mandated activities include: training and development, reform and restructuring, research and planning, conducting operations, and operating an Emergency Response Unit (United Nations Police 2010). UNPOL’s achievements since 2003 are summarized in the Table 5.

Table5 – UNPOL’s achievements since 2003

Graduation of over 3,500 new recruits from a basic training program at the National Police Training Academy, completed on schedule in 2007.
Deactivation of over serving 2,200 LNP officers who did not meet agreed minimum criteria for service in the “new” LNP or who had surpassed statutory age and length of service requirements.
Construction and renovations projects at the National Police Training Academy including classrooms, offices, male and female dormitories.
Advanced and specialist police training to over 500 members of the Emergency Response

Unit (ERU).
Development and Implementation of 23 LNP policies and procedures, including a revised LNP Duty Manual.
Recruitment and training of over 400 female LNP officers; including the development and implementation of a government endorsed female educational support program (trained by specialized female police unit from India).
Facilitated training and equipping of a 300 officer LNP Police Support Unit for disorder control in Nigeria.
Development and ongoing training, equipping and capacity building of a 500 officer, armed, Emergency Response Unit (139 male and 1 female officer has graduated so far).
Strengthened LNP command and control and executive decision making through the institution of a Senior Advisory Program with the executive tier of the LNP management
Strengthening of LNP administration and payroll through a verification of all LNP officers through physical presence and commensurate examination, accounting and updating of individual personnel records and payroll status.
Renovation or construction of over 35 LNP facilities in coordination and cooperation of key stakeholders at the international and national levels, and bi-lateral funding contributions from many donor countries.

Source: UNPOL 2010; Report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services 2010.

5.4.1.1 Evaluation of the reform of LNP

Despite the existing achievements mentioned in the previous chapter, the conducting of the LNP reform has had several serious shortcomings. With no exception, evaluations of its progress in the Report of the OIOS, Public Opinion Survey of UNMIL, International Crisis Group, as well as in the document by experts writing about this topic (Malan 2008; Omotola 2010; Sessay et.al 2009), conclude that the LNP remains highly ineffective and much more has to be done by UNMIL in order to re-create professional and independently functioning police.

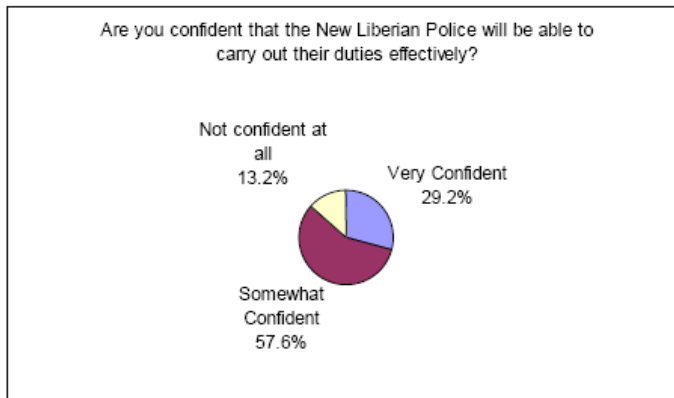
There are numerous reasons why the progress has been so slow. The core cause is the lack of funding to fulfill the mandate. So far, only around 4,000 of police personnel have been trained. For comparison, while the area of the Czech Republic and Liberia are around the same, there are more than 43,000 police personnel in the Czech Republic, more than ten times more than in Liberia (Policie České Republiky 2010). Furthermore, while

most of the recruits have only unspecialized training, there is a critical shortcoming of specialized advisors and managers. Out of 115 senior officers, 65 have not attended any specialized middle-management course. It is highly recommended that the UNMIL should focus on training officers in middle and senior management. (Report of the OIOS 2010). Generally, the funding of a UN peacekeeping mission is very complicated and limited, because the promised contributions from member states are usually delayed (Bureš 2003). There is a shortage of experts with required qualification. Mostly, adequately qualified professionals come from developed countries and those governments are hesitant or unwilling to send them, since peacekeeping does not belong between their prime political priorities. Most of the UNMIL personnel are from big developing nations such as Bangladesh, Pakistan or Nigeria. Their dispatching is less costly for their governments (Foreign Policy in Focus 2007). “Sometimes, they hire absolutely unqualified personnel for very important highly ranked job positions.” (Questionnaire 1, Attachment 1)

Due to the dissatisfactory funding, the Security Sector Reform in Liberia has no overarching strategy and integrated plan. The areas are targeted separately. “For example, the police captured suspected criminals at a faster rate than the judicial and corrections institutions could manage, resulting in overcrowded prisons and failure to meet human rights requirements, including the right to a timely trial”(Report of the OIOS 2010). (Period after citation) The Security Sector Reform lacks clear vision and there is “...no consensus on who, if anyone, would respond to any new outbreak of insurgency.” (International Crisis Group 2010).

Despite the lack of equipment and human resources, UNMIL’s activities and achievements are assessed very positively among the Liberian public. 92 percent said that the retraining of the police by the UN was very good or good; however, they are very skeptical about the effectiveness and functioning of LNP without UNMIL assistance. Only 29 percent stated that they were very confident in the effectiveness of police, 58 percent said they were only somewhat confident in the police, and 13 percent stating they had no confidence in the effectiveness of the police. This fact simply proves the assumption that the presence of UNMIL in Liberia is and will be much needed (see Figure 7) (Public Opinion Survey of UNMIL’s Work in Liberia 2006).

Figure 7 – Public opinion on the New LNP performance



Source: Public Opinion Survey of UNMIL’s Work in Liberia

The aforementioned opinions of the general Liberian public confirm the words of both Czech police officers, who spent two years in Liberia training the LNP. One of them who helped to establish the armed Emergency Response Unit and spent another year monitoring and mentoring in 4 LNP stations in Nimba county. The second one was a highly ranked commander and leader of a team of 120 people for more than 2 years. They both have expressed in their responses that there were significant achievements in the training of the LNP, but the process is very slow and provision and functioning of the security forces in Liberia is still dependent on the long-term support of UNMIL.

