THE SPATIAL AND SOCIAL IMPACTS OF SIERRA LEONE'S CIVIL WAR (1991-2001): INTERNAL DISPLACEMENT AND HOUSEHOLD DESTABILIZATION

by

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(Under the Direction of B. Ikubolajeh Logan)

ABSTRACT

A decade of civil war in Sierra Leone resulted in cataclysmic consequences, including, the massive internal displacement of civilians and the creation of refugees. The study is a detailed micro-level analysis of warfare in Sierra Leone from 'eyewitnesses' who invariably were also 'victims.' The study is used to examine three interconnected issues associated with the perspectives of these victims: whether explanations provided in African civil war discourse correspond with their experiences; the impacts of the war on their livelihoods; and the coping strategies they adopted to adapt to displacement.

The victims believe that a socio-cultural explanation, "hatred minds" rather than neopatrimonial rule or the diamond trade as espoused in the literature, is the overriding explanation for the war. Accounts from victims reveal also that even though they were faced with numerous socio-economic difficulties, they developed and adopted a number of strategies to cope with displacement.

KEY WORDS: Civil War; Internal Displaced Persons (IDPs); Sierra Leone; Displacement; Coping Mechanism.

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to my Beloved Mother, Eva Miranda, D. Wilson who passed away on November 16, 1979. You set the pace which I have emulated.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

A. Problem and Objectives of Study

The civil war in Sierra Leone, which lasted for ten years (1991-2001), was one of the most brutal internal strifes of the twentieth century. Sierra Leone has a history of internal wars dating back to the nineteenth century. The 1991 Revolutionary United Front (RUF) attack against the people of Sierra Leone, however, was on a scale and intensity that was unprecedented in the history of the country. The war started as an apparent invasion from neighboring Liberia, which itself, had been engulfed in internal conflict a year earlier. Initially, most Sierra Leoneans did not view the invasion to be a threat to national security and stability, but within two years, the spatial extent, intensity and consequences of the war were matters of grave political, economic and social concern to all.

The causes of the war are complex and to some extent nebulous. Political and socio-economic grievances by some ethnic segments of the population who were marginalized by the ruling All People's Congress (APC), which ruled the country between 1968 and 1992, appeared to be a proximate factor. Ultimately, however, the war was caused by a complex interplay of internal and external agents that were not mutually exclusive. As noted by Scarry (1984), what is construed as internal conflicts is far from being internal, as it constitutes several international agents.

An important internal explanation of the war was APC misrule, manifested most palpably in the rigging of multi-party elections. APC misrule saw its culmination in the declaration of a one-party system of government, a progressively deteriorating economy due to diamond smuggling, embezzlement of state funds, and repressive actions against covert opposition groups that were predominantly from the southern and eastern regions of the country. Rural isolation, neglect of youths and a biased judicial system also contributed to popular dissatisfaction with the ruling party.

External factors are linked primarily to Libya and to President Gaddafi's desire to spread his Green Book ideology to Sub-Saharan Africa. As part of this grand design, he provided guerilla training for revolutionary forces from several countries and is strongly alleged to have provided financial support for the initial attacks on Sierra Leone (Davies, 2000). There is also some suspicion that Charles Taylor, former President of Liberia and a one time rebel leader, actually triggered the war because he believed that Sierra Leone provided a base for the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) in Liberia, harbored his rebel adversaries, and created obstacles to his ambition to become head of state in the early 1990s. Another possible external explanation of the war is economic in nature. Neighboring countries, particularly Liberia and Ivory Coast, which were allies of the RUF, have been accused not only of aiding in the destabilization of Sierra Leone, but also of benefiting materially from its diamond resources. As a Liberian fighter noted, the invasion of Sierra Leone was part of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia's "sharp business practices" and was central to that group's efforts to add to Taylor's profits from regional trade in diamonds, timber and cash crops (Reno, 1998).

The complex nature of interest groups involved in the war was partly responsible for its protracted nature. In spite of several attempts by organizations like the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the United Nations (UN) to negotiate between the government of Sierra Leone and the RUF, the conflict gained a momentum of its own that culminated in the invasion of the capital city, Freetown, on January 6 1999.

The impacts of the war on the population are manifold, intense and devastating. The war resulted in a complete disruption of the politico-economic and socio-cultural frameworks of the country. One significant impact of the war has been widespread re-distribution of population due to attacks on civilians. A large number of people were forced to seek temporary refuge in forests or other areas that were comparatively safe. The displaced subsequently had to move to Internally Displaced Persons (IDP) camps while others traveled to neighboring countries to seek refuge. As Wood (1994) has noted, the movement of displaced within states may have greater socio-economic and political ramifications than the flow of refugees. IDP movement is typically associated with a complete disruption of the socio-economic fabric of a country and total disorientation of individuals and households. Wood goes on further to point out that the collective displacement of a community is an evolving process that permanently alters its composition and the interrelationships amongst its members and that restoration of peace and stability and subsequent re-location of people may not necessarily lead to a replica of pre-war conditions in its entirety. The IDP problem is often further complicated by the fact that involvement by humanitarian organizations may be regarded as an infringement in the affected country's sovereignty.

In the Sierra Leone case, IDPs had to adapt to unfavorable livelihood patterns in the IDP camps, which forced them to engage a variety of coping strategies. For example, that were provided by humanitarian relief agencies were insufficient, thereby, necessitating alternative mechanisms by the IDPs. Wood (1996) has observed that the dearth of relief food supplies, as in the Sierra Leone case, is often a manifestation of larger market and political-economy forces that go beyond the dynamics of a particular war for which the displaced are suffering. These affected people also have to cope with socio-cultural conditions many of which are different from what prevailed in pre-war situations. The war has also resulted in environmental degradation due to massive deforestation by IDPs. The activities of the RUF has resulted in the emergence of large number of amputees According to victims and eyewitnesses, the rebels amputated the hands, feet, ears and fingers of numerous civilians.

This thesis will examine the victims' perspective of the Sierra Leone civil war. This broad objective is divided into three smaller themes:

i) to explore whether theoretical explanations of the causes of African civil wars are consistent with those of victims of the Sierra Leone civil war;
ii) to assess the consequences of the war on IDP victims, and add to the broader literature on IDPs; and,
iii) to examine the coping mechanisms of the IDPs in Sierra Leone as a contribution to a broader emerging theory on livelihood adaptation of internally displaced persons.

This research is important for several reasons. First, it presents a detailed account of warfare in Sierra Leone from 'eyewitnesses' who, in most instances, were also the 'victims' of the civil war. A number of scholarly works attribute the war in Sierra Leone to diamond exploitation. The present research goes beyond this level of analysis to explore the contributory factors leading to the war as perceived by the actual victims. This is an important micro-level view of the actual victims of the war in term of their decision-making on internal migration, their

perception of the impacts of the war on their livelihood systems and the coping strategies they adopted after they were displaced.

B. Methods of Data Collection

Data for this thesis are obtained from two sources: (i) secondary, archival records including books, journals, dissertations and official documents; and (ii) primary data from a questionnaire interview conducted in 2001 by the author and a research assistant. The survey instrument was divided into a number of schedules to reflect the demographic structure of the IDP population (including age, sex, household size, and marital status). The survey sought also to gain insights in the victims' perceptions on the causative factors of the war; their perceptions of the war itself; human rights violations related to the war; and their lives as IDPs. (The survey instrument is attached as Appendix 1).

During the war, eighteen IDP camps were located in the four headquarter towns, Makeni, Kenema, Bo and Freetown. Five hundred respondents were interviewed in nine of these camps distributed regionally as follows: the only camp in the Northern Province, two out of five camps in the Eastern Province, two out of five camps in the Southern Province, and four out of seven camps in the Western Area (Figure 1). The general goal of the survey was to obtain victims' views from a reasonably balanced number of IDPs from the various ethnic groups in the country. The number and choice of camps in each region was constrained significantly, however, by safety concerns related to their proximity to rebel activities. Based on United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (UNOCHA, 1999) data on the ethnic composition and distribution of IDPs in Sierra Leone, it is safe to say that the population of the nine camps that

were surveyed is a true representation of the geography of the total population of the IDPs in the country.

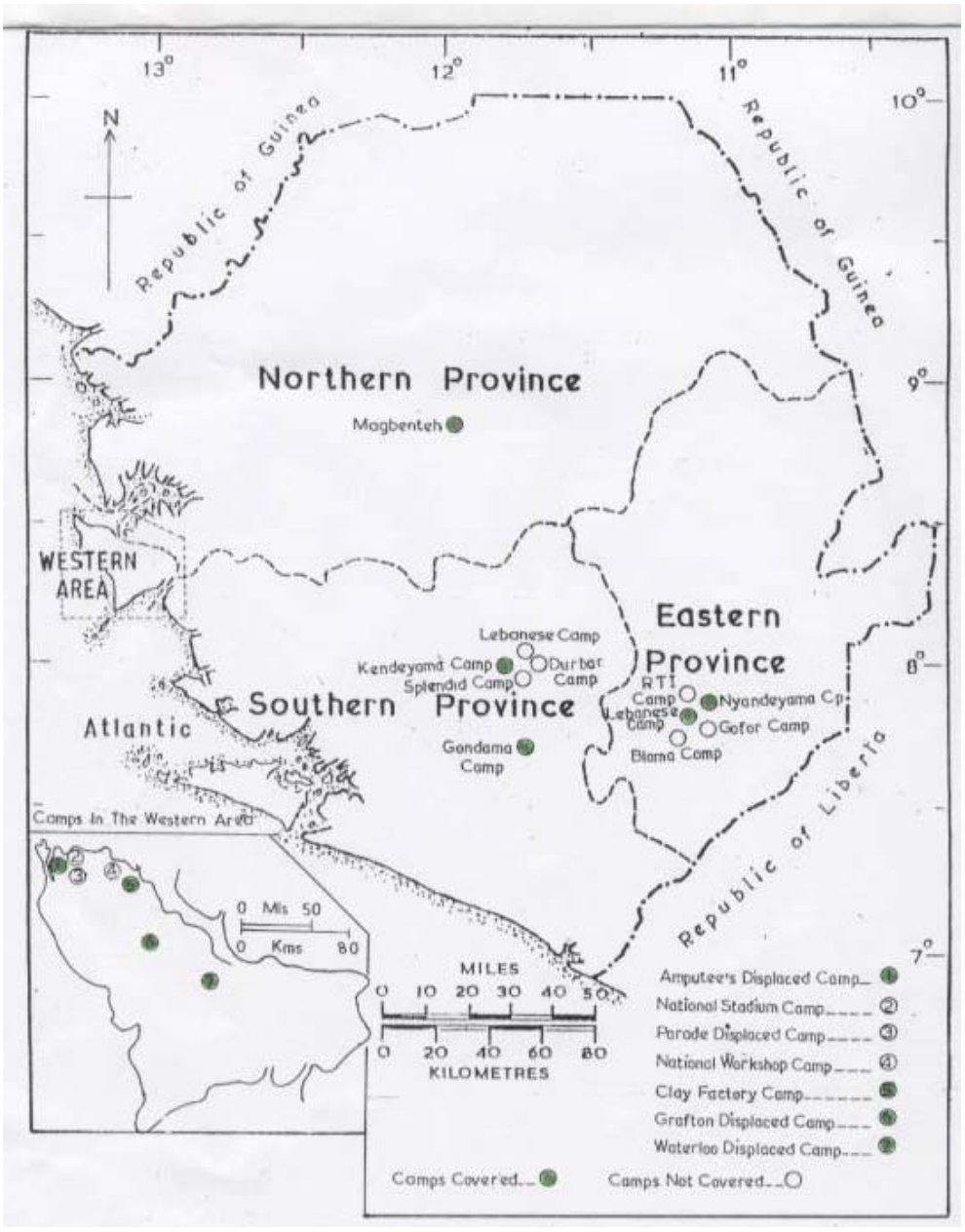

Figure 1 Location of IDP Camps in 2001

The households interviewed in each camp were selected by systematic random sampling to ensure the goal of ethnic and regional representation (Table 1).

Table 1.Number of Respondents from each Region

Location of Camp	Original location of respondents				
	North	South	East	West	Total
North	45	3	12	0	60
South	1	29	90	0	120
East	0	6	114	0	120
West	33	19	45	103	200
Total	79	57	261	103	

* IDPs originally located in the Western Area did not move to the provinces as the security situation in this region was robust.

The camps were already organized into ethnic sections by UNOCHA. The survey was administered to every fifth household within each ethnic section in order to cover about 30% of

The number of respondents interviewed for each region is proportional to the region's share of the country's total population as follows: Northern Province (12%); Southern Province (24%); Eastern Province (24%) and Western Area (40%) (Central Statistics Office, 2000). As a matter of expediency (the imminence of rebel attacks was always a concern), the surveys were conducted simultaneously by the author and a research assistant in two sections of each camp

The camp managers and their assistants facilitated the process by introducing us to the occupants since many IDPs were suspicious of researchers whom they believe collect information only for financial reward.

C. Background of Study

1. *Geographical Background*

Almost diamond-shaped, Sierra Leone is embedded like a gem in the bulge of the west coast of Africa. It covers an area of 27,925 square miles (72,326 square kilometers) and has a coastline of 356 miles (570 kilometers). The country has two immediate neighbors: Guinea, with which it shares nearly 406 miles (650 kilometers) boundary to the northwest, north, and northeast, and Liberia along a 156 miles (250 kilometers) frontier of the southeast (Figure 2).

The country may be divided into four physical regions: the coastal swamp; the Sierra Leone Peninsula, with thickly wooded mountains that rise from the swamps; the interior plains, consisting of grasslands and rolling wooded country; and the eastern plateau region, encompassing several mountains (Britannica Concise Encyclopedia, 2003; Gynne-Jones, 1979). Some of these mountains especially those in the north of the country, served as a fortress for the RUF during the civil war and impeded the movement of IDPs. The highest range of mountains can be found in the northeast, the highest peak being the Bintumani Mountain with a height of 6390 feet (Gynne-Jones, 1979). The country has nine main river systems that have shaped the steep-sided valleys and precipitous hills on the plateau: the Rokel, Sewa, Mano, Jong, Great Scarcies, Little Scarcies, Wanje, Tai and Moa. Most of these rivers navigable for several kilometers upstream from the sea until rapids are reached. These rapids offer significant potential for hydroelectric power generation.

Sierra Leone has a humid tropical climate with average temperatures ranging from 77°F to 82.4°F (25°C to 28°C). The coolest areas are found in the Loma and Tingi Mountains in the northeast and the warmest regions are in the north and central interior plains.

