

CONFLICT RESOLUTION AND PEACE-BUILDING IN SIERRA LEONE: EXPERIENCE OF KINDERNETZWERK SIERRA LEONE e.V. (KNSL)

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Political Map of Sierra Leone



Pujehun District

Facts and Figures about Sierra Leone - 1

- Land mass: 71,740 sq. km (approx. Bavaria)
- Population: approx. 5 Million
- 18 tribal / ethnic groups
 - 30 % Temne
 - 30 % Mende
- Religion:
 - 70 % Muslim
 - 15 % Christian
 - 15 % Traditional African

Facts and Figures about Sierra Leone - 2

- Gross Nat. Income per capita: 130 USD p.a.
(Average in Sub-Saharan Africa: 470 USD p.a.)
- Population below poverty line: > 82 %
- Regular income earners: < 10 %
- Illiteracy: 75 %
- Average life expectancy: 43 years
- Childbirth deaths: 138 per 1000

Administrative Structure in Sierra Leone

Sierra Leone has 4 Regions:

Western Area

Northern Province (made up of 5 Districts)

Eastern Province (made up of 3 Districts)

Southern Province (made up of 4 Districts)

These Regions consist of a total of 12 Districts

Time-line of the civil war - 1

- March 1991 – Outbreak of civil war - RUF guerrillas, formed by Charles Taylor in 1989, invade Sierra Leone from Liberia.
- April 1992 - Army topples Pres. Momoh
- Jan 1996 - Brig. Maada Bio ousts Military ruler Strasser in bloodless coup
- May 1996 - Sierra Leone elects a civilian government led by Tejan Kabbah

Time-line of the civil war - 2

- Nov. 1996 – Abidjan Peace Accord
- May 1997 – Army topples Tejan Kabbah and forms a junta regime with RUF
- March 1998 – ECOMOG ousts junta and restores Kabbah government
- Jan 1999 – Rebels overrun Freetown: at least 2,000 men, women and children killed
- July 1999 – Lomé Peace Agreement (power-sharing)

Time-line of the civil war - 3

- Aug. 1999 - Feb. 2000 – UN deploys 11,000 peacekeepers
- Oct. 1999 – April 2000 – Hostilities continue
- May 2000 – Lomé Agreement collapses
- July 2000 - UN Security Council places diamond ban on rebels
- Jan. 2002 – Civil war officially declared over

Impact of civil war

- Tens of thousands of people killed or maimed
- Over 2,000,000 people displaced / traumatised
- Entire rural infrastructure destroyed
- Economy, judiciary, governance collapsed
- Socio-cultural values undermined
- Thousands of children and youths without any form of education

Priorities in rebuilding the country

- Restore political stability
- Rebuild the security sector (police and armed forces)
- Reform the judiciary and the civil service
- Rehabilitate economic and social infrastructure
- Stimulate the private sector and rural economy
- Promote reconciliation and social cohesion
- Rebuild the civil society

KNSL Focus

- Pujehun District, Southern Province -

- Education for children
- Adult education for women and youths
- Agriculture and food security
- Peace-building - through mediation, negotiation, training, research and conflict analysis.

Structures within Pujehun District

(Population: approx. 234,000 in 12 Chiefdoms)

- District Council of 22 elected Councillors and 2 nominated Paramount Chiefs
- The Native Administration:
 - Chiefdoms (headed by Paramount Chiefs)
 - Sections (headed by Section Chiefs)
 - Villages (headed by Town Chiefs)
 - Neighbourhoods (Neighbourhood Chiefs)

The Justice System in the District

- Magistrate Court in Pujehun Town
(professional judges, rule of law)
- Native Administration (Chieftdom) Courts
 - Section Chiefs' Courts
 - Town Chiefs' Courts(all non-professional jurors, no rule of law)

III. KNSL Peace-Building Approach

- Types of training workshops / seminars
 - Service Providers Seminars
 - Grassroots Problem-Solving Workshops
 - Intensive Training Seminar for Peace Monitors

Service Providers' Training Workshops - 1

- Targets key service providers:
 - local and central government officials
 - civil society representatives
 - NGO workers
 - teachers, health workers, social workers,
 - police officers, military personnel, etc.