“I have to say that the professionalism and quality of LNP has increased tremendously since 2004 until 2009.” “...UNPOL officers have worked altogether with them on a daily basis and supervised them for the whole time...” “...However, the quality and professionalism of LNP can hardly be compared to quality standards of police service in the EU countries and they are pretty far to achieve them.” (Questionnaire 2, Attachment 1)

5.4.2 Reform of the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL)

The reform of the AFL is paid by the US government, which hired private military companies DynCorp International and Pacific Architects and Engineers to recruit and re-train 2,000 of the Liberian soldiers. The reform started by the complete deactivation of the former army associated with Taylor’s regime. Overall, the AFL staff with the age average of 39.5 years had a very limited military training (Samukai 2007, p.19). Many of the highly

ranked, mostly very old soldiers were demobilized and paid retirement fees. The recruitment of the new soldiers was open to all, including Taylors AFL militias, LURD, or MODEL, and the process of complicated and costly task of gathering of information on each recruits history had started (Call 2008, p.345 – 346).

So far, the deployment of the US private military companies is planned until the 2011 election, but whether the AFL will be able to take over all the duties, is unclear (more in the chapter 5.3.1.2).

5.4.2.2 Evaluation of the Reform of AFL

So far, only the promised and planned number of 2,000 of military troops has been trained since August 2006, when this part of Liberian SSR reform was launched. Overall, it is a very low number of soldiers that were trained, which is one of the reasons why the army is not currently able to carry out its duties independently (International Journal of Transitional Justice 2007). Furthermore, currently the army has only 110 officers, and the training of new soldiers is very limited and this shortcoming may be an issue for another decade (International Crisis Group 2009).

The training of the new army was delayed due to complications with designing and preparing the sites, as well as due to the thorough recruiting process. Therefore, lots of the budget was used for paying expatriate staff that had to wait on spot before all the preconditions were fulfilled in order to start training (International Journal of Transitional Justice 2010).

US private military contractors showed the intention to establish the army based on very high standards. The comprehensive Report of the SSR by the International Crisis Group (2010) notes, that the selection process of the new recruits was very successful. The recruiting standards were set correctly; the recruiters visited all fifteen countries in order to give chance to people from every ethnic group applying. International observers perceived the selection process of the recruits very positively. Also, applicants had to pass entrance exams and a physical test, which resulted in rejection of 82% of the applicants. Besides that, the probationary period of one year was established and in case of misconduct, the soldier is immediately fired. “The recruitment process was not cost effective in economic terms but was politically important.” (International Crisis Group 2010)

It is estimated that the deployment of the US contractors will have to last longer than planned, because the Liberian government has limited resources making it difficult to

be able to take over the funding and conduct of the AFL. Until that time, the future of AFL depends on unstable funding from the USA, which has plenty of other costly military actions going on abroad (Sessay et. al 2009, p.42). Therefore, the greatest long-term challenge is to be able to keep the functioning and sustainable support for of the small, yet well-trained AFL.

6 CORRUPTION AND ITS IMPACT ON THE POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION OF LIBERIA

After being elected, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf has made the fight against the corruption as her high priority; however after five years since her election Liberia's incidence of corruption still remains one of the highest in the world (Johnson 2009, p.7). Transparency international conducted a general survey among more than 73,000 people from 69 countries. They asked people if they paid a bribe in the past 12 months. On average, more than 1 in 10 respondents reported paying a bribe in a year. In Liberia, the results are alarming, because more than 5 from 10 respondents reported paying a bribe. Public opinion on the actions of Liberian government in the fight against corruption is biased: 45 percent assess it as ineffective and 48 percent as effective, while 8 percent of respondents said "neither" (Transparency International 2009).

Eliminating corruption is essential for the long-term success of the post-conflict reconstruction of Liberia. It is a very complex issue that requires an overreaching strategy and the cooperation of all the key stakeholders such as the government of Liberia, UNMIL, and security forces. Furthermore, "...It is a threat undermining and complicating reconstruction effort in the war-affected Liberia." (Sessay et. Al 2009, p. 57).

During the Liberia donors' conference in Copenhagen in May 2005, donors expressed doubts about the lack of the transparency and credibility of the Liberian government that complicates their actions in Liberia. Also, due to the high level of corruption in the country, foreign investment companies are reluctant to start their businesses in the country. Corruption also complicates the work of international development NGOs (UNDP Press Release 2005).

As a result, the UN, the EU, ECOWAS, the United States, the IMF, and the World Bank proposed the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program (GEMAP) for the country. Because after thorough investigation, they concluded that all of the important Liberian companies are very corrupt. These include the most important industries of Liberia such as Monrovia's free port, Robertsfield International Airport, the Forestry Development Authority, the Bureau of Maritime Affairs, and the Liberian Petroleum Refining Company. Therefore, the GEMAP is aimed at imposing international control over state's revenue collection, expenditures, granting of contracts, procurement, and judicial reform. Besides eliminating corruption, another goal of this undertaking is to

protect these profitable economic areas from being abused by warlords in order to fuel the war as it happened in the past. Since the plan was launched, a few government projects suspected of corruption were interrupted, but overall, the progress is very slow (Call 2008, p.113 – 115).

The fight against corruption in Liberia is a very complicated endeavor. The main obstacle undercutting its goals is the fact that many corrupt politicians from the former regime still participate on the country's governance and maintain connections with big businesses. The main cause of such a situation lies in the Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Many corrupt politicians with accusations of abusing human rights became legitimate politics in the transitional government, so the armistice could be secured and the conflict finally settled. Giving seats in the transitional government to controversial politicians who were eventually elected in the 2005 elections was a dangerous, but necessary step in order to be able to start post-conflict reconstruction (Sessay et.al 2009, p.30).

According to Jaromír Kulha and Daniel Benář, the Czech police experts who worked in Liberia for over 2 years, corruption is the biggest threat and obstacle that undermines the country's stability and reconstruction. "The alarming level of corruption in country, as well as letting ex-leaders of rebel groups participate in the government are, in my opinion, the biggest factors that could undermine country's stability"(Questionnaire 1, Attachment 1). According to the International Crisis Group (2009), donors are still hesitant to cooperate with government, because much of the donated money has not been used effectively or has been lost due to the corruption and mismanagement within the Liberian government (see Chapter 6).

7 DEVELOPMENT OF EDUCATION AS PART OF POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION of Liberia

While reconstruction of education is not in the UNMIL mandate, rebuilding the destroyed system of education belongs between the core priorities of Liberian government various UN donors. This chapter aims to emphasize importance of education in the post-conflict reconstruction of Liberia and provide a brief summary of the situation in this area, followed by a description two examples of a concrete projects focused on the peace and human rights education.