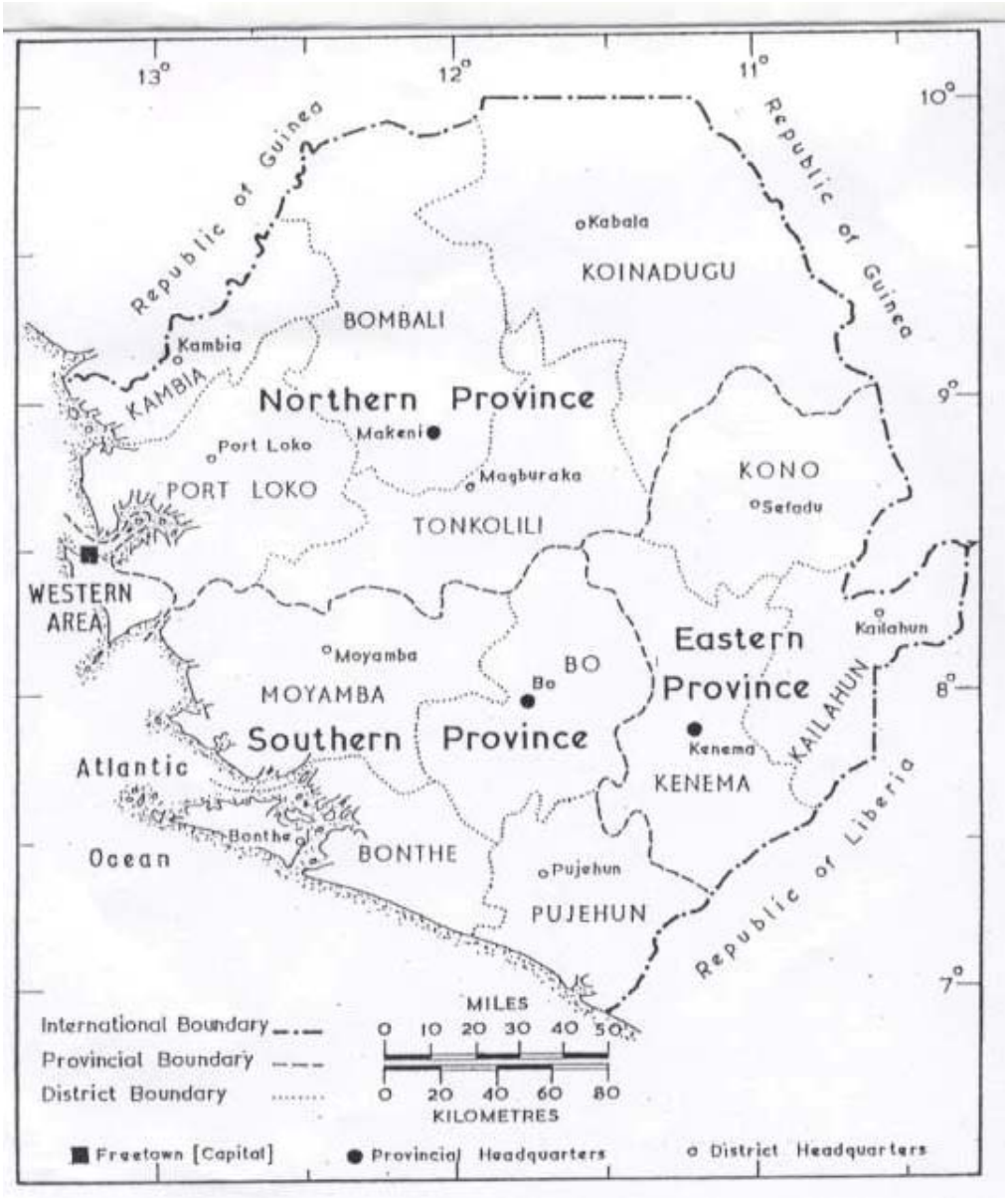

Figure 2 Administrative Regions of Sierra Leone

As with other West African countries, Sierra Leone has wet and dry seasons and the harmattan (which is a cool dry wind) blows in from the Sahara Desert mid-way during the dry season. Both seasons occur as a result of the interplay of the southeast and northeast trade winds. The southwest monsoon brings in moisture laden winds from May to October, which is the rainy season. The dry season is between November and April and is, in part, controlled by the northeast trade winds that are dry winds from the arid regions of North Africa. The average annual rainfall in Sierra Leone is about 127 inches (3170 millimeters) (Gynne-Jones, 1979).

The vegetation of Sierra Leone consists of mangrove swamps along the coast, particularly in the northwest and southwest of the country, inland wetlands (e.g. the *boliland* and the *batiland*), sparse savannah in the north, and montane vegetation of the Loma and Tingi Plateaus (Gynne-Jones, 1979). There are also secondary rain forests scattered mainly in the Freetown Peninsula and the eastern and southern parts of the country. The most pristine forests in the county are found in the Gola Forest Reserve located in the southeast. A number of displaced people who originated from the southeast of Sierra Leone initially sought refuge in these forests. As of 2001, only 5% of the land area of the country was primary, thick forest (Ministry of Agriculture and National Resources: MANR, 2001). Some displaced civilians initially seek refugee in these forests when they were attacked by the rebels or in cases when attack was imminent.

For administrative purposes, the country is divided into four regions: the Southern Province, Eastern Province, Northern Province and the Western Area in which is located Freetown, the capital city.

The country's population as of the 1985 Census was 3.5 million (Central Statistics Office, 1998). The estimated population in 2002 was 4.8 million (Britannica Concise Encyclopedia, 2003). Population density is estimated at 75 per square kilometer with an annual growth rate of 2.67%. In general, population density is sparse (58 persons per square kilometer) except for the capital Freetown (about 300 persons per square kilometer) and Kono is (about 112 persons per square kilometer). Densities in the latter are attributable to the diamond mining industry. The urban population is about 40.2% of the total population. Much of the urban population is located in Freetown, and in the administrative headquarters of the Southern and Eastern Provinces, Bo and Kenema respectively (Central Statistics Office, 1998).

The two principal ethnic groups, the Mende and Temne constitute 60% of the population, each accounting for 30% of the total (UNDP, 1998). Other ethnic groups include the Limbas, Kono, Madingos, Susu, Lokos and Krios. The Mendes are predominantly found in the southern and eastern parts of the country while the Temnes and Limbas are mainly located in the north. The Krios are mainly found in the Western Area of the country. Over the years, there have been considerable internal migration obscuring these regional demarcations and resulting in a much more integrated society.

2. *The Political Economy Background*

Sierra Leone attained independence on 27th April 1961 from Britain and the first general elections were held in 1962. As in most African countries, political parties invariably have a tribal affiliation, a regional affiliation, or a combination of both. The Sierra Leone People's Party (SLPP), a Mende-dominated party, won the 1962 General Elections and the All Peoples Congress (APC) dominated by the Temnes and Limbas, formed the opposition.

Sir Milton Margai, who was the first Prime Minister of Sierra Leone, headed the SLPP until his death in 1964. His successor and half-brother, practised overt regionalism and supported the establishment of a one-party constitution. The move to change the constitution resulted in ethnic and regional resentment and divisions. It also resulted in divisions even within the ranks of the SLPP. In fact, some members of the party who opposed the establishment of the one-party constitution were refused the party's political symbol for the 1967 elections and had to contest as independent candidates. A number of Freetonians, (people from the capital city), dissatisfied with the SLPP, gave their support to the APC, which narrowly won the 1967 General Elections. This was immediately followed by successive *coups d'etats,* which led to military rule for a year and eventual APC control of the state in 1968 (Pratt, 2003; Allie, 1990).

Upon his ascendancy into office in 1968, the APC leader, Siaka Stevens, called for a republican state that eventually came into effect in 1971. Within a few years he cajoled some opposition members to join his ruling party and, thereafter, marginalized and repressed all opposition parties. State intervention in elections removed competitiveness and accountability successfully eliminated opposition parties, and reduced parliament to a rubber-stamping institution (Hayward, 1989; Abraham, 1993). The perversion of the electoral process was achieved by the dangerous introduction of thuggery into the political landscape (Zack-Williams, 1999). Unemployed youths were recruited and mobilized during elections to oppress potential opponents in various parts of the country (Abraham, 2001). These 'lumpen' youths (under-class, unemployed and drug-addicted) maintained clientelist relations with the All Peoples' Congress, and increasingly came to be recruited into the army (Hayward, 1989; Turay and Abraham, 1989; Abdullah, 1997). In fact, following a failed coup in 1971, Stevens established an Internal

Security Unit (ISU), which was a brutal, personally managed, paramilitary force constituted of young men recruited largely from the slums of Freetown (Pratt, 2003).

The ISU and APC thugs actively participated in manipulating all subsequent elections. There was widespread violence and voting irregularities during the 1973 and 1977 elections as the APC used its thugs against opposition members (Boas, 2001). During the 1977 elections, armed ISU troops disrupted the process countrywide and violently suppressed student demonstrations (Pratt, 2003). As a result, the APC assured its candidates success and gained control of every single seat in parliament. Although, in principle, the country continued to be a multiparty state, by 1977 it had become a *de facto* one-party state.

The expansion of Stevens' logic of patrimonial rule in the country's political economy gradually blurred the boundaries between the state and private interests (Luke and Riley, 1989). This was facilitated by the virtual inexistence of institutions of checks and balances and of opposition parties. Patrimonial rule was solidified with the eventual official adoption of a one-party constitution in 1978 after a referendum organized by the APC. Politicians who were against the imposition of the one-party state were implicated in coup plots, forced into exile, or reduced to penury (Koroma, 1996). This was the starting point of accumulated grievances by opposition party members many of whom refused to be integrated into the one-party government. There were two alleged *coups d'etat* in the 1970s in which the accused were tried and found guilty. Some were executed, while others were sentenced to life in prison. Amongst the latter group was Foday Sankoh, an army corporal who served seven years in jail before eventually becoming the head of the RUF.

In the economic sphere, Stevens institutionalized corruption through favors to party clients, theft of public funds and illicit payments of bribes. There was also administrative allocation of basic commodities like rice and fuel (Davies, 2000; Koroma, 1996; Hirsh, 2001; Luke and Riley, 1989; Reno, 1998). Stevens also created a network of informal markets in a bid to control the diamond-rich Kono district (Zack –Williams, 1999). Within this network, patronage was distributed and denied as chiefs and other individuals who were cooperative with the APC were rewarded with senior positions of responsibility and mining plots, while those against the party were fired from office or punished. There were selective access rights in the exploitation of diamonds with preference given to Lebanese and other foreign agents (Davies, 2000; Reno, 1998; Zack-Williams, 1999). These agents created cartels for key sectors like diamond sales and the importation of essential items like rice, cement and onions. They were also engaged in fraudulent business practices like tax evasion. By 1985, the economic mismanagement of the country had resulted in a mix of massive unaccountable public expenditure, inflation, increases in foreign debt, massive smuggling of diamond and gold and a burgeoning black market system (Davies, 2000).

Corruption, a sharp reduction of formal diamond mining and unfavorable terms of trade in the 1970s, resulted in declining GDP growth from nearly 4% in the 1960s to 1.9% in the 1970s and further to 0.5% in the 1980s (Davies, 2000). Massive looting of diamonds led to the collapse of the National Diamond Mining Company (NDMC) in the 1980s. Consequently, official diamond exports dropped sharply from 2 million carats in 1970 to less than 200,000 carats in 1984 as most diamonds produced by artisinal miners were not sold to the government (Davies, 2000; Reno, 1998). This resulted in a sharp drop in foreign exchange earning since

diamond export was a major source of government revenue. The reduction in the Sierra Leonean mineral economy by the early 1980s, made Stevens' government dependent on aid to balance the national budget and finance neo-patrimonial exchange. Very few loans were given, however, as financial institutions such as the IMF and World Bank wanted to see evidence of more judicious use of state resources.

The political elite continued to amass wealth to the detriment of the ordinary people in particular and the country in general, worsening the socio-economic condition in the country (Boas, 2001; Reno, 1998). In fact, the World Development Report 1988, stated that Sierra Leone was one of the poorest countries in the world, with a GNP per capita of U.S. $310 in 1986, an average life expectancy of only 41 years, with as many as 154 of every 1,000 infants dying every year before they reached their first birthday (World Bank, 1988). Data on the distribution of income and life-chances suggested the existence of an extremely unequal society with a few affluent people while the majority lived in abject poverty (Luke & Riley, 1989; Davies, 2000).

During its twenty-four year rule, (1968-1992) the APC leadership changed once, when in 1985, Stevens handed power to Major-General Joseph Saidu Momoh, the head of the army. Stevens side-stepped his long-serving Vice President Sorie Ibrahim Koroma, whom he feared would have brought him to book for economic mismanagement. Stevens, however, trusted the army chief who incidentally hailed from his own Limba ethnic group. President Momoh inherited an economy characterized by a reduction of output in mining, industry, agriculture, and the services. Further, there was a burgeoning budget deficit due to expansionary monetary policies and galloping inflation, diversion of government funds at an unprecedented scale, and a thriving black market for foreign exchange. Total foreign debt in 1985-86 amounted to nearly

300% of all export earnings, two-thirds of which were needed annually to meet the scheduled debt-service payments to the IMF/World Bank (Longhurst, Kamara and Mensurah, 1988). The country's revenue collection was in an abysmal state as there was a substantial increase in commodity smuggling without any meaningful payment of export revenues to the government (Reno, 1998; Pratt, 2003). Income tax collection was also at its worst level and most of what was collected was diverted to the private use of politicians and their associates (Kpundeh, 1994). The unavailability of government revenue manifested itself, amongst other things, in chronic fuel, power and food shortages (Pratt, 2003).

The country's economy continued to decline during President Momoh's tenure in office. By 1990, the economy and the entire state system were in a crisis. The 1990 budget speech delivered by the then Finance Minister, Tommy Taylor-Morgan revealed that the Sierra Leone economy experienced another difficult period in the fiscal year 1989/90. The minister lamented the fact that the economy still suffered from low production, poor export performance, deteriorating balance of payment, large budget deficits, shortage of vital goods and services, an inability to service fully its external debt obligations, an overvalued official exchange rate, a pervasive parallel economy and hyper-inflation.

As in the Stevens era, structural economic problems under Momoh were made worse by rampant corruption of government functionaries. A major scandal hit the headlines in 1991 when it was discovered that no work had been done on 32 government contracts that had a price tag of 1 billion leones (about U.S. $2 million), although 500 million leones (about U.S. $1 million) had been paid out to the contractors (Ayittey, 1998). To pacify citizens, the World Bank and the investment community, President Momoh declared to parliament on June 2, 1989, that austerity

and self-sacrifice must prevail. Unfortunately, large expenditure items had rendered the budget meaningless (Ayittey, 1998) and the government's malfunction led eventually to state collapse.

The social sector was also plagued by a number of problems attributed, in part, to government malfunction. The legislative organ of government was gutted of its significance as bills were approved out of sentiment rather than on the basis of critical evaluation of their significance in relation to the electorate. The judicial sector was equally handicapped as appointments to senior positions were highly politicized. In fact, some judges were intimidated or bribed by the government and top business potentates. Political elites and their influential business partners were often 'above the law' as they went unpunished for their crimes (Davies, 2000; UNDP, 1998). The Low-Cost Housing Estate at Kissy, in the eastern part of Freetown represents an anecdotal example of the social crisis. As its name suggests, this housing complex was designed for low income earners but the houses were routinely given out to rich and powerful party functionaries. As noted in (West Africa 7-13 June, 1993:952), "although houses in the Kissy Low Cost Housing Estate were meant for low income earners, many of their occupants did not fall within that category." While the poor and homeless remained homeless, many of the houses in the project were rented out for profit by their new owners.