Service Providers' Training Workshops - 2

- **Contents are conventional (“Western”)**
 - **four phases of conflict resolution continuum: negotiation, mediation, arbitration and adjudication**
 - **relation to human rights, participatory democracy, good governance, sustainable development**

Grassroots Problem-Solving Workshops -1

- Targets ordinary citizens:
 - Section Chiefs and Town Chiefs
 - religious leaders and elders
 - women, youths including ex-combatants
- Main purpose:
 - To enhance local capacity to achieve community peace and development

Grassroots Problem-Solving Workshops -2

- Participants learn basic negotiation and mediation principles, skills & techniques
- Participants present concrete problems in their communities
- Participants learn to resolve problems using the „Win-Win-Solutions“ approach
- Grievance committees are set up

Intensive Training Seminar for Peace Monitors - 1

- Targets ordinary citizens who
 - are respected members of their community
 - have good knowledge of local circumstances
 - take an active interest in conflict prevention
 - are willing to serve as multipliers
- Contents of training:
 - negotiation and mediation
 - conflict assessment, problem-solving techniques

Intensive Training Seminar for Peace Monitors - 2

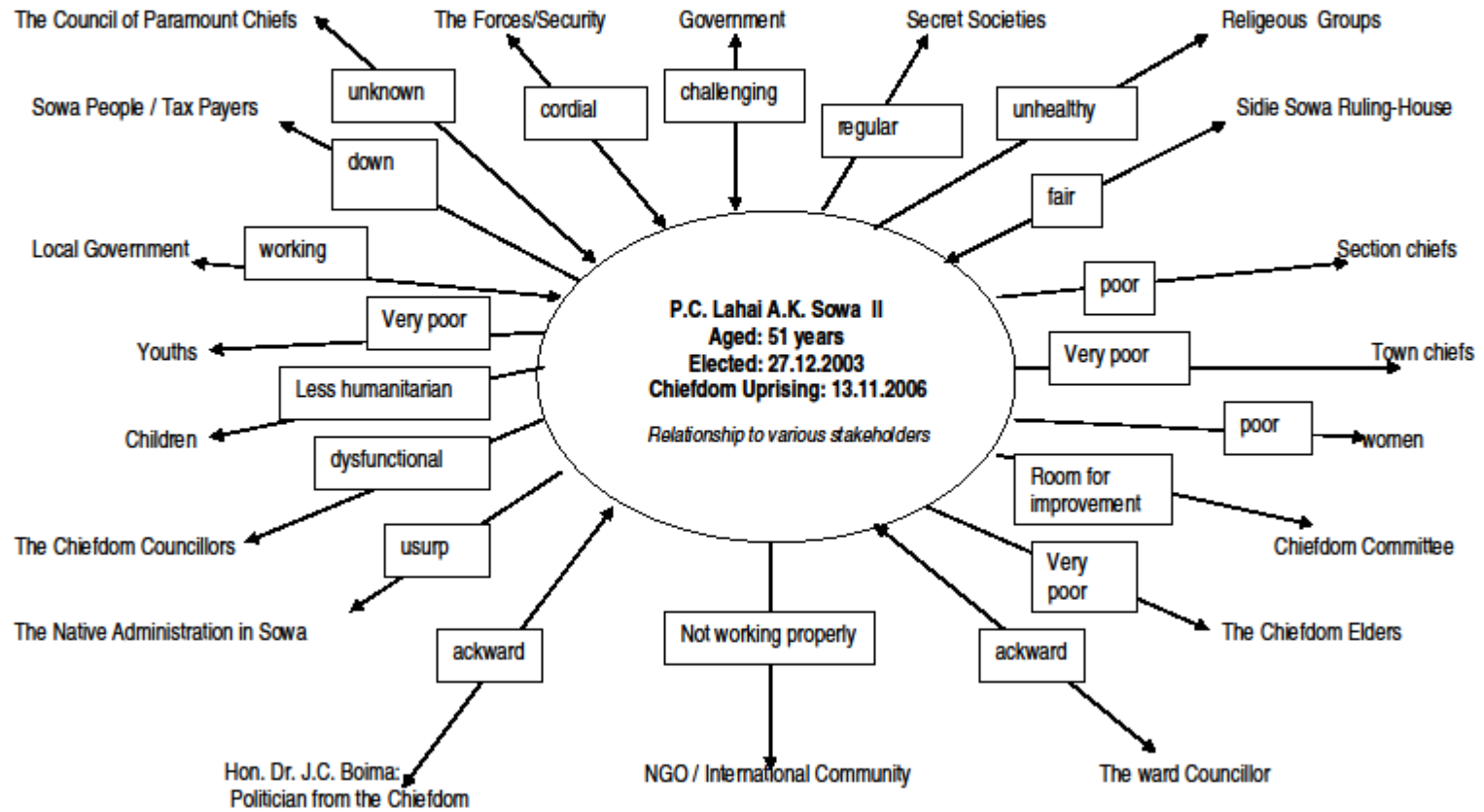
- Peace monitors are expected to:
 - advocate for peace, unity and development
 - identify early signs of conflict and intervene
 - promote reconciliation & propagate human rights
- Peace monitors choose a Chief Monitor to
 - coordinate and supervise activities
 - establish network to monitor conflict potential
- They receive certificate and bicycle after training