7.1 Education as indicator of development

It is commonly agreed, that equal access to education for everyone is one of the major indicators of a country's development as well as a sign of its stability. Also, the level of adult literacy is one of three indicators that are used to determine the Human Development Index (HDI) – the most commonly used indicator of development. There are countries in the world which spend significant percentages from their budgets on education and those countries are also the most developed. On the other hand, there are countries that do not have enough money to provide even the basic needs for their citizens or countries spending most of their money on other purposes than education. So therefore, there seems to be a positive correlation between the level of education and a country's development.

7.2 The impact of a conflict on education in post-war countries

Education systems in countries, which experienced decades of instability and civil wars, are either non-existent or very weak. After years of civil wars, Liberian school system is in a very poor condition. Reconstructing and reforming education is increasingly viewed as a critical element in the strategy to reduce the risk of conflict or relapse into conflict (Castillo 2008, p.22).

Conflict causes a devastating impact on education in many different ways - starting with destruction of education system to causing serious psychological impacts on the pupils, teachers, and communities. Ironically, the very poor education system in war-

ravaged countries such as Liberia can also be a significant opportunity of conducting the so much needed reform of education. .

7.3 Education statistics in post-conflict Liberia

The damage of the education system of Liberia after protracted civil war is enormous in every part of the country. But still, there are regional differences. In Liberian case, the conflict seriously affected rural areas which were for many years under control of various rebel groups. The government had no control over these areas. These rebel groups made no attempts to ensure provision of education. As a result, there are parts of Liberia where there was a very poor access to primary education for more than a decade. Not even mentioning never existent system of secondary education.

In 2002, the nationwide statistics revealed that the literacy rate in Liberia was even below African average. But at that time, excluding Ghana, the literacy rate in Liberia was similar to neighboring Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire, and Guinea. Adult female literacy at 2002 was only 22 and adult male literacy is 54 percent (see Table 6). As the result of the war that lasted 14 years, for the first time in Liberian history, there is a new generation of youth who are even less educated than their parents (Johnson 2006, p. 22).

Table 6 - Adult Literacy rate of Liberia and its neighbors in 2002 (percentages)

Country	Total Adult Literacy Rate, adults above 15 years old in 2002	Male	Female
Liberia	38	54	22
Guinea	36	50	22
Sierra Leone	31	45	18
Cote d'Ivoire	39	57	40
Ghana	65	76	54

Source: Human Development Report 2002

From 2002 to 2007, according to the nationwide statistics of Liberia, the total adult literacy rate had increased significantly from 38 percent to 55. However, the low level of literacy and unequal gender access to education in Liberia, as well as in neighboring countries, is still alarming (see Table 7).

Table 7 – Total Adult Literacy Rate in 2007 (percentages)

Country	Total Adult Literacy Rate; adults above 15 years old in 2007	Male	Female
Liberia	55	60,2	50,9
Guinea	29,5	42,6	18,1
Sierra Leone	38,1	50,0	26,8
Cote d'Ivoire	48,7	60,8	38,6
Ghana	65	71,7	58,3

Source: Human Development Report 2007

It is important to mention, that carrying out statistic research in post-conflict countries can be very complicated and the results can vary greatly. Peter Buckland, an expert on education and post-conflict reconstruction, stresses the great disproportion between statistics and reality. He points out that the official data are often not disaggregated by region and district so that the effect of conflict in some areas is masked by national averages (Buckland 2005, p.5). This is the very case of Liberia, where the great regional disproportions between the capital area and rural areas have to be taken in account.

7.4 The role of education in post-conflict reconstruction of Liberia

7.4.1 Teachers and their role in the post-conflict reconstruction of the country

Sufficient number of qualified teachers is the crucial resource in education reconstruction. During early stages after the conflict, there is always a shortage of qualified teachers. In Liberia, civil war sent most of the middle class and well-educated people to exile and teachers were, of course, part of them.

As a result of the shortage of teachers, many new under qualified or even unqualified people, who consider themselves teachers, aspire for the job and there is a lack of qualified teachers, who should represent democratic and progressive leaders and support education reforms. “Effective school leadership as well as leadership of all forms in civil society has to promote active, full and meaningful participation in dialogue. It is only through purposive dialogue that a civil society like ours can create a democratic space in preparing itself for the eventual learning society anchored in democratic forms of life.” (Johnson 2006, p.99)

Liberia has long way to go in order to reach significant progress in this area. The level of literacy in the country is low, there is lack of schools as well as lack of qualified progressive teachers. The poor quality of education in the post-conflict Liberia could have some serious impacts on the state of democracy in the country in the long term.

7.4.2 Change in school curriculum, textbooks, and in teaching practices

Curriculum and textbook reform is needed which requires strong leadership and expertise. Textbooks are starting point for a curriculum change and their content should always avoid bias, prejudice, or distorted interpretations. They should incorporate new issues related to conflict while avoiding some controversial topics from the past (Buckland 2005, p.7-9). The school curriculum in Liberia has always been rigid and primarily sought to consolidate an ethnic division between the Liberians, descendants of former slaves brought from the USA, and between the natives. It created the division, which was one of the very causes of the civil unrest and the war. Following excerpt from civic education textbook is one of the many examples of such practices:

“Two regions of Liberia are inhabited by different groups of people. The coastal region is westernized to a great extent and has the appearance of many places in America and Europe. The majority of people in this region speak English. Forty miles back from the coast live numerous tribal groups who speak several diverse languages and dialects of African origin in addition to English. *Primitive towns and villages are sprinkled over this hinterland region of our country.* For a long time Liberians who lived along the seacoast assumed complete responsibility for developing a fair arrangement. In a democracy all citizens should share in meeting the needs of the country. Therefore, after World War I, the hut tax was imposed on tribal groups, giving them additional rights and responsibilities of citizens. (Henries, A. in Johnson 2006, p.45)

7.4.3 Reform of teaching methods and practices in Liberian school system as a part of post-conflict reconstruction

Tarnue Johnson, Liberian expert on development of education, emphasizes that the current Liberian situation demands the deconstruction of established psycho-cultural norms, social practices, and institutional patterns that have persisted since the state formation in the 1820's. He criticizes the existence of so called “teacher-centered learning” as a heritage from the United States. Whereas the quality and approaches in education in

the United States have changed significantly in 70's, Liberian rigid pedagogical practices using culturally biased information remain until today. There is almost no focus on the importance of context in the learning process and reflective learning using critical thinking. In reflective learning, we learn to question and challenge everyday practices by ... “discussing with others the extent to which these can be justified. It involves comparing our experiences and opinions with those of others, and considering with them the merits of the evidence proposed to justify different beliefs and courses of action (Brookfield 2005, p.33)