Ethnicity was also an important dimension of social discontent in Sierra Leone. As in other African countries, ethnicity is manipulated by politicians to ensure legitimacy. In Sierra Leone, the southeastern region, home of the majority ethnic group, the mendes, is endowed with considerable natural resources, including the diamond fields. As such, the mendes believe that their population strength and regional resource affluence should guarantee them political leadership of the country into perpetuity. Political power was, however, wrested from their

control by a coalition of smaller ethnic groups during the 1970s and 80s. The feeling by southeasterners that they were being marginalized was exacerbated by the fact that the natural wealth of the region never trickled down to the local people. In fact, there was a perception in the southeast that its wealth was being used to concentrate infrastructure and accumulate wealth in Freetown (Davies, 2002). These feelings of inequity set the conditions that were later exploited by the RUF leader, Foday Sankoh, to initiate the civil war (even though he does not belong to the majority ethnic group and does not seem to underscore ethnicity in his philosophy).

Two other social trends during the reign of President Momoh later had salient implications for the civil war. The first was the continued growth in the size of unemployed and disgruntled youths, who migrated from the countryside to Freetown, other urban areas and to the diamond fields of Kono. These youths became socialized into a climate of violence, drugs and crime (Pratt, 2003; Abdullah, 1997). The other trend was an increase in the size of student militants who were strongly influenced by external revolutionary ideology. In the late 1980s, many university students had become radicalized, in part, by the violence of the government's suppression of their demonstrations and by exposure to new ideas, including Libya's President Gadafi's Green Book ideology (Pratt, 2003; Abdullah, 1997; Davies, 2000). Some of these disgruntled youths were part of the initial conscripts into the RUF cause, and were trained to effect political change by revolution.

D. Organization of Study

The body of this study is organized into four chapters. Chapter two contains a review of the current literature on civil war, with particular emphasis on civil war and the African state,

and displacement as a consequence of war. This includes an examination of the conceptual and theoretical discourse on civil wars and internal displacement.

Chapter three critically examines the theoretical explanations of the cause of Sierra Leone's civil war and compares these explanations to the victims' perceptions of the causes of the war. Chapter Four explores war and displacement from the victims' perspective. This chapter is used to examine the forms of attacks on civilians and civilian responses to attacks. Chi-square analysis is used to assess the association between the number of attacks and the degree of regional displacement of civilians. Chapter five highlights the demographic profile of the IDPs, destabilization of victims' livelihood system and their coping strategies. The analysis in chapter five also aims at contributing to the literature on the coping strategies of IDPs.
Chapter six is comprise of summary of findings, theoretical contributions and concluding remarks.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter outlines the conceptual and theoretical frameworks that are used in the literature to explain civil wars and the displacement of civilian populations. The first section of the chapter explores civil wars in general, the second examines civil wars and the African state, and the third section explores civil wars and internal displacement.

A. Civil Wars

According to the Correlates of War (COW) project, a civil war is defined as a "sustained military combat, primarily internal, resulting in at least 1,000 battle deaths per year, pitting central government forces against an insurgent force capable of effective resistance, determined by the latter's ability to inflict upon the government forces at least 5 percent of the fatalities that the insurgents sustain" (Small and Singer, 1982:210-220). This definition is generally accepted in scholarly work on civil wars. Recent empirical developments, for example, the involvement of up to eight foreign armies in the 'civil war' of the DRC, however, call into question its universal validity. Empirical cases also call to question Small and Singer's yardstick of 5% government troop fatality. Many civil wars are now marked by high number of civilian fatalities and small percentage of troop fatalities. The latter is often due to the unmotivated approach of government forces in a number of civil wars.

Civil conflicts have raged since the start of human social and political organization about 1000 A.D. The twentieth century, starting with the world wars, has witnessed an increasing complexity in warfare as more sophisticated weapons have led to more bloody combats. Like

international conflicts, internal conflicts in the latter part of the twentieth century have become more complicated, more intense and more large-scale due to a number of factors, amongst which are the emergence of liberation struggles, proxy wars during the cold war and political-economic destabilization of autocratic governments at the demise of the cold war.

Civil conflicts are occurring and recurring and they threaten places where communism and monarchial rule have collapsed, where there is economic dislocation, and where, as in the former Soviet Union, ethnic identities have emerged after long suppression by communist rule. The emotional turmoil and violence associated with civil conflicts can result in massive humanitarian crises, human rights abuses and, in some cases, genocide (Kanet, 1998).

A wide range of factors are responsible for the violent nature of civil conflicts. They include power vacuums, self-financing war makers, economic disparity and cultural/religious fissures. Other factors include external intervention by international organizations like the UN and NATO and regional political actors (http://iadc.iwa.org/en/Unit2.htm).

Most states that are engaged in civil conflicts, for example, the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Somalia, Liberia and Sri Lanka have been undergoing difficult political transitions. The end of the cold war and the consequent decline of engagement by superpowers in small state affairs are in particular responsible for these conflicts. Economies that were once maintained artificially through foreign aid, Western military support and highly preferential terms of trade have now collapsed (Ballentine and Sherman, 2003). This is especially applicable to former Soviet client states. As a consequence, repressive states, which no longer receive military support from superpowers as in the past, are now more vulnerable to attacks by domestic opposition groups.

Some civil wars are self-financing through the availability to rebels of natural resources like diamonds. In many instances, war profiteering, warlordism, patron-client relationships surge as national economies decline severely when resources are diverted to ethnic and regional fighting (Ballentine and Sherman, 2003; http://iadc.iwa.org/en/Unit2.htm). In addition, economic factors like resource depletion, increasing unemployment and failed fiscal and monetary policies have not only resulted in economic disparities, but have significantly precipitated volatile situations in Soviet Bloc successor states like the former Yugoslavia. In Africa, there are numerous cases in which economic disparities have played out along cultural, ethnic and religious divisions (Ellis, 1995). One well-known example is the manipulation of the Tutsis and Hutus in Rwanda and Burundi by power-thirsty politicians, which resulted in sporadic civil wars and genocide in these countries. Ethnicity was also manipulated in the Liberia case and is playing a fundamental role in the current crisis in the DRC.

External intervention is another characteristic of contemporary civil conflicts. According to the Carnegie Commission on Preventing Deadly Conflict (CCPDC), external actors can play a significant role in determining the course of an internal conflict. Neighbors often become involved because of fear of spillover effects, pressure from domestic constituencies, perceived economic interests, or threats to their citizens abroad. In some instances, insurgents are able to entice foreign intervention by appeals to religious and ethnic solidarity, or by using local resources to pay for foreign mercenaries.

Foreign intervention can range from the supply of weapons and financial support to allied factions to direct participation with organized military forces (CCPDC, 1997). Scholars like Reno (1998), Hirsch (2001), and Richards (1996) have repeatedly stressed the role of

external factors in civil conflicts. These authors identify economic interest to be the main reason why foreign actors become embroiled in internal conflict. The role of mercenaries in aiding either rebel groups or governments in exchange for mining rights has also been documented.

B. Civil War and the African State

Africa is plagued by a considerable number of wars many of which can be regarded as civil in nature. Scholars like Crisp (2002), Keen (1998), Wallensteen & Sollenberg, (1996) and organizations like UNHCR and USCR maintain that African civil wars are of a greater magnitude than those in other regions of the world, especially with regard to the number of states that may be engaged in a single conflict. Scholars have advanced various political, economic, social and cultural explanations for these conflicts (Jackson, 2002; Duyvesteyn, 2000; Reno, 1998; Richards, 1996; Addison *et al*., 2000). Some scholars opine that the disengagement of the colonial powers from African affairs has fueled most of these wars particularly after the demise of the Soviet Union. African economies have been weakened by the fact that the military support, aids/grants, and favorable trade preferences that marked the Cold War are no longer available to them. The reduction in state revenues often results in appalling socio-economic conditions and dissensions amongst the ordinary people, some of whom opt for radical changes through armed struggles. The weakened state is often unable to maintain a strong repressive force that can suppress these opposition factions.

Waltz (1979) has developed a framework within which it is possible to analyze civil wars at the individual, nation-state and international levels. According to Waltz, the individual level is centered on human nature and man's predispositions towards aggression, and on

individual political leaders, their beliefs systems, personalities, and psychological attributes. The national level is a co-mixture of governmental and societal factors. Governmental considerations include the structure of the political system and the nature of the policy-making process. Societal factors encompass the structure of the economic system, the role of public opinion and non-economic interest groups, ethnicity and nationalism and political culture and ideology. The international level includes the structure of international systems, major powers in the system, the appropriation of military and economic power among them, types of military alliances and international trade, and other factors that constitute the external environment common to all states. Some elements of this framework (particularly those of the nation state) are germane to African conflicts.

1. *Theoretical Explanations of African Civil Wars*

(i) *Relative deprivation theory*

Gurr's (1970) 'Relative deprivation' theory offers an explanation of civil wars that is based on the contrast between groups' expected and actual access to prosperity and power. This approach is closely related to 'group entitlement' theory (Horowitz, 1985), which places more explicit emphasis on ethnic factors that often have political and economic manifestations. In a similar vein, Stewart (2002) maintains that civil wars are often the result of the state's challenge to a group's perceptions of "horizontal inequality." This often leads to organized violence as the state endeavors to secure or retain its power. According to Stewart, group identity may be formed on regional, ethnic, class or religious bases. Collective perception of intergroup disparity in relation to political participation, economic assets, employment, incomes, and social access, constitutes horizontal inequality. In most instances, a group resorts to conflict from situations of

relative deprivation vis-á –vis other groups. While Waltz (1979) presents a combination of political, economic and social factors and different scales in which civil wars can be analyzed, Gurr (1970) and Stewart (2002) emphasize social factors that may have politico-economic ramifications.

(ii) *Weak State Theory*

Some scholars opine that the primary causes of war in Africa are the five attributes of a weak/failed/collapsed state (Jackson, 2000; Ayoob, 2001). First, weak states are characterized by fragile or non-existent democracies. In other words, these states are governed by autocratic governments, are at the rudimentary stage of democratization and/or do not fulfill the essential requirement of the institution of government. In addition, they possess serious problems of legitimacy. The legitimation crisis is manifested in very low political participation rates (and correspondingly high levels of disengagement or 'exit' by significant sectors of the population such as peasants), a reliance on coercion to ensure civic compliance, unstable politics (for instance, government crises, coups, plots, riots, rebellions), strong social attachments (ethnic, religious, or class), and the centralization of power in a ruling elite that is often focused on a single leader or political party. In order to ensure political control in such a volatile environment, it is sometimes imperative that weak-state elites create elaborate patronage systems. Patrimonialism coexists with coercion in a delicate balance, keeping rivals at bay and clients happy. For instance, Liberia and Somalia functioned through the personal rule of Doe and Barre, respectively, both of whom relied on patron-client networks to distribute wealth and favors in return for allegiance. With the decline in state finances, the favors and financial gains

flowing up and down the system dwindled, contributing to the origins of the wars in those two countries.

A second characteristic of weak states is that they often lack unified national identities and as such primary loyalties are often expressed in sub-national terms. The colonial state, a foreign imposition on an arbitrarily defined territorial unit, has contributed to such fragmentation. Decolonization gave such territories formal sovereignty or juridical independence prior to the emergence of a cohesive national identity (Jackson, 2000).

Third, weak states are construed as having wavering levels of institutional incapacity and a frequent inability by governments to execute their policies (Ayoob, 2001; Byman and Van Evera, 1998). At its worst, the institutions of state are incapable of even a minimal level of operability and may actually be in a terminal spiral of collapse. At its best, the state possesses under-resourced and underdeveloped institutional capacity, and face tremendous difficulties in mobilizing the population or regulating civil society. In fact, relatively straightforward governmental tasks such as tax collection or the maintenance of minimal levels of law and order can be insurmountable.

Fourth, institutional weakness is both a source and a consequence of ongoing economic crisis. As Jackson (2000: 71) points out "weak states normally manifest all the attributes of economic underdevelopment- dualistic and poorly integrated mono-economies, heavy debt burdens, low or negative growth rates, high inflation and unemployment, low levels of investment, and massive social inequalities." It should be noted that a combination of some or all these factors are evident in most volatile countries in Africa.

Lastly, as a direct consequence of their internal fragility, weak states are characterized by susceptibility to international actors and forces. As Ayoub (1986:14) succinctly puts it, "fragile politics, by definition, are easily permeable. Therefore, internal issues in Third World societies… get transformed into inter-state issues quite readily." Mujaju (1989:260) makes a similar point in his argument that weak states "are internally incoherent and because aspects of their internal form are projections of the external environment, they are easily manipulated from the outside." External vulnerability can be observed in the permeability of weak-state borders to arms smuggling, refugee movements, and general contagion effects that are manifest in areas like West and Central Africa.

For the most part, weak-state elites aim to ensure their continued political survival with a mixture of careful manipulation of internal politics and external support from powerful patrons. With a measure of fortune, weak states can stay intact and maintain relative stability for long periods, despite internal disorder, corruption, and poor economic performance. They are, however, always prone to internal or external shocks, and the elites, more often than not, are forced to adopt strategies that carry significant risks of precipitating civil violence.

For the reasons discussed above, Jackson (2002: 29) maintains that "the causes of multiple internal conflicts in Africa are rooted in the everyday politics and discourses of weak states, rather than in outbreaks of ancient hatreds, the pathology of particular rulers, or the breakdown of normally peaceful domestic systems." The weak state framework advances that state construction or adoptions, ruling class formation and consolidation, patrimonialism and alliance creation are requisite for internal conflict. In other words, civil wars or intra-state conflicts in Africa originate from domestic rather than systemic factors and involve politically

motivated violence primarily within the boundaries of a single state. This may include large scale and sustained conventional-based warfare as in the war between *União Nacional para a Independência Total de Angola* (UNITA) and *Movimento para a Libertação de Angola* (MPLA) in Angola and low-intensity guerilla-style warfare such as the Lord Resistance Army (LRA) insurgency in Uganda. In other instances, it may entail campaigns of genocide or 'ethnic cleansing', such as in Rwanda in 1994 or the 'slow genocide' in Burundi. In its extreme form, such conflicts may also involve the deliberate creation and maintenance of 'war economies' that accrue significant benefits to an array of local and international actors (Keen, 1998). In this context, internal conflicts can be perceived to constitute a rational policy within a constrained political space.

Other scholars posit that colonialism is directly responsible for the emergence of failed/weak/shadow states and the ultimate outbreak of civil wars. Mamdani (1998) points out that the form of the state inherited from colonial powers has created a distinction between 'native' and 'settler' that has resulted in a different type of citizenship (after independence) based on type of political identity. This native-settler dichotomy becomes apt in wars of national or ethnic identity where minorities are often at risk of total annihilation (Gurr, 2000). For instance, prior to the Rwanda genocide of 1994, the Hutu-dominated government had been stockpiling weapons for months and then passing them on to Hutu militias as part of the plan for a systematic butchery of the minority Tutsi. This resulted in the most gruesome genocide of the century. In the Congo, in 1992, two hundred thousand Balabu were expelled from Shaba and Kasai as non-indigenous (Cohen and Deng, 1998b).