A KNSL Peace-Building Case Study: The Sowa Uprising

KNSL / PYD Peace-Building & Conflict Resolution Project

1 District Office Road, Pujehun / P.O. Box 1315, Freetown

Active Conflict Map of Sowa Chiefdom in Pujehun District Under the Reigns of Paramount Chief Lahai A.K. Sowa II:
Analysed by Grassroots Participants at the Problem-Solving Workshop at Geoma Jarqoh on the 25th and 26th May 2007



Making peace dividend sustainable : combining conflict resolution with learning opportunities and income generating activities

- Institute peer mediation in schools and communities
- Support students to set up peace clubs in schools
- Provide civic education, leadership and empowerment training for youths and women
- Organise mediation training for chiefs, court chairmen and court clerks

Making peace dividend sustainable: (cont.) -2

- Set up Grievance Committees and Village Mediation Councils
- Train women volunteers as trauma counsellors
- Set up Community Development Forums, buy radio air time for discussion
- Facilitate Computer training and internet access
- Establish community library services

Making peace dividend sustainable: (cont.) - 3

- Build youth structures, help youths elect leaders, train them in leadership skills, inspire them to work together, rather than in isolation
- Reorganise the civil society: strengthen activists to understand the concept of civil society, and on strategies for strengthening the civil society in its pursuit of addressing issues of poverty, democratisation and sustainable human development
- Encourage commercial agriculture to contribute to employment, food security and poverty reduction

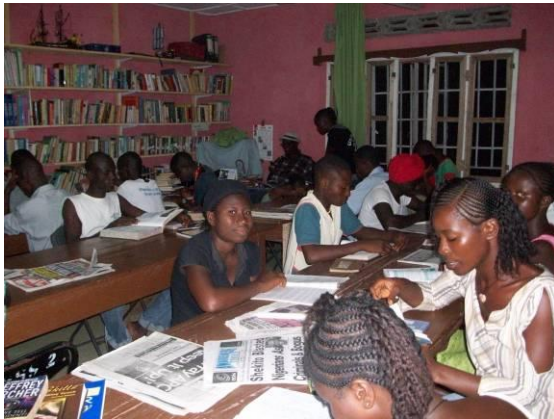
Food security and poverty reduction



Empowering local women to deal with trauma and gender-based violence



Promoting children's right to education and development



Promoting peaceful development through sports and culture



Promoting peaceful development through sports and culture – 2



A typical village scene in project area