The above mentioned excerpt from the civic education textbook shows that there had been no serious attention to developing the relationship between education and its focus on building democracy. Formal education is not enough. Ideally, the formal education should go in hand with the informal education, when both are equally important for the development of democracy and civil society. Informal education aims at development of critical thinking and the development of self-governing consciousness (Johnson 2006, p. 96-97). Informal education is especially relevant to Liberia because it is focused on the education of people about civic awareness and a critical democratic ethos in their communities and workplaces, such as towns, villages, farms, market places, formal civil society organizations and non-governmental organizations. It also plays important role in ensuring higher levels of civic participation and in supporting democratic and civic values such as registering to vote, voting in elections and getting the sense of control of decision-makers (Johnson 2006, p. 58). Furthermore, informal education can serve as a force for reuniting the country as well as a mean of national reconciliation after a fractious civil war (Miamen 2002, p.131). For all the mentioned reasons, increasing the level of literacy and education nationwide is one of the crucial tools how to reach positive social change and make a good basis for building of democratic tradition in the country. The progress in the area of education depends on a good government support as well as on the performance of UN agencies and NGO's in the country.

7.4.4. The transformation of higher education in Liberia

It is widely recognized, that the more people with higher education there are, the better economic and social situation in the country. In Liberia, there is an enormous difference between Monrovia and life in rural areas, where the access to higher education is very low. This regional disproportion in the access to education is one of the major

causes of the massive migration to Monrovia. Decentralization of the University of Liberia could be one of the practical ways how to slow-down migration to the capital. Regionalization of university bodies would bring more education and job opportunities outside Monrovia. This strategy was also one of the voting pledges of the current president Ellen Johnson Sirleaf.

The decentralization of the University of Liberia is viewed as critical to any further steps in development of rural areas after years of total neglect. Hence, the agricultural college and its branches should be relocated to interior to the bread basket regions such as Lofa, Nimba, Bong Country and Margibi (see Map 1) and other counties with high potential for agriculture, but no institutions of higher learning (Johnson, 2006, p.104).

Map x – Map of Liberian counties



Source: Maps of World 2001.

Besides decentralization, the University of Liberia urgently needs to be modernized and the administration restructured. In order to build new centers around the country, transparent and efficient school management has to exist. Currently, the University of Liberia is just slowly beginning to build its first website, which is a fundamental step for starting fundraising and enabling other higher-institutions gather information about the university. Later on, these could start-up cooperation with foreign universities and increase the quality of education. The University of Liberia names it as one of the major priorities in its Long-Term plan (University of Liberia).

As for the curriculum programs at the University, they should mainly reflect the current needs of the economy and prepare qualified graduates whose skills and abilities

responds to demands of post-conflict reconstruction (Buckland 2005, p. 14). Tarnue Johnson interviewed students for his research on improving quality of higher education in Liberia and transformation of University of Liberia. The main outcome of this research was that the relationship between the University and the government of Liberia has to change. Government has too much influence over this educational institution. “The University needs to depoliticize its leadership and the curriculum must reflect the needs and priorities of the country. The curriculum must be geared toward the developmental objectives of the Liberian state.” (Johnson, 2006, p. 105)

7.5 Importance of education for establishing democracy in Liberia

Is there a link between education and democracy? John Dewey in his work called *Democracy and Education* recognizes the connection between education and democracy as following: “The superficial explanation is that government resting upon popular suffrage cannot be successful unless those who elect and obey their governors are educated. Since a democratic society repudiates the principle of external authority, it must find a substitute in voluntary disposition and interest; these can be created only by education. But a form of government; it is primarily a mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience.” (Dewey 2003, p.46)

Democracy in Liberia does not have a tradition. One of the causes of Liberia’s failure demonstrated by a consequent line of authoritarian regime was that ...”Inability to confront the crisis of identity and citizenship at the beginning of the state’s formation (Freepong 2004, p. 28-29).” The power stayed in the hands of the descendants of the first settlers who arrived to Liberia as freed slaves. Rural dwellers were excluded from the country’s decision making processes. As a result of that, the society has been fragmented into many heterogeneous parts and there was no common basis for creating the Liberian nationality and common citizenship. The governing regimes were authoritarian, oppressing any kind of opposition. In Liberia, the access to education as well as the quality of education is still very poor. It is evident that the illiteracy greatly affects the idea of citizenship and participation in governance decision-making (Sawyer, 2005, p. 193). In the atmosphere of such a mass illiteracy, it is easier for governing elites to manipulate crowds and abuse power (Borradori, 2003).

7.6 Peace and human rights education as in the post-conflict reconstruction in Liberia

The aim of the whole chapter 7 is to emphasize the important role of education in the peace process and the country's development. As aforementioned, the Liberian educational system is debilitated by the civil war, and the reconstruction of the system of education has to start from scratch in some parts of the country. Although, the reconstruction of the education is not a part of the UNMIL mandate, but other UN agencies and funds took over this all-embracing agenda. The very specific role that education plays in the post-conflict reconstruction is its ability to implement specific techniques such as peace and human rights education into the school curriculum or to the community through trainings and seminars.

The goal of such parts of the school curriculum is to learn and promote the resolution of conflicts peacefully and to provide enlightenment into the area of the human rights. The overall objective of such programs is to support the peace process and contribute to conflict prevention (Buckland 2005, p. 23-24).

The biggest UN programme focusing on such programs is the UN Peacebuilding Plan. The UN Peacebuilding plan was established in 2007 and its program areas are designed in order to address specific needs of the conflict-sensitive environment. Various programs are implemented with partners such as Liberian ministries, UNESCO, UNDP, or UNHCR. It has three priority areas: Fostering National Reconciliation and Conflict Management, Critical Interventions to Promote Peace and Resolve Conflict, and Strengthening State Capacity for Peace Consolidation (UN Peacebuilding Fund 2009).

Programs focused on promoting peace and human rights education are the part of the priority area called "Fostering National Reconciliation and Conflict Management" (see Table 8)

Table 8 – UN Peacebuilding Priority Area – Fostering National Reconciliation and Conflict Management programs

Community Empowerment: Peace Human Rights and Civic Partnership (UNHCR/ \$932,400 approved), in partnership with the Justice and Peace Commission
Implementation of Peace, Human Rights and Citizenship Education in the Liberian School System (UNESCO, \$900,000 approved), in partnership with Ministry of Education, UNICEF, UNMIL and UNHCR

Source: Liberia PBF Priority Plan 2008.