(iii) *Shadow State Theory*

Reno (1998) argues that the chronic diversion of state economic resources through patronage networks ultimately results in the creation of a "shadow state" which increases the risk of civil war. Reno (2000) describes the shadow state as one that is constructed behind the pretense of laws and government institutions. The shadow state is a form of rule that is centered on the decisions and interests of an individual rather than on a set of written laws and procedures, even though these formal aspects of government may exist. The shadow state is founded on a ruler's ability to manipulate external actors' access to markets (both formal and clandestine) in such a way as to enhance economic and political power. This alternative form of governance allows rulers to undermine the formal institutions of government. The shadow state can be regarded as a type of weak state, which emphasizes the essential tenets of patrimonial rule. A change of leadership or a curtailment of resources in a shadow state can lead to a disequilibrium that can precipitate an internal conflict.

(iv) *Spillover Effect Theory*

A number of scholars maintain that internal conflicts can be transformed to international conflicts (Jackson, 2002; Mujaju, 1989, Crisp, 2002). Jackson (2002) points out that the spill-over or refugee-flows may upset regional stability. Moreover, external states may become involved in a conflict by supporting various sides of the conflict (by supplying weapons, training, or other materials). In some instances, sub-state actors like rebel movements, militias and warlords often receive financial and political support from diaspora communities or ethnic kin separated by international borders. Collier and Heoffler (2000) view diaspora involvement in

civil wars as a cause of re-emergence of a civil war rather than the cause of the civil war in the first instance.

(v) *Post-modern Conflict Theory*

Tshitereke (2003) maintains that it is more meaningful to refer to intra-state conflicts in Africa as 'post-modern conflicts' because they reflect the re-emergence of globalized political economies that are no longer contingent on an inclusive nation-state (see also, Kaldor, 1999; Duffield, 1998). According to Tshitereke, these conflicts are expressions of new and singular political dynamics in the developing world, that diverge from the conventional evolutionist assumptions that states are in transition to liberal democracy. Further, he posits that the weak institutionalization of political practice in Africa is due to the fact that the African state was never significantly autonomous from the African society. This is a factor that is responsible for the perpetuation of failed states in Africa amongst which are Somalia, Sierra Leone, the DRC and more recently Cote d'Ivoire. The African state, therefore, has no attribute that is distinctly African as it is an artificial transplant of its Western counterpart (Henderson, 2000; Jackson, 2002; Tschitereke, 2003). Tshitereke, therefore, views civil wars in Africa from the perspective of premature state formation and the holistic political dynamics of the African state.

2. *Classification of The Causes of African Civil Wars*

There are numerous explanations in the literature for the cause of civil wars in Africa. These can be broadly classified as political, social and economic factors and multiple factors. It should be noted that these factors are not mutually exclusive and, as such, their boundaries may be blurred.

(i) *Political Factors*

Angstrom (2001) uses a political approach to classify internal armed conflicts. According to this author, internal armed conflicts should be classified according to two considerations: idea-individual; and whether or not the state is contested. For Angstrom, asking if the rule of the state is contested in ideological terms or in individual terms can differentiate between conflicts about the rule of the state, that is, about how or who rules. While Gurr emphasizes social factors in his relative deprivation theory, Angstrom perceives civil wars from a political lens. In fact, the political framework has gained extensive scholarly attention (Jackson, 2000, 2002; Duyvesteyn, 2000; Ayoub, 1986; Reno, 1998).

Duyvesteyn (2000), citing empirical evidences from Liberia and Somalia, contends that war is an instrument of politics (see also Clausewitz, 1993). Although elements of ethnic rivalry and economic interests may play a role in the initiation of a conflict, it can be done in combination with, or subjected to the political interests of the protagonists involved in the fighting. He argues that the Liberian and Somalian wars represent a continuation of politics. According to Duyvesteyn, the rebellions in both countries have created overt opposition politics that was not initially possible. As all peaceful channels for changing the regimes had been exhausted, violence was an instrument in the hands of the politically motivated invaders to establish control over the state. Factions representing highly personalized entities, striving to gain advantage over competitors, rise to prominence when the state is very weak (Lemarchand, 1987). The personalized nature of the factions in both the Liberian and Somali wars is conspicuous in this respect. The leaders had ruled through a network of personal power, relying

on their families, ethnic groups or clansmen. The invasions did not fundamentally question the nature of the rule but more the hands in which the rule rested. The faction leaders and their men have a chance to rise to power when they manage to gain control over the sources of power (Earle, 1997). The view about the type of rule or who rules expressed by Duyvesteyn (2000) is similar to that of Angstrom (2001) alluded to earlier.

Some scholars have emphasized the role of democratization as another political agent in forestalling or facilitating civil conflicts. In examining the linkage between political systems and peace, a number of scholars maintain that democratic states hardly go to war with each other. Hegre, Gates, and Gleditsch (1999) identify the different propensities for internal conflict in different kinds of democracies. They suggest that transitional democratic states are more prone to war than those that are fully democratic. Davenport et *al.* (2003) reiterate this same view. Transition towards democracy is seen to be particularly dangerous as every political segment is anxiously in need of power and some wish to obtain it by any means necessary (Jaggers and Gurr, 1995). This argument is relevant to the violent conflicts in Sierra Leone as the transition to democracy was at its rudimentary stage when the civil war started in 1991.

Henderson (2000) contends that African civil wars in the post-World War II era are primarily due to domestic political factors relating to state building and nation building. This is primarily contingent upon the colonial pattern of state formation that is evident in contemporary African states. He opines that in most of these newly independent and culturally diverse states, culture was the primary criterion for political association, and political rivalry was pivoted on the features of intercultural competition. The 'divide and rule' system used during the colonial system significantly contributed to cultural polarization that has been perpetuated in some

African countries and may have precipitated civil wars in some African countries. The results of Henderson's (2000) logistic regression analyses indicate that previous colonial experience is a significant predictor of the likelihood of civil wars. While Henderson (2000) underscores colonial history in the outbreak of contemporary civil wars, other scholars argue that the present epoch of globalization is a fundamental contributor to civil wars.

(ii) *Globalization and International Factors*

The pressures of globalization on fragile states, in particular, have resulted in the emergence of what is sometimes referred to as 'post-modern conflict' (Kaldor, 1999; Duffield, 1998). Post-modern conflicts involve substantial economic aspects as entrepreneurs make use of opportunities to profit from the uncertainties created by widespread conflict (Bardal and Keen, 1997; Keen, 1998). It also involves a diverse range of actors, from local militias to states, multinational companies, humanitarian organizations, and international bodies such as the United Nations. Each of these parties generates its own set of interests and pressures in a complex interplay of local and external interactions. Within this fragmented setting, the warring factions employ what some perceive as novel warfare strategies, such as ethnic cleansing, child soldiers, mass rape, banditry, and the use of mercenaries. The role of the different external players is primarily economic in nature though humanitarianism might also motivate some external agents.

(iii) *Socio-Cultural Factors*

While some scholars like Jackson (2000), Duyvesteyn (2000), Reno (2000) and Henderson (2000) underscore the paramount role of internal and external political factors in precipitating civil wars, others like Braathen *et al*. (2000) Kaplan (1994) and Hubert (2000) place

emphasis on socio-cultural factors. These social and cultural aspects are generally examined under the following categories: greed and grievance, and ethnicity.

The greed and grievance discourse is dominated by two schools of thoughts. One school views violence to be a response to a range of grievances including systematic discrimination and human rights violations, inequalities in wealth and political power, or a scarcity of resources. These are evident in situations marked by social cleavages such as ethnicity or religion. The second perspective of the greed and grievance approach views war as irrational, either originating in 'ancient hatreds' causing a needless disruption along the normal path to development, or simply as 'mindless violence' (Hubert, 2000; Kaplan, 1994).

A number of scholars have argued that grievances against governments are primarily responsible for the outbreak of civil wars. Braathen *et al.* (2000) maintain that there is potential for violence in situations in which there is repression in combination with exclusion of some groups (for instance youths from the southeastern Sierra Leone) from the state. According to them, when the elites in power feel threatened by their own politics of exclusion, resulting in a narrow support base, violence becomes a mechanism of repression (for example, the APC's government ISU thugs) on behalf of the state. The structure of state violence is to ensure the consolidation of power while accumulation continues. These contests in the arena of the state can, thus, provoke violent confrontation between groups with different locality and/or community affiliations. Richard (1996) alludes to the fact that the political elite in Sierra Leone maintains power by distributing resources on a personal basis to its constituents and that relatively few resources are distributed in accordance with principles of bureaucratic rationality

and accountability. This may have significantly contributed to the accumulated grievances against the government by those who were repressed and excluded.

Other scholars within the social discourse school of thought maintain that ethnicity is primarily responsible for civil conflicts in Africa. While some scholars regard it as an innate force that was suppressed during the cold war era and re-emerged with greater intensity after, others believe that it is a social construct. Three broad schools of thoughts on ethnicity are the primordialists, the instrumentalists and the constructivists. The primordialists argue that ethnic identity is a permanent element in which members of a particular group are linked through a common bond that determines the identity of an individual (Stack, 1986). This bond and identity create the coherence of the group. This concept of ethnicity is seen as static though it can be revived at any moment. They see it as an inherent conflict-promoting or producing element. The instrumentalists perceive ethnic identity to be a tool that is fluid rather than permanent and can be used and manipulated for political purposes as constituencies are created and people mobilized. The caveat here is that history and tradition have some role in ethnicity and as such individuals are not free to choose their ethnic identity. Instrumentalists emphasize the role of leadership and the elite who use ethnicity to their own advantage. The instrumentalist perspective has some veracity in countries like Burundi and Rwanda and to some extent Liberia, where politicians manipulate ethnicity for political authority. (Elllis 1995:183) states that "ethnic labels generally attached to the various militias are ideological representations used by politicians as a means of creating constituencies." For their part, the constructivists believe that ethnicity is malleable, but only to a limited extent. Ethnicity is a construct in society of existing social networks. The constructivist view could be applicable to Somalia where the clan structure of

society has created the conflict. In referring to the Somalia situation, Samatar (1992: 640) maintains that;

> it is the precipitous decline of the constraining role which the household economy played in the social affairs of the community, as well as the rise of an influential minority [Barre and his clan] whose command of the state machinery "liberated" them from the rules of the xeer [the clan and kinship conventions] and the values of Islam, which led to the Somali calamity.

With reference to the Burundi/Rwanda episode, Adekanye (1996) argues that the military organizational structure, which he refers to as "uni-ethnic dominant," though latent, has considerable destabilization potentials. For him, much of the cycle of armed ethnic formations epitomizing political life, concomitant with its associated vicious violence, is a direct consequence of that structure. Socio-cultural factors based on ethnicity and greed and grievance are primarily responsible for conflicts in Africa as expressed by Adekanye (1996), Stark (1986), Samatar (1992) and others.

(iv) *Economic/ Environmental Factors*

Other scholars argue, however, that socio-cultural attributes do not lead to outbreaks of civil wars. For them, the pivotal factors that precipitate civil wars are economic in nature (Ross, 2002; Collier and Hoeffler, 2000; Wachira, 1997). Collier and Hoeffler (2000) hypothesize that civil wars are caused by economic rather than social factors. From their analysis of 161 countries, they posit that, as state's primary commodity export relative to GDP rises to 26 percent, the risk of civil war in that country increases to 23 percent within the next five years. According to them, dependence on primary commodity exports, low average incomes, slow growth, and large-scale diaspora are significant and powerful causes of civil war. Collier and Hoeffler (2000) discard Gurr's (1970) relative deprivation theory because the latter's analysis of

global civil war using indices of grievances (inequality, political repression, and ethnic and religious divisions) do not provide explanations for the outbreak of civil wars. Collier and Hoeffler (200) point out that while objective grievances and hatreds may generate intense political conflicts, such conflicts do not usually escalate to violent conflicts.

Some scholars have attested that the increasing number of African civil wars cannot be attributed to genuine grievance, but a lucrative and bourgeoning 'booty futures' especially oil and mineral. While the sale of this booty continues to initiate and prolong civil wars in Africa, the intricacies of obscure but insidious types of contracts concluded between rebels and their commercial clients provide the necessary funds needed to launch assaults on governments (Ross, 2002). The futures markets played a significant role in the conflicts in Sierra Leone, Angola and the DRC where the weaker party sold oil or mineral futures (especially diamonds) to help pay the costs of combat, thereby, lengthening the conflict. This ultimately resulted in the fragmentation and criminalization of the conflict as military units changed their motives from politico-military objectives to economic ones. This latter view is applicable to Sierra Leone's civil war in which, by 1994, some government soldiers concentrated on the economic exploitation of resources, especially diamonds, instead of pursuing the war.

Wachira (1997) agrees that African crises are predicated on economic opportunities and allocation of resources in the context of perceived diminishing opportunities and resource bases, growing populations, and extreme poverty. He opines further that the primary root causes of African civil wars are human-made economic and political arrangements initially created to respond to needs external, rather than internal to Africa. The exploitation of primary commodities to satisfy external demands and the emulation of Western principles of democracy

in a distinctly different milieu are examples of such arrangements. The possession of natural resources within a particular country, coupled with weak management, have resulted in conflicts in some African countries as nascent rebel organizations have seized the opportunity to extract resources whose profits facilitate their cause. It is estimated that the correlation between resource-dependence and civil war is curvilinear (Collier and Hoeffler, 2000; Collier, 2000), suggesting that the risk of civil war declines when resource dependence reaches exceptionally high levels, at which point "the increased tax revenue eventually augments the capacity of the government to defend itself sufficiently to offset the enhanced finances of the rebels" (Ross 2001: 9). This, however, is questionable in the Sierra Leone case as the government had earlier lost control of the diamond resources, its principal economic mainstay, and did not have resources to forestall RUF advances.

The nature and geographical location of natural resources also affects the emergence of war. Addison *et al.* (2001) identify two main types of resources. First, there are point resources such as non-renewable minerals that are geographically concentrated and their extraction requires little labor. Second, are diffuse resources such as soils and water that are renewable and geographically diffused, which need large labor input for the cultivation of crops and livestock. The argument concerning resources is that countries with abundant point resources have a greater likelihood of experiencing conflict than countries that have only diffuse resources, especially when the latter undertake land reform. This view is applicable to the DRC, Angola and Sierra Leone where there are point resources. It should be noted, however, that the point resources in Sierra Leone were not the primary cause of the war but assisted immensely in sustaining it.

The literature on civil wars and the African state eludes to specific and general contributory factors. Some scholars like (Jackson, 2000; Reno, 1998; Duyvesteyn, 2000) specifically examine political factors as necessitating civil wars while others like (Stack, 1986; Akeyande, 1996; Ellis, 1995; Braathen *et al*., 2000) explore the dominant role of social factors particularly greed and grievance and ethnicity. Others contend that social factors are merely proximate and the ultimate factors are economic in nature (Collier & Hoeffler, 2001; Ross, 2001, 2002; Addison *et al*., 2001'; Wachira, 1997).