The implementation of the peace and human rights projects was delayed due to delays in budgeting and transferring of funds and it eventually started in late 2008. So far, there are only partial achievements in implementation, such as conducting workshops for high-level country authorities, writing several publications, selection of schools, trainings for trainers, identification of main partners, etc. So far, there are no evaluations available or surveys of the projects' impact on the beneficiaries. The project's goals and objectives are long-term and whether they contributed to decrease of violence or cannot be determined yet (Second Consolidated Annual Progress Report on Activities Implemented by PBF 2009).

8 QUESTIONNAIRES – Summary of findings

The objective of creating the questionnaires included in the Attachment 1 was to gain more in-depth information about various aspects of the post-conflict reconstruction and about the situation in Liberia in general.

Questionnaires were sent to seventeen NGO or UNMIL professionals who by any means participated on the post-conflict reconstruction of Liberia. Five of them replied and provided detailed information on topics relevant to their specialization; all of them have authorized to publish their names and responses in this thesis.

Although they all worked at various places and various projects, they all concluded that there is a tremendous difference between the capital area and the rest of the country. Lack of infrastructure impedes the work of NGOs and UN agencies. Some rural areas are very hardly accessible for the security forces as well as for international donors to carry out their projects. These areas are potentials for a conflict to emerge.

Karen Barnes and Stephanie Broughton worked for international organizations promoting gender issues. They both concluded that although the efforts to implement gender agenda are great, the results are only sporadic and there are not enough resources to implement the projects and policies in practice.

The goal of the thesis is to map and critically evaluate the performance and achievements of the UN and its. Therefore, the questionnaires no. 1 and 2 provided by the two Czech UNMIL professionals with 2 years-long field experience, are the most relevant and valuable for the thesis' formal purposes.

They both experienced the country's transition in the period between 2004 and 2009 and concluded that the security situation had significantly improved. They also noted that according to what they experienced, the UNMIL's presence is generally welcomed by locals. Both of these opinions correspond with the findings and points made in chapters dedicated to the Security Sector Reform, DDR programs and implementation of UNMIL's mandate.

On the other hand, they both testified that there is a great level of corruption on multiple levels, which is a great threat to the country's stability and hinders the effective implementation of the Security Sector Reform and the country's development in general.

9 CONCLUSION

Liberia has never been a colony, since it originated as a state founded by the freed US slaves. The new settlers from the United States, whose descendants were being oppressed for centuries, turned into oppressors. They created a state, where a minority maintained strong rule over the majority, the indigenous population, by not granting them any economic or social benefits.

This oppression resulted in many dramatic events, which led to a civil war that lasted 14 years. To support the ECOWAS peacekeeping operation, the UN responded by dispatching a peacekeeping operation that involved an inadequate mandate that broke the negotiated ceasefire, and the civil war lasted for another six years.

Liberia was a failed state after the end of the civil war when the Comprehensive Peace Agreement was signed in 2003. The UN responded by dispatching a large multidimensional peacekeeping organization with a very comprehensive mandate that practically took over the country's central functioning, whereas a number of other UN bodies and international NGO's launched other humanitarian and development assistance programs.

In order to ensure that the country does not slip back into the conflict, the UNMIL mandate consists of the key initiatives that are aimed at supporting and reaching the main UNMIL objective: to maintain security and stability in order to promote sustainable peace. The mission is deployed under the Chapter VII of the UN Charter, which authorizes it to use force in case the peace agreement is violated. Concretely, the main tasks are the implementation of the ceasefire agreement and the peace process; protection of United Nations staff, facilities, and civilians; organizing 2011 elections; coordinating the DDR programs; supporting humanitarian and human rights activities; as well as assisting in the security sector reform.

The first and the very important task for UNMIL was to organize the first democratic presidential and parliamentary elections in the Liberian history, which were considered free and fair. They were UNMIL's success story; not only according to observers, but also according to public opinion survey's. Immediately after her election, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf announced support to the UNMIL objective. While the results of presidential election were perceived positively, the Parliamentary elections brought controversy, because some of the figures connected to former warring factions that committed serious human rights abuses, were elected. They had to be given seats in the

transitional government so that the ceasefire in 2003 could be implemented and the conflict could eventually be settled. Paradoxically, the highly recommended implementation of transitional justice, which is an important step towards reconciliation, is very complicated, and sometimes the pursuit of justice could in fact undermine the peace process.

DDR programs started immediately after the peace agreement was signed. Successful disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration of thousands of ex-combatants, for whom the war was the only source of income for 14 years, is another key aspect of post-conflict reconstruction. Despite several organizational failures that resulted in an outbreak of violence, the DD phase has ended and is considered more or less successful. On the other hand, the reintegration phase has faced many challenges and criticisms. First of all, its funding was always insufficient, because it depended on unreliable funding from various donors. Thousands of ex-combatants had to wait several months before they could join the reintegration training programs. Also, the allowances that they were promised to be given after the DD phase were delayed, which resulted in series of killings and the deterioration of the security situation.

Successful reintegration of ex-combatants into communities is a long-term process. Most ex-combatants are still unemployed, even among the ex-combatants that have gone through the extensive series of training program. Proving that even with programs designed to help people change into better assets to society, the reintegration of combatants and civilians is difficult and takes time. This is not to blame the UN from doing something completely wrong, because successful reintegration, which is characterized by employment of the ex-combatants, depends on the overall economic recovery of the country, which is a matter of decades, and other external factors such as significant development of education in the country, so much needed for successful post-conflict reconstruction. Furthermore, the chronic unemployment causes frustration among the population and makes it more likely that the ex-fighters might re-group into their former factions and resume fighting. In addition, the high level of unemployment could eventually lead to the loss of the government's and UN's credibility. Overall, the reintegration of ex-combatants into communities lacks clear strategy and is badly organized. In many cases, the arrival of ex-combatants at new places is not well supervised and causes tensions between locals and exacerbates land disputes.

Liberia cannot function effectively without professional and impartial institutions that provide security and guard the rule of law, and in Liberia they had to be rebuilt from

scratch. The security sector reform in Liberia has been ongoing since 2003 and consists of the reform of authorities like the Liberia National Police and the Armed Forces of Liberia.