(v) *Multiple factors*

The literature includes a group of scholarly works on the causes of war that can be classified as multiple factors (Welch, 1993; Brown, 1996). In these cases, there is apparently no dominant factor but a collection of factors that may be inextricably interwoven to precipitate conflict. Welch (1993) maintains that there are very few necessary conditions for war, and very many sufficient conditions, of which only a few may apply to a single conflict. Sufficient conditions may include the availability of able-bodied men and women under the guidance of a leadership whose ultimate goal is to defeat the enemy and gain power. The goals may be political, economic or social, or a combination of all three. The availability of logistics and the willingness to fight are other sufficient conditions. The necessary condition could be attributed to war as the only mechanism to obtain power or the last resort to attain it.

Like Welch (1993) who underscores the role of necessary and sufficient conditions in civil wars, Brown (1996) distinguishes between background and proximate causes of internal conflicts and identifies four main clusters of factors that lead to violence:

> structural factors such as weak states, security concerns, and ethnic geography; political factors such as discriminatory political institutions, exclusionary national

> ideologies, inter-group politics, and elite politics; economic/social factors such as widespread economic problems, discriminatory economic systems, and economic development and modernization; and cultural/perceptual factors such as patterns of cultural discrimination and problematic group histories (Brown, 1996:573).

In general, economic conditions emerge as the most important explanatory factor for civil wars (Hauge and Ellingsen 1998). Auvinen (1997) identifies lack of democratic opportunities as an important secondary factor. These findings are supported by the arguments and evidence advanced by Collier (1999) that even in poor societies, leaders are usually competing with one another for control of the available economic surplus, even though it may be small. When the available surplus is small or where there has been a catastrophic slump in the economy, competition for economic resources may be particularly severe, and a violent escalation is likely to be the outcome. The terrible violence in Liberia from 1989 to 1997, the war in Sierra Leone from 1991-2001, decades of warfare in Angola and cycles of massacre and brutality in Burundi and Rwanda are among the many examples highlighted under this approach.

3. *Classification of Civil Wars*

Internal civil conflicts are often differentiated by type to determine what kinds of contingent generalizations can be produced. Rupesinghe (1992) suggests five different kinds of internal conflicts: ideological conflicts, governance and authority conflicts, racial conflicts, environmental conflicts, and identity conflicts. Similarly, Brown (1996) divides internal conflicts into two dimensions: elite-triggered or mass-triggered conflicts; and internally driven or externally driven conflicts. This results in four main categories, of which there are a number of sub-categories, such as ideological conflicts, ethnic conflicts, power struggles, 'spill-over' conflicts, and economically motivated conflicts.

According to the Conflict and Peace Analysis and Response Manual (1999) there are specific conflict indicators that can be used to monitor the dynamics and development of conflicts. The political indicators are human rights violations (arbitrary arrests, political killings, disappearances); internally- displaced peoples and refugees and military intervention in political affairs. Economic indicators include unemployment and social insecurity; prevalence of poverty, income disparities and land distribution and environmental degradation. Socio- cultural indicators are lack of access to mass media and discrimination on racial or ethnic grounds. Institutional conflict indicators include failure of the rule of law, in particular, lack of independence of the judiciary and the police, weakness of state institutions and repression of civil society organizations. African civil wars can easily be placed in one or a combination of these categories.

C. Explanations of the Sierra Leone Civil War

1. *Internal Factors*

A number of scholars have used theoretical and empirical approaches to explain the civil war in Sierra Leone (Clapham, 2001; Abdullah, 1997; Davies, 2002; Davies, 2000; Hirsh, 2001; Boas, 2001; Reno, 2000). These explanations can be categorized as internal (politico- economic, socio-economic) and external. Boas (2001) maintains that Sierra Leone's war was embedded in the extreme version of neo-patrimonial politics in the country. According to him, though the neopatrimonial state like Sierra Leone is a façade of what it pretends to be, it is able to privatize, extract and distribute resources. The privatization of public goods has two consequences: first, rather than having the impersonal and abstract attributes of legal-rational domination, political power becomes personal power; second, politics becomes a kind of business, due to the fact that

political resources subsequently give access to economic resources and vice versa. Politics and economics become conflated into a single, inextricable dynamic. As Davies (2002:10) puts it,

> "Unchecked state-sponsored corruption ensued, practiced through a patrimonial system of rationed favors; public theft; illicit payments and bribes; administrative allocation of scarce basic commodities; and manipulation of access to diamond and other natural resources, and rents from economic distortions in foreign currency, financial and commodity markets."

Abraham (2001) also alludes to the patrimonial rule of the APC as the cause of Sierra Leone's civil war. He maintains that the APC government adversely overhauled the democratic structure of the state, eliminated opposition parties and dominated the autonomy of civil society. In a similar vein, Boas (2001) suggests that a clear understanding of the dynamics of civil wars in Liberia and Sierra Leone is predicated on political collapse and state recession. According to him, this process can be understood only through the lenses of a dysfunctional neopatrimonial state (patron-client relationships and the expansion and withdrawal of this type of postcolonial state), the historical relationship between this kind of state and political violence, and the semi-permanent condition of social exclusion to which the withdrawal of the state has led. Similar views are expressed by (Davies 2000; 2002).

Reno (2000) posits that corruption was a systemic and deliberate component of the politics of the Sierra Leone state. Corruption was integral to political control by the APC and was resulted from efficient predatory behavior by that government. For Reno, the term corruption goes beyond the violation of laws, to include behavior on the part of political authorities in contravention of notions of reciprocity or obligation to citizens.

Clapham (2001) maintains that the ultimate causes of state collapse in Sierra Leone lie in the deep-seated problems of adapting a European model of statehood that is at variance with the prevailing situation in this area of West Africa. Further, he posits that the proximate sources of state collapse can be attributed to three distinct types of interaction between the indigenous social, economic and political structure, and its incorporation into the global order: the political economy of 'shadow statehood;' the political sociology of alienated youth; and the regional politics of insurgency (Clapham, 2001; Abdullah, 1997; Reno, 2000).

Clapham (2001) asserts that the central problem in Sierra Leone was the management of the diamond economy. This is what Davies (2002) refers to as the diamond curse. Diamond brokers and merchants, mostly of Lebanese origin, manage both the commercial linkages between miners and the global markets, and the political linkages between the country's main source of revenue and the networks of prominent politicians. According to Clapham (2001), the amount of illicit diamond in the market challenged the ability of the state to extract economic rent from the diamond fields, created powerful local political interests, and empowered those who controlled the diamond trade at every level (Davies, 2000; Davies, 2002). The role of diamond in the civil war has been given considerable scholarship (Smillie, Gberie and Hazleton, 2000; Davies, 2002; Davies, 2000; Collier and Hoeffler, 2000; Reno, 1998).

Davies (2002) asserts that ethno-regional divisions in Sierra Leone resulted in distributional grievances, which contributed to the outbreak of the war. According to him, the APC apparently discriminated against the southeastern region (a predominantly SLPP region) which is the country's breadbasket. This region was underdeveloped and its people did not receive most of the economic benefits from its output. Though not an ethnic war, the civil war

was aided by ethno-regional undercurrents (Davies, 2002; Logan, 1999). Widespread distributional and political grievances forced some people in the southeast (where the war started) to enlist voluntarily into the rebel movement (Davies, 2002).

Another socio-economic explanation of the war is urban bias. Modern amenities like electricity, telecommunications facilities, and pipe-borne water supply have been located only in the urban areas especially Freetown while close to 80% of the population (prior to the war) lived in the rural areas (Davies, 2000; 2002). The absence of these amenities heightened rural-urban migration, increased urban unemployment and created a recruitment base for the rebel movement (Davies, 2002).

Abdullah (1997) maintains that the civil war in Sierra Leone was the outcome of a rebellious youth culture in search of a radical alternative (in lieu of a concrete emancipatory programme) to the bankrupt APC regime. He believes that the glaring absence of a radical post-colonial alternative to Sierra Leone's political culture paved the way for what he calls the "bush path to destruction" Abdullah (1997: 204), that contributed to the outbreak of the war. In fact, (UNDP, 1998) points out that neglected youths created a pool from which the initial RUF fighters were recruited. Davies (2002) argues, similarly, that a dearth of educational opportunities for youths, high unemployment rate and the repressive action of President Momoh's government towards those that were engaged in diamond mining, aggravated the accumulated grievances of neglected youths (Abdullah, 1997). Reno (2000) maintains that youths who are victims of shadow states seek to overturn the corrupt moral and political order. Like Abdullah (1997), Reno (2000), Clapham (2001) also emphasizes the crisis of alienated youths. According to the last, the origins, ideologies and activities of dissenting youths clearly

played a dominant role in promoting state collapse. Abdullah (1997:223) uses the term 'lumpen' in describing the largely unemployed and unemployable youths, mostly male, who lived by their wits or were managing life in the informal or underground economy.

Another salient internal explanation of Sierra Leone's civil war was the absence of economic opportunities for the ordinary person due, in part, to poor national economic performance (Collier, 2000; Davies, 2000). The adult literacy rate was only 21%, per capita income stood at $250 while GDP growth rate in the 1980s averaged 0.5%. According to Collier (2000), poor economic performance increases the chances of war because it stems the capacity of government to spend on defence and as such makes rebel predation easier. The issue of widespread poverty also reduces the opportunity cost of joining the rebellion (Davies, 2000).

2. *External factors*

Clapham (2001) points to two external factors, which he believes triggered Sierra Leone's civil war. These are Colonel Gaddafi's radicalizing project in West Africa with the international linkages and training that it provided, and the immediate impact of the Liberia's civil war. Abdullah (1997), and Davies (2000; 2002) also allude to Libya's role in providing training and pre-war financing for the RUF. In fact, Davies (2000) suggests that pre-financing by Libya significantly reduced the collective action problem that may have hindered the likelihood of war. The collection action problem to which he alludes is that aggrieved people are averse to the risk of warfare, and, therefore, would like others to carry out the action while they free ride on the eventual benefits.

Scholars like Hirsh (2001), Abraham (2001), Boas (2001) and Richards (1996) have underscored the dominant role of Charles Taylor and his National Patriotic Front of Liberia

(NPFL) in the outbreak of the civil war in Sierra Leone. They highlight the following reasons for Taylor's involvement with the RUF: the APC government's support of the United Liberia Movement (ULIMO) faction which was opposed to Taylor; the Sierra Leone government's involvement in ECOMOG, which was restraining Taylor from his aim of seizing the mantle of leadership in Liberia; and Taylor's involvement in clandestine diamond trade from Sierra Leone into the business operations of his trading empire, Greater Liberia.

The previous section explores the political, socio-cultural, economic and multiple factors that are used in the literature to explain the war in Sierra Leone. While some scholars specifically emphasis the dominant role of one of these categories in the outbreak of the conflict, in many instances, a combination of factors that are inextricably linked led to the civil war.

D. Civil Wars and Internal Displacement

In this section, I examine the meaning of the term internal displaced person, discuss some theoretical explanations for internal displacement, and pinpoint some pertinent cases of internal displacement in a number of regions.

1. *The Concept of Internal Displaced Persons*

The term internally displaced person (IDP) is used to describe a person forced out of his home by some tragedy, is in search of a safe haven within the boundaries of his/her country, and continues to benefit from the protection and assistance of his/her government (Blavo, 1999). Internally displaced persons (IDPs) are identified as "persons who have been forced to flee their homes suddenly or unexpectedly in large numbers, as a result of armed conflict, internal strife, systematic violations of human rights or natural or man-made disasters, which are within the territory of their own country" (UN, 1992). This definition, however, is inadequate, as it does not

encompass all categories of people who are displaced. For instance, it neglects those who have to migrate in small numbers to avoid being noticed by a repressive government (as in Colombia) and those who do not actually flee but are expelled from their homes (e.g. Bosnian Muslims). According to Korn (1999: 13-14) the definition of IDPs should be modified to encompass groups of persons

> "who have been forced or obliged to flee or to leave their homes or places of habitual residence, in particular as a result of, or in order to avoid the effects of armed conflict, situations of generalized violence, violations of human rights or natural or human-made disasters and who have not crossed an internationally recognized state border."

Korn's definition identifies two distinctive features of internal displacement: first, the movement is coerced or involuntary; and second, the populations affected remain within their national borders (see also, Wood, 1994).

There are some general outcomes of displacement that are evident in most cases. Internal displacement may not be racially and class selective but, many times, most of the displaced are the rural poor. In Sudan, the majority of the displaced are from the rural south; in Turkey most of the displaced are Kurdish villagers from the country's southeastern region; in Latin America, they are mostly rural indigenous people.

A feature of the displaced is that the overwhelming majority of them are women and children. Most instances of displacement are contingent upon civil wars during which men who join or are drafted into the fighting ranks of one side or another, are killed, disabled, or flee to avoid recruitment. Children suffer immensely from these predicaments. During the Mozambican civil war of the 1980s, rebel troops forced children to serve as porters. Children were also

sexually harassed, and were used as human shields. In Liberia and Sierra Leone, children were conscripted as fighters.

Displacement can be said to have a multiplier effect. The consequences of large-scale displacement transcend the number of IDPs. Those who remain in their original location continue their lives in the vacuum created by the departure of the displaced while the lives of those living in the areas of destination are altered due to major population inflows (Winter, 1997). As a community loses population it also loses skills, and both its economic and social equilibria are affected (Wood, 2001). When the displaced flee in large numbers to rural areas they unavoidably disrupt the environment, polluting streams and groundwater sources and strip forests and grasslands for fuel (Cohen & Deng, 1998b).

Internal displacement is normally attributed to intricate causes many of which reflect a collapse in the basic mechanism of society and, to a varying extent, a crisis of identity. Korn (1999:7) citing Deng (1998) notes that there is "a crisis of national identity that generates cleavages between the affected population and the controlling authorities, governments, or insurgent groups." A sense of alienation in terms of race, ethnicity, language, culture, or religion is manifested to varying degrees in virtually every major case of forced displacement. Cohen and Deng (1998a:21) maintain, however, that "it is never the mere differences of identity based on ethnic grounds that generate conflict, but the consequences of those differences in sharing power and the related distribution of resources and opportunities… The role of political leadership at all levels, from local to national is pivotal." In fact, Annan (1996: 176) posits, "in societies where they are accepted and respected, people of vastly different backgrounds live peacefully and productively together. Ethnic differences become charged…when they are used

for political ends." It is important to note that problems often arise when a dominant group seeks to impose its identity on others or advance its interests over those of others. Problems also emanate from the fact that political leaders exploit resentments, prejudices, and passions in their attempt to gain or retain a hold on power (Korn, 1999). This was manifested in places like Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia where ethnic tensions culminated into genocide. In examining genocide, Wood (2001) has also underscored the spatial patterns created by displacement, which, according to him, include forced migration, selective property destruction and massacres. This is due to the role of political leaders that exaggerate perceived 'ethnic differences and old grievances (Korn, 1999; Wood, 2001; Cohen and Deng, 1998). Ethnic cleansing may be regarded as the ideology-driven strategy of genocidists to lay absolute claim to national territory. These perpetrators use terror, rape, murder and incarceration to achieve their goals, forcing most survivors to migrate out of an area (Wood, 2001).

Various scholars have cited the manipulation of the concept of identity as a precipitant of civil war with displacement as an ultimate consequence (Annan, 1996; Korn, 1999; Deng, 1998a). A global overview of civil war and displacement in other regions will be explored followed by an examination of the African case which appears to have much more multiple interwoven causal factors.