Liberian police remain highly ineffective and it is still dependent on the constant UNPOL's support. It can hardly exercise effective control over the whole territory, over areas where hazards of eruption of new conflict are very high. So far, only around 4,000 of policemen have been trained, which is a very small number given the area of Liberia. The reasons for such a low number of trained personnel lie in its insufficient funding and unwillingness of member countries to send enough qualified professionals. The progress of re-training the army by private US military companies faces similar difficulties those involved with re-training the police. The army, consisting of about 2,000 soldiers, is well trained; however, the number of trained military personnel, especially officers, is very low. Generally, due the lack of funding and delays, the Security Sector Reform in Liberia has difficulty forming an overarching and long-term strategy and clear vision for the future. Whether the security institutions will be able to function independently one day remains unclear. Since the operational capacity of Liberian security forces is too weak, a high level of corruption in the country prevails and has a negative influence on all of the aspects of the post-conflict reconstruction.

Post-conflict reconstruction is a decades-long process and Liberia is just in the beginning of it. Generally, the UN has succeeded in maintaining security, but still, serious challenges remain, threats that can abruptly undermine the country's stability. Therefore, it can never be definitely concluded, that the country has reached sustainable peace.

10 SUMMARY

The major objective of this thesis is to discuss the post-conflict reconstruction efforts in Liberia performed by the United Nations. It describes and evaluates the progress within the main areas of post-conflict recovery under the auspices of UN. While the security situation in the country has significantly improved since the UNMIL was launched, progress in priority areas has been sporadic. The major institutions in charge of providing security in Liberia rely on the inadequate assistance of UNMIL and its partners. So far, many problems have not been resolved. They have not been able to eliminate the alarming level of corruption in the country, implement transitional justice recommendations, or to effectively maintain control over sensitive areas where the potential of a new conflict to re-emerge is high due to reintegration pressures and high levels of unemployment. Since there are many serious challenges in the post-conflict reconstruction remaining, it can never be definitely concluded, that the country has reached sustainable peace.

11 SHRnutí

Hlavním cílem této diplomové práce je popis a rozebrání procesu post-konfliktní obnovy Libéria pod hlavičkou Organizace Spojených Národů. Práce popisuje a hodnotí pokrok v prioritních oblastech postkonfliktní obnovy v souladu s mandátem mírové mise United Nations Mission in Liberia.

Ačkoliv se bezpečnostní situace v Libérii od doby kdy byla vyslána mírová mise výrazně zlepšila, dílčí výsledky v stěžejných oblastech jsou pouze sporadické. Klíčové státní instituce zajišťující bezpečnost země stále nejsou schopné fungovat samostatně a jsou závislé na nedostatečující pomoci UNMIL a jeho partnerů. Mnoho problémů stále přetrvává: nedaří se snižovat alarmující míru korupce v zemi, zavádět doporučení v oblasti transitional justice, ani efektivně kontrolovat oblasti s velmi vysokým rizikem znovuvypuknutí konfliktu, způsobeným neúspěšnou reintegrací bývalých vojáků či obrovskou nezaměstnaností. Vzhledem k těmto nedostatkům nelze rozhodně dojít k závěru, že země je na cestě k udržitelnému míru.

ATTACHMENT 1 – QUESTIONNAIRES

QUESTIONNAIRE 1 – Czech UNMIL professionals

Name: Jaromír Kulha

- 1) What exactly did you do in Liberia and for how long?

I worked in Liberia for 26 months. I spent the first 13 months in Monrovia where I helped to set up the ERU (Emergency Response Unit). ERU is the intervention unit of LNP (Liberia National Police). Then, I worked for 13 months for United Nations Police (UNPOL) Team Sanniquellie. I was doing monitoring and mentoring in 4 LNP stations in Nimba County.

- 2) How would you assess the process Security Sector Reform and its achievements so far?

The process of the SSR is still ongoing. The UN and other agencies have put much effort and finances for this. There are some evident results – hundreds of trained policemen and soldiers, but the progress is very slow and Liberia is dependent on the long-term international assistance with this.

- 3) How do you assess the progress and achievements of the DDR programs in Liberia?

N/A

- 4) What are the greatest achievements of the UNMIL in Liberia in your opinion?

Definitely, the greatest success of the mission is the improvement of security situation in the country, and the country has been experiencing slow but steady development.

- 5) What are the biggest shortcomings of the missions? What could/should be changed?

The very shortcoming of the mission is its weak mandate which leads to several other problems. Local authorities are very well aware of this fact, and the weak mandate opens the space for corruption, which impedes functioning of the state. The UN officials in the field are very well-aware of this situation, but due to their limited competences, there is no will to change something.

Next shortcoming of the functioning of the UN mission is its hiring-staff policy, which is based on nationality quotas. Sometimes, they hire absolutely unqualified personnel for very important highly ranked job positions. For example, the UNMIL Head of Field Office in the region, where I worked, has been in the position for 5 years. As what I saw, he can not even use the “copy and paste” computer function, which is terrible. Unfortunately, this is very common in Liberia. Many of my colleagues, mainly Africans, have university education, but the having a diploma from does not mean being qualified at all. The quality of their education, their skills and qualifications can hardly be compared with ours. Sometimes it is very shocking. The UN promotes the “national balance” rules, which makes sense, but sometimes it significantly slows down the development of key areas.

- 6) How would you describe the current security situation in Liberia? Are there any differences between the situation in the capital and rural areas?

The security situation is good; the crime level is normal and does not exceed average numbers. The difference between Monrovia and rural areas is enormous, these are two different world. Availability of food, health and other social services are totally incomparable.

- 7) What are the biggest threats which could undermine the country’s development or even cause the civil war to re-emerge?

The alarming level of corruption in country as well as letting ex-leaders of rebels groups to participate in the government are, in my opinion, the biggest factors, which could undermine country’s stability. For example, Prince Johnson, former warlord of Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (a faction of Charles Taylor’s NPFL), is now in the Senate.

Furthermore, I think that the state’s existence without foreign assistance is impossible.

- 8) Do you think that the presence of UNMIL in the country is welcomed by locals?

Yes, thanks to ongoing financial subsidies.

- 9) Do you think that the state's functioning is permanently dependent on the presence of the UN mission in the country?

I am completely sure about that.

- 10) Are there any disputes in the cooperation between UNMIL and NGO's in the country?

I do not think so.

- 11) What is women's involvement in the post-conflict reconstruction like?

"Gender balance" is a real priority in the post-conflict reconstruction. Women's participation in government as well as in other professional bodies is constantly increasing.

QUESTIONNAIRE 2 - Czech UNMIL professionals

Name: Daniela Bednář

1) What exactly did you do in Liberia and for how long?

My first mission in Liberia was from 11-02-2004 until 11-02-2005. After first month, I became the Deputy Head of UNMIL's United Nations Police of Liberia (UNPOL) Liberia National Police (LNP) HQ Advisors. There were around 50 United Nations Police officers working under me at different UNPOL headquarters in Liberia. They did mentoring, monitoring and assistance for the local LNP headquarters Section Heads.

My second year mission in Liberia started in 09-04-2008. First, I work in UNPOL team in Region 3 Gbarnga. After a month I went again through a selection and I became a Team Leader of UNMIL UNPOL for Lofa, Nimba a Bond Counties. My work duties were mainly to coordinate the activities in UNPOL Region 3. I was responsible for 12 UNPOL teams dispersed in three counties. Each team consisted of 6 to 12 policemen, so 120 was the total number of people I commanded. My work duties were monitoring, mentoring and assistance to the LNP in the area of responsibility. In practice, I was supervising the cooperation between all of the 12 UNPOL teams with the Liberian police residing at the LNP stations.

For example, the supervision was determined to observe, whether human rights are not broken by the activities of LNP, or whether the LNP has does adequate practices during investigation. Furthermore, a big part of my and my peer's job was to monitor corruption and distribution of drugs, mainly marijuana. Also, I commanded a unit which consisted of 120 Nigerian FPU – formed police unit. This unit was fully armed and they were entrusted to tackle civil disturbances, high risk arrests crowd control, because LNP teams on the regional level were not armed.

2) How would you assess the process Security Sector Reform and its achievements so far?

Since 2004, when I first arrived to Liberia, much work has been done. I have to say that the professionalism and quality of LNP has increased tremendously since 2004 until 2009. Mainly in the area of Human Resources – in 5 years the Liberian officers acquired skills and a significant level of professionalism. I am persuaded that the success is hidden in the strategy of UNPOL work. UNPOL officers have worked altogether with LNP policemen on

a daily basis and supervised them for the whole time and gave them valuable advice and training. However, the quality and professionalism of LNP can hardly be compared to standards of police service in the European Union countries and they are pretty far to achieve such standards. But the progress they have made in 5 years since the end of the civil war, is incredible.

3) How would you assess the progress, achievements, and importance of DDR programs?

I think that the DDR were very successful and they did lots of useful work. In 2005, there were still many weapons among the population, every week you could hear shooting in the streets. When I came back in 2008, I never heard any kind of shooting when there were disputes among tribes (land disputes) or during street riots. In 2005 the guns were used, whereas in 2008 there people would use „only“ machets, sticks, or stones when a skirmish happened.

4) What are the greatest achievements of the UNMIL in your opinion?

Whoever experienced or knows about horrendous atrocities that happened during the civil war simply appreciates the fact that thanks to UNMIL, ordinary people of Liberia now live in peace. They do not have to worry to walk on the streets and/or send their kids to school. In the years of the UNMIL duration and also thanks to the post-conflict reconstruction, the country experienced significant economic growth and recovery. Thanks to UNMIL and their NGO's Monrovia and other cities have some new buildings and infrastructures. But one has to take into account a significant abundance of corruption of government and state bodies.

5) What are the biggest shortcomings of the missions? What could/should be changed?

**the respondent answered these questions, but because he is not authorized to officially mention negative aspects of the UNMIL, I can not publish it in the thesis...*

6) How would you describe the current security situation in Liberia? Are there any differences between the situation in the capital and rural areas?

The security situation is very good, but it is essential for foreigners to have house security guards, because the most common crime is a housebreaking and theft. Streets riots are generally pretty common. African crowd is able to do anything, there are cases of lynching on the streets when crowd turns into a herd of beasts. I might have used

words that are too strong, but I witnessed them many times and believe me, if compared to street riots in Europe, this is a real hell.

- 7) What are the biggest threats which could undermine the country's development or even cause the civil war to re-emerge?

Corruption and dangerous influence of the international corporations which are extracting natural resources of the country. Corruption of Liberian government bodies, which can lead to human rights abuses, when repressive organs can still control whatever they want in order to assist influential politic and economic bodies to reach their goals.

Also, I think that other problem is the fact, that Liberians own and run only very few shops, restaurants, hotels, and other businesses. 90 percent of the business is controlled by immigrants, mainly by Lebanese,, Indians, and speculates from other African states such as Nigerians.

- 8) Do you think that the presence of UNMIL in the country is welcomed by locals?

Yes, it is very welcomed.

- 9) Do you think that the state's functioning is permanently dependent on the presence of the UN mission in the country?

Yes, it is.

- 10) Are there any disputes in the cooperation between UNMIL and NGO's in the country?

I am not authorized to answer this question.

- 11) What is women's involvement in the post-conflict reconstruction like?

There are many women working for LNP, the percentage has been rising thanks to UNMIL.

Additional Comments:

QUESTIONNAIRE 3 – FOR NGO PROFESSIONALS

Name: Dana Plavcová

1) What exactly did you do in Liberia and for how long?

Humanitarian Affairs Officer, in UNMIL section of Humanitarian Coordination (in charge of coordination of humanitarian actors – coordination of mtgs, needs assessments, linking needs to resources – all in Western part of Liberia – 3 counties, based in Tubmanburg), 8 months in 2005

2) What were the major obstacles that complicated work of your organization and achievement of its goals?

The UN itself. Insufficient support from the administrative/logistical part of UNMIL. Also rain and bad roads.

3) Are there any tensions between NGO's that complicate post-conflict reconstruction efforts? If so, any suggestions how to improve the situation?

I did not notice.

4) Are there tensions between NGO's and Liberian government that complicate post-conflict reconstruction efforts?

At that time, before the elections, there was only the temporary government, highly incompetent and corrupt. Now I don't know.

5) Are there any tensions between NGO's and UNMIL that impede post-conflict reconstruction efforts?

NGOs did not trust UNMIL and they have their point. On the other hand, there aren't many NGOs that can do really efficient peacebuilding, are there? It is more role of the UN, although UN itself is very imperfect and inflexible.

6) Is it safe for NGO's to operate in all the parts of the country? Are there any regional differences in terms of security?

In 2005 it was not safe.

7) What are the major deficiencies in the deployment of UNMIL in your opinion?

I don't know the current situation, at the time when I was there, the deployment was still in the process and majority of UN staff was in Monrovia, only very few people based in the field.

8) Do you think that some of the deficiencies could directly undermine the stability of the country?

Lots of things have changed since 2005 after left. I can not comment on this question...

9) What should be improved or completely changed in the deployment of UNMIL?
Any suggestions?