2. *Internal Displacements in Europe, Asia and Latin America*

According to the Global IDP Project (2002), there are about 25 million people displaced by internal conflicts. This is double the number of refugees worldwide. The project report points out that large numbers of innocent civilians are being forced from their homes by increased

insecurity in the world and many of these people remain officially neglected by government authorities (IRIN- the Global IDP Project, 2002).

In Europe, the predominant contributor to displacement has been ethnic-related conflicts. Ethnic cleansing was prevalent in Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina with massive displacement as one of its attendant consequences. Wood (2001) notes that idealized territorial aspirations is a genocidal goal of those engaging in ethnic cleansing. He argues further that apart from altering population composition, genocidal action also aims at redistributing population radically between and within states through mass expulsions. The diffusion of genocidal behavior occurs at local and regional scales, with significant spillover consequences. This was clearly evident in the disintegration of the Former Yugoslavia. Internal displacement in Europe reached its highest level by the end of 1996 when the region had almost 5,000,000 IDPs. In addition to Turkey and Cyprus, Eastern Europe and the Caucasus, and the former Yugoslavia, are the main centers of IDPs.

Displacement in former Yugoslavia could be delineated in three phases. The first major period of displacement was the war in Croatia from June 1991 to January 1992. This resulted in Serb rebels laying claim to a third of Croat territory and the displacement of 200,000 Croats, Hungarians, and others from Baranja, Slavonia, and what came to be known as Serb Krajina (Weiss & Pasic, 1998). According to UNHCR (1992) there were about 605,000 displaced people in the countries of the former Yugoslavia: 324,000 Croatia, about 100,000 in Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia and 60,000 in Vojvodina.

The second period of displacement was a consequence of the war in Bosnia. A series of territorial shifts and incidents of "ethnic cleansing" generated over 1 million IDPs and about 1.1

million refugees who fled from Bosnia-Herzegovina but remained on the territory of the former Yugoslavia (UNHCR, 1992).

The third period of displacement occurred in 1995 when 150,000 civilians fled from the Krajina region. In addition, there were incidents of organized expulsions of tens of thousands of non-Serbs from the Banja Luka region. This resulted in mass influx of about 750,000 refugees from former republics to the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (UN, 1995).

Policies of repression pursued by the Soviets towards the inhabitants of the Caucasus and the Russians repression of Chechnya resulted in a million IDPs in the Caucasus region. As of 1998, Azerbaijan had the largest number of IDPs in the region with more than 600,000, Chechnya about 320,000, and Georgia about 275,000, Armenia about 65,000, while the estimated IDPs in Ingushetia, a former province of the USSR, was 30,000 (Green, 1998).

As in Europe, civil wars have been the main cause of internal displacement in Asia. This is sometimes fomented or exacerbated by foreign intervention as in the case of Afghanistan. Political struggles, ethnic strife and religious disputes have contributed to such wars. The number of IDPs in Asia is estimated to be 5 million with most located in Lebanon, Iraq, Tajikistan, Afghanistan, India, Sri Lanka, Burma and Cambodia. South Asia has the highest number of IDPs in Asia (2.4 million) due to conflicts in Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, and India. India has about 250,000 IDPs due to the conflict in Kashmir state between the Indian authorities and Pakistan-backed Muslim separatists. Ethnicity and religion have also been instrumental in the separatist struggle of the Tamils in Sri Lanka. The Global IDP survey (2002) points out "although seemingly ethnic or religious in nature, many conflicts in Asia are rooted in poverty and the exclusion of certain regions or social groups from the economic development process."

Regional, ethnic and religious trends and incomplete state building further complicate these factors. Other scholars have expressed similar views about civil conflicts (Korn, 1999; Annan, 1996; Cohen and Deng, 1998b).

While most conflicts in Asia invariably have a religious origin, the situation in South America is often rooted in politico-economic tensions. Contemporary displacement in South America is concentrated in three countries- Guatemala, Colombia, and Peru, which collectively account for about 2 million IDPs. Civil wars have been the primary cause of displacement in these countries.

The outset of the civil war in Guatemala between the government and insurgent groups, which are mainly impoverished Mayan peasants, date back to 1960 (Ross, 1999). Human rights abuses perpetrated against these groups by the army, in collaboration with large landholders, resulted in large-scale flight from the rural highlands to safer areas. At the height of the war, soldiers reportedly burned more than 440 villages (Ruiz, 1993). Estimates of the number of people displaced at the end of 1995 when the civil war was drawing to a close, ranged from 200,000 to 1.5 million.

In the case of Columbia, the central problem is dual partisan politics that are based on partnership and clientism and from which ordinary people are excluded. In addition, there is a skewed land distribution system that favors the few affluent landowners at the expense of the rural dwellers. Displacement in Colombia has been primarily the outcome of political violence, which in some regions of the country, has degenerated into armed conflict among insurgents, the military, and various paramilitary groups and private agents. Over a million people were displaced between 1985 and 1998 (Obregon and Stavropoulou, 1998). Collective forced

displacement, since 1996, may have been an instrumental part of the government's counterinsurgency strategy and has also been used by drug traffickers' and guerillas' for territorial control.

As in Columbia, displacement in Peru is triggered by conflict due to poverty, ethnic divisions, and disrespect for human rights. The poorest and most violent provinces, Ayacucho, Huancavelica and Apurimac, as well as the selva of the Rio Ene and the Rio Huallaga valleys, are the areas of origin of most IDPs (Stavropoulou, 1998). More than 600,000 Peruvians fled their Andean villages in the 1980s. By 1994, the extreme leftist Shining Path insurgents had been substantially weakened. As a consequence, there was reduced violence and between 120,000 and 250,000 IDPs returned home.

3. ***Internal Displacements in Africa***

Africa has the highest spatial extent of displacement per continent (Crisp, 2002), with more IDPs than the rest of the world put together, and the numbers are growing. Three-quarters of African IDPs are concentrated in just three countries: Sudan, Angola and the DRC. The burgeoning number of IDPs in Africa is attributed to an escalation of armed conflicts, social violence, lawlessness, and human rights violations (UN Economic and Social Council, 1999; Global IDP Survey, 2002). In many instances, state and non-state actors have subjected IDPs in the continent to multiple, forced relocation. As of 2002, more than one-quarter of the continent's 53 countries had been affected by civil wars (Crisp, 2002). Many conflicts, while intra-state, have a regional dimension and are sustained by external factors which encompass cross-border support for the armed groups or rebel movements active in resource-rich areas (IRIN-The Global IDP Project, 2002).

The fundamental factors underlying the surge of IDPs in Africa are predicated on nation building. The primary explanation of the IDP problem in the region include crises of national identity and unity, ineffective government authority and control, dearth of economic productivity and resource distribution and most importantly tensions between centralized political and economic forces and popular calls of various constituencies for autonomy and equitable participation in political and economic life (Cohen and Deng, 1998b).

The predominant cause of displacement in Africa has been conflict among different ethnic groups and conflicts between governments and minorities of a different race, language, culture, or religion. Divisive colonial policies and/or a competition for political power, in which ethnic strife is used as a weapon, have been major factors in the civil strife that has sundered apart countries like Rwanda, Burundi and Sudan, (Cohen & Deng, 1998a, 1998b).

Most often, displacement is the outcome of ethnic strife manipulated by governments. In some instances, the objective is to expel certain ethnic groups from their lands while enriching others who have been politically supportive. Forms of "ethnic cleansing" have also been practised in Burundi where hundreds of thousands of Hutu civilians have been uprooted during the army's campaign of "ethnic cleansing." In the DRC, government officials instigated "ethnic cleansing" in the southern Shaba region in 1993, while authorities in the eastern part of the country acquiesced and at times assisted in the "ethnic cleansing" of Tutsi in 1995-96 (Yett,1996). Tutsi retaliation against the government gained momentum and was transformed into the movement that succeeded in overthrowing the Mobutu government in 1997.

In addition to conflict-induced displacement, internal displacement in Africa can occur as a result of refugee repatriation. As a considerable number of the returning refugees' villages and

towns of origin have been destroyed by wars, refugee repatriation can result in internal displacement. For instance, following the sudden return of hundreds of thousands of Rwandan refugees from the DRC in 1996, many returnees became internally displaced, due to fear of reprisal or, in some instances, because "others" had occupied their homes and lands.

While civil wars normally impel migrants to move to comparatively safer zones, there are instances of forced re-location. For instance, the Burundian authorities embarked on a policy of forced relocation during 1996-97 that placed large numbers of people in regroupment camps in the provinces of Muramvya, Kayanza, and Karuzi (Boutin and Nkurunziza, 2001). Regroupment is defined as "the forced movement of entire communities, usually by a government, to permanent or semi-permanent sites often directly under the control of military units" (Bennett, 2000:1). The official explanation was that the Burundian government wished to protect civilian populations from rebels.

The factors that force Burundians to flee their homes are varied. Some segments of the population are displaced as a by-product of civil war, others as a deliberate result of "ethnic cleansing", while others as a result of historic fears so embedded that many Burundians flee instinctively at the first rumor of imminent danger in their region. The violence in Burundi is driven by factors such as ethnic acrimony, which has stimulated what has been regarded by foreign observers as acts of genocide, widespread fear which has engendered a 'kill-or-be-killed' mentality; a culture of impunity, which has allowed acts of violence to persist unrestrained by justice or accountability; political ideology, which has incited some combatants to fight for the reinstatement of democracy; and political opportunism, which has convinced some Burundians that sustained chaos enables them to retain political power and economic privilege

(US Committee of Refugees, 1998). These multiple factors trigger displacement in Burundi and that displacement exacerbates rather than alleviates the conflict. Uprooted Burundians of one ethnic group, say Hutu, are often regarded to be dangerous by the Tutsis. Boutin and Nkurunziza (2001), citing the Burundian case, argue that displacement often means initial disorientation and confusion as those that were uprooted fled in haste. As a consequence, families were separated, and belongings were left behind and looted. In subsequent phases of the crisis, people considered themselves more capable of identifying risks, distinguishing reliable information from rumors, and planning ahead. They posit, therefore, that there exists a learning curve in regard to displacement.

In the Rwanda case, ethnic conflict between the Tutsi and Hutus, due in part to colonial manipulation, was sporadic since 1959 but reached an unprecedented scale and intensity in 1994. The genocide in Rwanda in 1994 was the most devastating selective massacre following the Holocaust of World War II. It was a well-planned and organized action. Wood (2001) notes that genocide creates patterns that can be mapped in the targeted area: specific villages and neighborhoods targeted for destruction, massacre sites [the church at Nyarubuye and Kibuye in Rwanda] destruction or defilement of specific cultural landmarks and forced displacement from defined areas. These attributes were evident in the Rwandan genocide. Out of Rwanda's population of roughly 8 million at the beginning of the 1990s, 2 million had become displaced in 1994 (Minear and Kent, 1998). These included Tutsi, some of whom had remained in Rwanda during the genocide, and others of whom were among the 600,000 'veteran' refugees who entered with the victorious Rwanda Patriotic Front. Others were Hutu, who, as the military and political tide turned, feared reprisals from the new Tutsi regime and army.

There has been intense fighting in the eastern DRC, where most of the over 2.27 million (IDPs) are located since 2002 (OCHA, 2002). There are additional IDPs in the Ituri region of Orientale Province following recent fighting. The staggering levels of internal displacement in the DRC have resulted from confrontations between various competing groups (both external and internal), struggling to accede to power and to control and exploit natural resources. These have often been exacerbated by inter-ethnic rivalries (IRIN news.org/webspecials/idp/rDRC.asp 9/24/2003). According to an OCHA study, four-fifths of the rural population of North Kivu has been displaced at least once since the beginning of the conflict in August 1998. Perhaps the most exasperating characteristic of the war in the DRC is the inability of international relief organizations to distinguish patterns of displacement. The sheer number of parties to conflicts (as many as eight in some places) and the different dynamics of attack and reprisal render even the largest shifts in population hard to predict (IRINnews.org/webspecials/idp/Rdrc.asp 9/24/2003).

In Liberia, the causes of displacement can be categorized as underlying and proximate. Underlying causes are structural, political and socio-economic in nature. Proximate causes are linked to structural factors which include a collapsing state, shifting military balance of power and destabilizing population shifts. Proximate political factors include President Doe's military tyranny and repression, rapid political transitions, violent leadership struggles and international indifference and regional politics (Scott, 2001). Proximate socio-economic factors include collapse of the country's currency, fortress Monrovia, the locus of wealth and focus of power struggle, aid concentration in Monrovia and militarization of society, while proximate cultural factors of displacement are ethnic hatred, Monrovia elites versus interior rebels and

normalization of violence (Brown, 1996). As of 2002, the estimated number of IDPs in eleven camps in Liberia was 140,000 while a considerable number of people were hiding in the forests.

In the case of Sudan, displacement can be attributed to interwoven factors that pivot on identity differences. In short, an acute crisis of national identity is at the core of the Sudanese conflict. As noted by (Deng [cited in Cohen and Deng, 1998b: 142],

> " the politically dominant and economically privileged northern Sudanese… see themselves as primarily Arab, deny the African in them, and seek to impose their self-perceived identity throughout the country…In sharp contrast… southerners see themselves as unambiguously African, racially and culturally, with Western influences reflected in Christianity and secularism…In this war of identities, the South has been joined by the non-Arab, though Muslim, communities of the North-South borders, notably the Nuba of Southern Kordofan and the Ingassana of Southern Blue Nile."

In a similar vein, Jacobsen, Lautze and Osman (2001) argue that the chronic vulnerability of the displaced in Khartoum must be seen in light of the economic, political, military and religious ambitions of the northern-dominated government of the Sudan at the expense of the southern people. This has resulted in an alarming scale of impelled and forced migration in the country. Widespread inter-ethnic conflict and drought have resulted in 4 million Sudanese IDPs, giving the country the largest number of displaced people in the world (IRIN Reports from the field- Sudan 9/24/2003). 1.8 million Sudanese IDPs live in and around Khartoun in the north, several hundred thousand reside in South Kordofan and South Darfur, and 1.5 million remain in southern Sudan (Ruiz, 1998).

There were about 4 million IDPs in Angola prior to the peace accord of 2002. Displacement in this country was due to civil conflict between two armed forces, UNITA and the MPLA. Birkeland (2003) notes, however, that displacement in Angola should be attributed to multi-complex factors amongst which are war and environmental degradation. Throughout 2001

and the first quarter of 2002, UN figures indicate that the number of new IDPs in Angola fluctuated between 20,000 and 50,000 each month, the number rising to over 60,000 in September 2001 owing to a massive movement of people following UNITA rebel attacks in the north of Bengo province.

4. *Displacement in Sierra Leone*

Displacement in Sierra Leone is primarily attributed to the armed conflict which forced civilians to leave their homes as a result of, or in order to avoid the effects of the civil war. It should be noted that displacement occurred in smaller scales prior to the war. For example, forced displacement took place as a result of violence during the election periods of 1977, 1982 and 1986. In addition, some people were displaced due to commercial mining activities in parts of the Southern and Eastern Provinces.

Displacement in Sierra Leone normally follows a two-step pattern in which individuals under threat often flee to temporary safe-havens such as remote settlement or bush camps and subsequently move to sites under government control such as IDP camps and public buildings (Global IDP project, 2002: Sierra Leone). According to the Global IDP survey, civilians flee villages and towns when expose to rebel offensives. Between 1991 and 1993 the entire eastern Sierra Leone and parts of the south were ravaged by rebel activities, resulting in mass displacement primarily to urban areas in the central, north and particularly the west of the country. The massive movements of IDPs from the southern and eastern parts of the country to the Western Area, Freetown in particular, resulted in over 100% increase in the population of the city. By 1995, some districts in the Northern Province (Koinadugu, Kambia and Tonkolili) were engulfed by rebel activities leading to the displacement of large civilian populations. Most of the

civilians in Koinadugu and Kambia districts trekked long distances until they crossed over to Guinea where they were lodged in refugee camps. Massive population displacements occurred also in 1998 as a result of escalated violence and human rights abuses in northern, eastern and central Sierra Leone. By December 1998, thousands of people displaced by fighting in areas just outside of the Western Area moved to Freetown. The RUF invasion of Freetown in January, 1999 led to substantial displacement in the western part of the country (Global IDP survey, 2002) as most people moved to the western part of Freetown that was under the control of pro-government troops. Different organizations give varying figures of IDPs in Sierra Leone, but these reported numbers are in the range of 500,000 to 1.5 million people (UN, 2002).

In summary, displacement can be triggered by civil wars in which people are impelled to move, by returnees not having access to their original homes, and by forced re-location (regroupment) by government authorities. Impelled migration may occur when the security of people is seriously threatened and can adversely affect their right to life and sustenance. The affected people decide to move to areas that they perceive to be safer (Davenport *et al.* 2003). In a few instances, displacement can occur as a result of returnees who have lost their land to others while away or are afraid to settle in their original communities due to potential reprisal.

To summarize this chapter, the discussion of civil wars and the African state shows that the politics of exclusion in concert with socio-economic inequalities are the primary causes of conflict on the continent. Other factors, though not mutually exclusive, are apparently secondary. The ramifications of civil conflicts are many and diverse, but displacement is an immediate and salient effect on civilian populations.

An examination of the explanations of African civil wars has revealed the dominance of politico-economic factors. Competition over power and resources ignites violent conflicts with displacement as one of its consequences. It is expected that the examination of the Sierra Leone case in the next chapter will shed some additional light on the theoretical discourse on this subject.

CHAPTER 3

CAUSES OF THE SIERRA LEONE CIVIL WAR

Numerous reasons have been advanced to explain the origins of the civil war in Sierra Leone. For example, human rights groups have underscored the repressive tendencies of the government in office at the inception of the war, and academics have analyzed the contributory factors that led to the war using various politico-economic theories as benchmarks. The victims' explanations of the civil war, however, transcend those discussed in the African war discourse (Table 2). This chapter is used to address theoretical explanations of the war and to compare them to victims' perception. The objective of these analyses is to ascertain whether there are differences between theoretical and victims' explanations and to unbundle any differences between the two (Table 3).

A. Theoretical discourse and victims' perspective: a comparative analysis

The numerous debates over the explanation of the civil war in Sierra Leone can be categorized as internal and external factors. The internal factors can be broadly classified as political, economic, socio-economic and socio-cultural. The external factors can be generally classified as politico-economic.

1. *Internal Explanation*

(i) *Political explanation*

The theoretical discourse has underlined the neo-patrimonial system of the APC as the central factor responsible for the civil war. This theoretical explanation is comprised of several

elements, which include a patron-client relationship, a very weak democratic structure, and the virtual inexistence of an autonomous civil society.

Explanations of the war provided by victims are consistent with the literature in some aspects. The victims refer to the poor, selfish and inefficient political administration of the APC as a major cause of the war. This is similar to the patron-client relationship, an element of the patrimonial state. The victims emphasize that only APC functionaries had access to large tracts of arable land for farming, and to other important social amenities like health and education. Seventeen percent of victims (without stating it as such) refer to the patrimonial state as the main cause of the war (see sample comments below).

> Respondent A of Nyandeyama Camp, Eastern Province: "the government doesn't give any encouragement to people to get land or to go to school. When you come from poor families, but with talent to be educated, there is no financial support. The government doesn't give a helping hand. They are only bothered about themselves."

> Respondent A of Lebanese Camp, Eastern Province: "some members of parliament and some paramount chiefs have very big farms from which they make a lot of profit from cacao and coffee, rice and sugarcane, but for us the chief only give us a small plot of land to farm."

> Respondent B of Lebanese Camp, Eastern Province: "the children of most of us do not have the right to education and because we are poor and the politicians are very selfish, our children drop out of school due to lack of school fees."

A second element of the neo-patrimonial explanation is a very weak democratic structure exemplified by the APC's imposition of one party system of governance on the people of Sierra Leone. Only one percent of the respondents refer to this theoretical position. Those who did, state that the one-party system of governance which removed active political participation of the 'others,' was the beginning of accumulated grievances against the APC and its cronies.

> Respondent H of the Grafton Camp: "the one party system of government which silent most people was the main cause of war."

Respondent A of the Waterloo Camp: "Siaka Stevens wanted to quiet the students and teachers who were challenging his 'one-man' rule, so he imposed the one-party so you either support him or, if you are not in favor of him you face serious problem."

Table 2 Victims Perspective of the Civil War

Factor	Victims' explanation	No. of responses	% of respondents
Political	Poor, selfish and inefficient APC administration	83	16.6
	Deprived politicians anxious of political power	18	3.6
	The APC/SLPP rivalry for power	5	1.0
	One party rule imposed by APC	5	1.0
	Rampant corruption in government	27	5.4
Economic	The deprived want to get a share of government revenue	11	2.2
	Some people wanted to gain access to diamond mining sites	4	0.8
	Lack of money in the country	3	0.6
Socio-economic	The 'big men' have all the money and we the people are suffering	14	2.8
	The poor and deprived were envious of the few rich people	12	2.4
	There was no freedom of expression and the press, no freedom to political right	80	16.0
	Too much poverty even though even though God made the country rich	20	4.0
Socio-Cultural	'Bad mind' for one another- especially if you are progressing	135	27.0
	The youths were not encouraged in life as only those from rich homes can obtain good education	10	2.0
	No jobs if you are not connected to the politicians	25	5.0
	APC gives good jobs and scholarship to 'their people' from the north	20	4.0
	The poor lost a case in court even if he/she was wrong by the rich	14	2.8
	Grudge between ruling chieftaincy families	10	2.0
External	The Liberian war crossed into eastern Sierra Leone	4	0.8

* Most important reason expressed by each respondent cited

Table 3 A Comparison of Explanation of the Civil War

Internal Factor	Theoretical Explanation	Victims' Explanation
Political	Patron- client relationship	Selfish and inefficient political administration of the APC.
	Very weak democratic structure	Deprived politicians were anxious for political power
	The virtual absence of institutions of governance	The APC/ SLPP rivalry for power
	Kleptocratic leadership	One party rule imposed by APC
Economic	Absence of economic opportunities	Rampant corruption in government
	Clandestine economy	The deprived want to get a share of government revenue
	The diamond curse	Some people wanted to gain access to diamond mining sites
	Poor economic performance	Lack of money in the country
Socio- economic	Distributional grievances	The 'big men' have all the money and we the people are suffering
	Urban bias	The poor and deprived hate the very rich people
	Rural isolation	The politician care about themselves only and there was no freedom of expression and the press.
	Poverty	Too much poverty even though God made the country rich
Socio- cultural	Neglect of youths	'Bad mind' for one another – especially if you are progressing
	Rebellious youth culture	The youths were not encouraged in life as only those from rich homes can obtain good education
	Tribalism and nepotism	No jobs if you are not connected to the politicians.
	Ethno-regional divisions	APC gives good jobs and scholarship to their people from the north.
	Obsolete and biased judicial system	The poor loose case in court even if they were wronged by the rich.
External Factor	Theoretical Explanation	Victims' Explanation
Politico-economic	Charles Taylor clandestine diamond trade and his NPFL	The Liberia war crossed into eastern Sierra Leone
	Pre-war financing and training of rebels in Libya	

A third element of the neo-patrimonial state explanation is the virtual absence of institutions of governance like civil unions, and pressure groups like the students' union, the teachers' union and the bar association. There is no explicit reference to this aspect of the neo-patrimonial state by respondents. Perhaps, respondents, most of whom are rural dwellers, are oblivious of the virtual absence of institutions of governance.

There are a number of political explanations mentioned by interviewees that could be considered as secondary. Four percent of the respondents refer to the fact that those politicians that were deprived of power were anxious to gain it and another one percent of interviewees cite the APC/SLPP rivalry. As noted earlier, the SLPP were the first to rule after independence and lost the subsequent elections to the APC. The observations of these respondents are relevant as it gives us a broader idea of political factors that are absent in the literature. These additional explanations, though secondary may be useful in designing preventive conflict policies.

> Respondent C of the Clay Factory Camp, Western Area: "In 1967, the general elections were rigged in favor of the APC which resulted in a number of coups and counter coups. Since that period, there has always been strong rivalry between the APC and SLPP. This dirty politics has brought all of these problems on us the masses."

The literature also points to the Kleptocratic leadership as Stevens and his henchmen were alleged to have embezzled considerable amount of the country's revenue for personal aggrandizement. Again only a small number of respondents (5.4%) agree with this explanation.

> Respondent D of the Amputee Camp, Western Area: "Siaka Stevens and his ministers stole a lot of money during the O.A.U. meeting in Sierra Leone as, for instance, 50 mercedes-benz cars that were donated to Sierra Leone by Algeria, never reached Sierra Leone. Most people strongly believed that they sold it for their own enrichment."

There are some similarities between theory and victims' perception in the political realm. The theoretical explanation of the patron-client relationship, an attribute of the neo-patrimonial

system, is consistent with the poor selfish and inefficient APC administration to which 17% of respondents attest. Although about 28% of respondents underscore political factors as their main explanation for the war, their reasons are not consistent with the literature in most instances. The literature underlines the virtual absence of institutions of governance but respondents fail to mention it. The literature cites political repression and kleptocratic leadership but only few respondents pinpoint these as the primary explanation for war. Respondents, on the other hand, address the aspect of discrimination in access to land and the fact that deprived politicians were anxious for political power. These factors are not explicitly addressed in the theoretical discourse. Perhaps, the issue of skewed access to land has a cultural orientation that may have been omitted in the literature.

Another possible reason for the divergent political emphasis is that the literature draws on political theories that have been tested in other volatile regions to see how applicable they are in the Sierra Leone case. Some of the findings in the literature may be limited in geographic coverage, and researchers might not have examined the views of various strata of the society. As a consequence, the literature may fall short of a clear understanding of the inherent cultural attributes of Sierra Leoneans. These inadequacies may have resulted in more macro-scale explanations in the discourse. Respondents who are from various social strata and regions of the country are familiar with the intricacies of political activities that may have brought out some micro-scale explanations.

On the whole about 28% of respondents attribute the war to political factors and more than half of them blame the poor, efficient APC administration. In these terms, theories and

respondents converge, but the fact remains that less than a third of respondents believe that the war was due to political factors.

(ii) *Economic Explanation*

The literature emphasizes the following causative economic factors: absence of economic opportunities; clandestine economy and the "diamond curse." Only a total of 3.6% of respondents, however, cite economic reasons for the cause of the war. Of these, 2.2% suggest that the deprived wanted to get a share of government revenue, 0.8% opine that some people wanted to get access to diamond mining sites and 0.6% believe that the war was due to lack of money in the country. To cite two respondents;

> "APC consists of several thieves, first it was 'vouchergate', then the OAU theft, followed by 'squandergate.' In all these cases, the treasury was 'dried up' for their own pockets." - Respondent F of the Gondama camp, Southern Province:

> "the politicians were benefiting seriously from the diamonds as they had mining pits, these people [RUF] believe that with guns they too can reap the benefit from diamond mining." - Respondent A of Kendeyama Camp, Southern Province:

The literature draws extensively on diamond as a precipitant to the war, whereas very few respondents (0.8%) are of that opinion. Thus, the respondents' perception of diamonds as an explanation to war can be considered secondary.

There are similarities between the theoretical and respondents' view with respect to rampant corruption in the machinery of government. Both highlight cases of rampant corruption but the theoretical explanation takes a panoramic approach to corruption and its adverse consequences. Only 5.4% of respondents underscore the role of rampant corruption in the inception of the war. The low response to corruption as a primary explanation for war may be attributed to the fact that it was embedded in the system for a considerable period of time even

when peace was prevalent and people were able to go about their daily lives. Another possibility is that most IDPs who were rural dwellers were so engrossed in their agricultural activities that they paid very little attention (if any) to the clandestine, corrupt economic trends that were prevalent in the country.

(iii) *Socio-economic Explanation*

The literature contains extensive discussions of socio-economic explanations of the civil war. Some scholars point out that there was a skewed distribution of the country's resources. According to the literature, a significant irony is that the rural southeastern region of the country produced about 70% of the country's GDP but was neglected in terms of infrastructure development. There was over-centralization of development in Freetown and a few other cities like Bo, Makeni and Kenema. Distributional grievances and urban bias, however, are not cited by the respondents as a contributory factor to the war. Only 2.8% of respondents lament the fact that 'only the big men had all of the money' and they the ordinary people were suffering. Respondents also state that the politicians were selfish and greedy.

> Respondent P of the Nyandeyama Camp, Eastern Province: " the country's money is in the hands of the MPs, ministers and their business partners who do the government deals for them, they don't help us at all, except when elections is near, then they will come with money, rice and rum to appease us so that we can vote them in."

A salient socio-economic factor that has been explored in the literature is poverty. Though respondents did not point out the rubrics of poverty, a few underline the issue in different ways: 2.8% point out that people were suffering, 2.4% opine that the poor and deprived were envious of the affluent; and 4.0% maintain that too many people were poor even though the country is endowed with abundant natural resources.

> Respondent K of the Magbenteh Camp, Northern Province: "God has given us so much 'wealth, yet most of us are poor because our politicians take the wealth away from us. They mine diamonds, gold, rutile, bauxite; we also export cacao and coffee but do not 'see the benefit.' These made people fed up with the country and some decide to go to the bush to liberate us from very bad poverty."
>
> Respondent T of the Grafton Camp expresses similar view: " We don't know what is wrong in this country as we mine diamond, gold and export other things, but we are very poor, far poorer than most of our neighbors who don't have diamond and gold."

There are some consistencies between the theoretical views and respondents' with regard to the socio-economic explanations of the civil war. The literature points to a clandestine economy in which only a few benefit at the expense of the majority. This is consistent with respondents who find it depressing to see so many resources been exploited while excruciating poverty prevails in the country. Respondents, however, did not categorically pinpoint issues like distributional grievances, urban bias and rural isolation as espoused in the literature. Some respondents implicitly cite distributional grievances in which the few that were linked to the political elites benefited immensely from the country's natural resources.

The possible reason why respondents did not explicitly state some of the socio-economic explanations espouse in the literature may be attributed to the fact that only a few (in the "system") benefit from these facilities, irrespective of urban or rural location. Most people therefore lived a subsistence life. Respondents did not dilate on macro and micro-economic indicators with regard to the outbreak of the civil war. Most respondents may not be familiar with these economic intricacies due to their low educational level.