NA

10) What were the biggest achievements of UNMIL so far, in your opinion?

The free and fair elections in 2005.

11) Are there any shortcomings in the cooperation between Liberian government and UNMIL?

N/A

12) Is UNMIL/government missing to address some key social issues?

N/A

13) What do you think about the progress of the DDRR process in Liberia? What are the biggest deficiencies? Any success stories?

N/A

14) How would you assess the UNMIL's performance.

In 2005 it wasn't good, loads of criticism of the UN for promising but not delivering. It could have changed significantly since 2005.

15) What are the major challenges and complications in the development of the education sector in Liberia? Any success stories?

NA

16) What are the major challenges in the Security Sector Reform?

NA

17) Do the development efforts engage women? Is the women's engagement in the post-conflict reconstruction process going well? What are the biggest achievements? Any success stories?

The president is playing a very strong positive role in this.

15) What are the biggest potentials and risks for conflict to re-emerge in Liberia? Is Liberia on the way towards sustainable peace?

I think so. However there aren't so many success stories in sub-Saharan Africa..

16) Do you think that Liberian government is doing well in setting the country on the right track?

Yes, however I do not follow the current situation in Liberia too much.

Additional comments:

QUESTIONNAIRE 4– FOR NGO PROFESSIONALS

Name: Karen Barnes

1) What exactly did you do in Liberia and for how long?

I traveled to Liberia approximately five times between 2005-2009, mostly for work (first trip was personal reasons). This involved working with local partners (women's organizations) and developing their capacity through strategic planning, training, etc. We also met with a range of UN, donor, government and civil society representatives to understand the context and peacebuilding priorities, and also for specific research projects.

2) What were the major obstacles that complicated work of your organization and achievement of its goals?

The lack of infrastructure is a challenge, as well as the lack of funding for many of our partner organizations. As always when working on gender issues, trying to get the key stakeholders on board is challenging as they do not always see that gender issues should be prioritized in the peacebuilding phase.

3) Are there any tensions between NGO's that complicate post-conflict reconstruction efforts? If so, any suggestions how to improve the situation?

I think that there are always tensions between NGOs who are competing against each other for limited pots of funding. At times, there is duplication and organizations may align their work with what they know there is funding for rather than ensuring that their priorities match the needs on the ground. There also can at times be conflict between women's organizations, and collaboration is not always easy.

4) Are there tensions between NGO's and Liberian government that complicate post-conflict reconstruction efforts? *Not that I was aware of specifically.*

5) Are there any tensions between NGO's and UNMIL that impede post-conflict reconstruction efforts? *Not that I was aware of.*

6) Is it safe for NGO's to operate in all the parts of the country? Are there any regional differences in terms of security?

I have always felt quite secure the times that I have left Monrovia, but I have not been to the most remote parts of the country so cannot speak with much experience. I think that perceptions of insecurity are often different from the reality. My experience was that there were much fewer INGOs operating in rural areas as compared to Monrovia, particularly in the hardest to reach regions such as the Southeast.

7) What are the major deficiencies in the deployment of UNMIL in your opinion?

N/A

8) Do you think that some of the deficiencies could directly undermine the stability of the country?

N/A

9) What should be improved or completely changed in the deployment of UNMIL?
Any suggestions?

N/A

10) What were the biggest achievements of UNMIL so far, in your opinion?

N/A

11) Are there any shortcomings in the cooperation between Liberian government and UNMIL?

N/A

12) Is UNMIL/government missing to address some key social issues?

N/A

13) What do you think about the progress of the DDRR process in Liberia? What are the biggest deficiencies? Any success stories?

The failure to integrate gender issues at the outset of the process was a major deficiency, and given the previous experience of Sierra Leone, it is quite inexcusable as the lessons learned there should have fed in to the Liberian experience.

14) What are the major challenges and complications in the development of the education sector in Liberia? Any success stories?

N/A

15) What are the major challenges in the Security Sector Reform?

Integrating gender; lack of infrastructure and resources to extend security services throughout the country; lack of pay for security personnel; the gap between formal and informal security provision; limited access to justice, particularly for women and in rural areas

16) Do the development efforts engage women? Is the women's engagement in the post-conflict reconstruction process going well? What are the biggest achievements? Any success stories?

There has been a lot of effort by some actors (UNMIL gender advisor, GoL gender minister) to prioritize gender issues but women are still largely left out of decision-making and don't necessarily benefit from any peace that is being built. The GBV strategy and NAP are excellent documents but there aren't enough resources or capacity to actually implement them. The story of WIPNET and Leymah Gbowee has been shared widely through the film "pray the devil back to hell" and I think this documents a really important success story and demonstrates the impact that women mobilizing for peace can have, even without the support of donors or the international community.

17) What are the biggest potentials and risks for conflict to re-emerge in Liberia? Is Liberia on the way towards sustainable peace?

N/A

18) Do you think that Liberian government is doing well in setting the country on the right track?

N/A

QUESTIONNAIRE 5 – FOR NGO PROFESSIONALS

Name: Stephanie Broughton

1) What did you do in Liberia?

I spent a year in Liberia working for International Alert as a manager of the West Africa Gender Program.

2) Did you notice tensions between NGO's and Liberian government and the UN that complicate post-conflict reconstruction efforts?

There is a valiant attempt to coordinate efforts, but there is definite tension between NGOs (largely following a 'reactive' model of responding to donor interests) and the government, which would very much like to dictate where NGOs should be working. With regard to GBV, for example, the government (with help from UNIFEM, I believe) called together NGOs to map out what they were doing to address GBV and where they were doing it. There was definite frustration on the part of the government that NGO activities were sometimes concentrated in specific areas, leaving other areas underserved, but clearly, they cannot dictate where NGOs work, and largely the NGOs cannot go to underserved areas without donor support.

3) What are the biggest potentials and risks for conflict to re-emerge in Liberia? Is Liberia on the way towards sustainable peace?

With regard to my thoughts on the future of Liberia... that's another tough one! Liberia is a difficult context. There is a huge disconnect between Monrovia and the rest of the country, and a real sense of irrelevance of government in the hinterland. There is all kinds of potential for conflict to re-emerge, particularly the longer people go without a real tangible peace dividend.

4) Do you think that Liberian government is doing well in setting the country on the right track?

The government has largely done well in setting the country on the right track (mostly) but has missed some key social issues - I'm speaking specifically of the handling of the TRC recommendations. I think the next elections will be quite critical, and the UN has a big responsibility in ensuring that those go well. We shall see.

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