(iv) *Socio-cultural explanation*

The most dominant factor underlined by respondents (27.0%) for the outbreak of the war is the "bad mind for one another" (Sierra Leoneans develop personal hatred for one another as

soon as one progresses or has the potential to forge ahead). It should be noted that in all locations victims mentioned that Sierra Leoneans do not like one another- "bad heart"- particularly if you are progressing or have the potential to progress. Below are some citations:

> Respondent K of the Clay Factory Camp, Western Area: "Sierra Leoneans, we do not like each other, as soon as your children starts to do well in school, relatives, friends and neighbors start to develop envious mind against you and your children."
>
> Respondent W of the Magbenteh Camp, Northern Province: " There is so much 'bad heart' amongst us [Sierra Leoneans], immediately your business start to flourish, people start to credit and don't want to pay and when you tell them to pay what they owe, enmity develops. Some go to the extent of harming you."
>
> Respondent M of the Gondama Camp, Southern Province: "We do not like each other in this land, people instead of them uniting in business so that they can progress, start to sabotage one another so that Mr. X will not be above Mr. Y in business. This is not how people in other neighboring countries behave. We really have 'bad heart' for one another."
>
> Respondent W of the Kendeyama Camp, Southern Province: "The bad heart amongst us [Sierra Leoneans] is heavy. Most of these elderly men who preside over cases of 'woman palaver' are bias. As soon as they see you have some money or property they fine you heavily. This ruins you and you are left with little or nothing to cope with life. This has made some young men join the fighters to gain freedom."
>
> Respondent Q of the Nyandeyama Camp, Eastern Sierra Leone: "We Sierra Leoneans, we don't like each other. My father left us some land with cocoa and coffee plantations but since we were very young and being the Muslim tradition to make uncles custodian of land instead of mothers, he was in charge. Later, when we had grown up we asked about the property. He totally denied that it was for us and he was a member of the council of elders. No one could challenge him because he was highly influential in the society. Some of my 'brothers' were very annoyed about the way our uncle treated us when our father died join the rebels."

Respondents emphasize that this occurs within the family most of which were polygamous, between families, neighbors, communities, within and across ethnic groups, within and between regions, and countrywide. It should be emphasized that is not ethnic hatred (theoretical view) but what could be referred to as 'personal hatred' at the national level.

Another important socio-cultural explanation for the war in discourse is the treatment and role of youths. Neglect of youths was manifested in the dearth of educational opportunities for youths, high unemployment rate and repressive government action for those youths that were mining diamond. Only 2% of respondents pinpoint that youths were not encouraged in life as only those from affluent homes obtained quality education.

> Respondent Z of the Grafton Camp, Western Area: "The APC politicians only care for their children. For me I come from a poor home. My uncle who was educating me died when I was awaiting my O level result [SAT]. I got a division one but no money to go to college as no body was willing to help me. This happened 12 years ago, and up till now there is no body to help. Some of my friends who were in a similar position, got annoyed with 'this type of system' and joined them to fight."

Unemployment is generally highlighted by respondents (5.0%) but not specifically as youth unemployment. The repressive government action against youth as noted in the literature is not included in victims' responses. Respondents may be aware of the repression against youths but may not have considered it to be a precipitant of war.

Other socio-cultural factors mentioned in theoretical discourse are tribalism and nepotism, ethno-regional divisions and the obsolete and biased judicial system. Tribalism and nepotism as espoused in the literature are consistent with victims' perspective but is not emphasized by the latter as only 5.0% of respondents state that 'you were not employed if you were not connected to politicians'. Other respondents (4.0%) mention that the APC gave good jobs and scholarship to their 'people' from the north.

> Respondent M of Grafton Camp, Western Area: "If Mr. A happens to be in the head office [top position], and you, Mr. you don't know him, whether his son, his brother's son, or his brother's relation, or his wife's sister's relation, or his relatives. But for you as a low man, when you come to that person, to that official in that place, he will not give you any assistance because he doesn't know you. This made the war to come."

The biased judicial system that is addressed in the literature though consistent with respondents' view is not an overriding explanation as only 2.8% of them maintain that the poor lost a court case even if 'he was wronged by the rich.' In others words, judges did not dispense justice in an impartial manner.

> Respondent D of the Magbenteh Camp, Northern Province: "the lack of basic rights to justice, education and freedom of expression, in addition to hatred and grudge amongst the people cause the fighting."
>
> Respondent E of the same camp: "lack of basic rights and hatred amongst the people caused the war."

A few Respondents (2.0%) maintain that the interference of the APC in chieftaincy resulted in the removal of some chiefs from office and the appointment of puppet chiefs that were affiliated with the party. The intrusion in traditional politics and its sacred characteristics resulted in repressive action by some of the APC appointed chiefs on those members of their community that opposed their rule. The literature fails to mention the manipulation of chieftaincy by the government. Chieftaincy is an inherent cultural attribute of most Sierra Leoneans and is revered in the communities.

> Respondent S of the Lebanese Camp, Eastern Province: "the APC manipulated the paramount chief election to parliament in my district because one of the top ministers wanted his cousin to be in parliament. As a result, my uncle was removed from office since he was at loggerheads with the minister. This made a lot of people annoyed as this was an interference with our culture as my family has been ruling over 100 years. Some people were treated harshly by the new chief and had to flee to other areas of the country. Some said they will one day reverse the situation."
>
> A similar view was expressed by respondent Z in the Magbenteh Camp, Northern Province: "Our paramount chief was removed from office because he refused to dance to the tune of the APC leader, Siaka Stevens. A very junior chief was installed as paramount chief by the APC. Our actual chief was also manhandled, put under house arrest for sometime before he was released. Some of his people join them [RUF] in the bush to revenge."

The literature and respondents' socio-cultural explanations of the war are consistent on issues like neglect of youths to education, tribalism and nepotism in obtaining jobs and a biased judicial system. There are, however, divergent views between the theoretical and empirical with regard to unemployment. While the literature underscores youth unemployment, interviewees' responses did not capture that but address general unemployment which, for them, is due, in part, to nepotism and regional preferential treatment in employment. Another point of divergence is that while the theoretical explanation stresses the 'lumpen' and radicalization of youths to effect change, the victims' did not point out these aspects.

The failure by respondents to cite the radicalization of youths may be linked to a cultural notion that children should not be considered as wayward or reckless but should be scolded for misbehavior and embraced. Rather, the victims emphasize the poor access to education by youths. Two respondents' views that are not captured in the literature are (i) that Sierra Leoneans have a ' 'bad mind' for one another, and (ii) the interference of the APC in the sacred tenet of chieftaincy, which subsequently led to retaliatory actions by some aggrieved people. These cultural aspects are not consistent with the explanations in the literature. It is possible also that the extensive coverage of the survey may have facilitated the 'capture' of some of the rather significant socio-cultural explanations which apparently are the overriding explanations of respondents.

2 ***External Factors***

The literature has given extensive coverage to external contributory factors to the civil war. The role of Charles Taylor and his NPFL in aiding and abetting the RUF has been extensively documented. Only 0.8 % of respondents, however, mention the spillover of Liberia's

war to Sierra Leone and none of them categorically cite Charles Taylor and his NPFL as explanations for the war. This is contrary to a number of scholarly works which assert the significant role of Taylor and his NPFL in the inception of Sierra Leone's civil war.

The sharp discrepancy between theoretical explanation and respondents' views on external contributor(s) may be attributed to the fact that some respondents were oblivious of external 'developments' that triggered the war. While other respondents might be conversant with external development, they may have argued that if 'the house was in order' external intervention would not have succeeded. As a consequence, they may consider external factor as rather adventitious. In fact, there is a famous cultural adage in the Sierra Leone society which literally means for an external attack on your locality to succeed, it must be facilitated by an internal agent.

In summary, the overriding political reason given by respondents for the war is bad governance by the APC manifested in a poor, selfish and inefficient political administration. About one-fourth of respondents pinpoint political explanations for the war. Respondents fail to emphasize economic explanation as primary explanation for the civil war. This is contrary to the literature which gives extensive discussion on economic contributors to the civil war.

There are a number of differences between discourse and respondents' explanation of socio-economic factors. There is however convergent view on poverty. On the whole, a fourth of the respondents advance socio-economic factors as the dominant explanation for war.

The overriding socio-cultural factors to which victims allude are hatred amongst Sierra Leoneans. This is inconsistent with the literature as it transcends ethnic hatred and may be regarded as 'personal hatred at a national level.' In all, about two-fifth of respondents underline

socio-cultural explanations for the civil war. Based on interviewees' perception one can infer that socio-cultural explanations are the most dominant explanation, followed by political explanations, socio-economic, and economic explanations. This is generally different from the literature in which political and economic factors are presented as overriding explanations for the Sierra Leone civil war.

The victims' perception of the cause of war may be useful for conflict prevention measures which may forestall a re-occurrence of civil war in Sierra Leone. As Collier & Hoeffler (2000) posit, there is a greater likelihood of re-occurrence of rebellion within five years after a war if conditions that precipitated the first carnage remain unchanged. Their model, which is based on an analysis of 44 countries, has been evident in Liberia and DRC where, after a transient period of calm and peace, fighting erupted which has led to cataclysmic impacts. There is, therefore, the need to address marked socio-economic disparities, socio-cultural and political problems which may prevent future wars. An analysis of the Sierra Leone's civil war with regard to micro level socio-cultural factors (that are not captured in discourse) that impel people to move as a result of threat to personal security and survival will be the subject of discussion in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4

WAR AND DISPLACEMENT

The numerous factors that contributed to the outbreak of a decade of war in Sierra Leone were examined in the preceding chapter. The need to remove the APC from power and the subsequent liberation of the masses was the initial reason advanced by the RUF for launching the rebellion. Abundant evidence shows that the rebels, however, terrorized and looted the people that they initially said they were fighting to liberate (Abraham, 2001; Hirsh, 2001). As Collier and Hoeffler (2000) point out, grievances against governments are often pretext for launching a rebel war. They maintain that the primary reason for the outbreak of war is the financial viability of rebellion. The coordinated looting of civilian and government properties and the RUF's engagement in diamond mining in the southeast give credence to this view.

The barbaric attacks on the civilian population are difficult to comprehend. Abdullah (1997:223) and Abraham (2001:206) have attributed these actions to the 'lumpen culture' of the RUF. This chapter examines the forms of attacks, the ultimate response of civilians to attacks, possible reasons for the spread of the war, regional computation of association between number of attacks and level of displacement using chi-square, and the spatial distribution of the victims of warfare.

A Forms of Attacks

According to respondents originating from the eastern district of Kailahun, upon the inception of the war, the rebels fired into the air when entering their towns, advised the people not to be worried. This would be followed by an eloquent speech during which the spokesperson would highlight their proposed plans of governance and would disseminate their ideologies to the youths to convince them to become RUF conscripts. According to one respondent, at the initial stage some unemployed youths willingly joined the rebel movement. This initial propaganda strategy was short-lived, however, as within six months, rebel interactions with villagers became dramatically and increasingly more violent. The original intention of the RUF seems to have been to win over the ordinary people who subsequently would participate in the 'revolutionary' movement with the ultimate goal of removing the APC from power. This did not materialize because most people were not motivated by the rhetoric of the rebel movement. As a result, the rebels apparently changed their strategy possibly coming to the conclusion that violence and coercion would be more effective for conscripting new cadres.

During the decade long war, attacks on civilian populations took different forms. Numerous scholars have documented the nature of these attacks. The responses of victims during the survey lucidly demonstrate the barbaric nature of the strategies implemented in most of the attacks. In some instances, armed men (mainly RUF) advanced from one front firing light weapons rapidly interspersed with heavy explosions. Most victims recall the sounds of these weapons and readily verify the types of weapons employed by these armed gangs. According to respondents, light weapons included the AK-47 rifle (the starter in most attacks), the G-3 and the

LMG while heavy weapons included the rocket propelled grenade (RPG), rocket launchers, and the general purpose machine gun (GPMG) and mortar bombs.

Another form of attack involved initial sporadic firing of light weapons for about two hours followed by rapid firing of light weapons. Within the period of rapid firing, a considerable number of civilians would be caught in crossfire while trying to escape to a safe zone.

A brutal form of attack resulted in an all out assault on the town/village from multiple fronts. Eyewitnesses report that both light weapons and artillery bombardment were used in this type of attack, which unleashed terror and mayhem on the vulnerable civilians at the center. This form of attack was mostly launched when there was a formidable military presence in the town or village in question.

In some instances, rebels attacked from one direction initially with heavy shelling and artillery fire. After they had engulfed the town or village the rebels reverted to the use of light arms fire. Eyewitnesses state that rebels engaged in this strategy when prior information revealed that government soldiers that were supposed to guard the area were absent without leave (AWOL). Many soldiers went AWOL because they were not trained to cope with the guerilla tactics employed by the rebels. In other cases, civilians awoke to the sound of gunfire at dawn. This type of attack signaled a well-organized ambush that had been set around the town or village in the adjacent forest a day or two prior to the launching of the attack.

The rebel invaders were very skilful in attacking innocent civilians. Sometime, they entered a town or village incognito without gunshot or weapons. The unsuspicious community then converged at a prominent location within the town/village for a meeting with their unexpected guests as instructed by a town or village chief or headman. During the meetings, the

rebels would make flowery statements and in the process reveal their identity. They would state the RUF aims and objectives of usurping the power of the legitimate APC government. At this juncture, calm would dissipate to edginess among the local community. When the rebels realized this development, their associates (who would have been concealed at the edge of the town/village) would open rapid fire and advance swiftly to the town/village center. Civilians normally suffer the brunt of casualties from these attacks.

According to respondents, another strategy of attack was the one used by the rebels to enter Koidu, a north-eastern town in the diamond rich Kono region. It was reported that the rebels entered the town with music playing on a tape recorder and dancing to a local favorite tune. Some residents of the town who liked dancing accompanied these 'visitors' until they arrived at the town center. Within a few minutes, there was rapid fire with light weapons that were hidden in the rebels' gowns. This resulted in the massacre of a number of people and many youths were abducted during the carnage.

Respondents also state that towns and villages surrounded by hills and mountains were attacked from these high elevations. Gunmen set up ambush within the perimeter of the town/village and at a stipulated time, unleashed terror on the civilian population. A surprise descent on the town/village resulted in murder, rape, looting, abductions and arson attacks.

The various forms of attacks on civilians resulted in deaths, mutilations, abduction, torture, sexual abuse as well as the destruction and looting of civilian property. One of the excruciating atrocities committed on civilians, however, was the amputation of the hands, feet, ears, lips, tongues and nose. This act did not only inflict enormous pain on the victims, but also posed a psychological trauma with which the amputees have to cope for the rest of their lives. It

was reported that the RUF rebels amputated the hands of at least 50 villagers who voted in the parliamentary and presidential elections of February 1996. Civilians also had their eyes plucked out, legs, arms, noses and tongues severed in retaliation for voting in Bo District, southern Sierra Leone. The rebels used hot irons to brand the words "no election" on the backs of some villagers as a stern warning to others to boycott the run-off elections to be held the following March.

According to some amputee respondents, upon abduction, they were ordered to stand in a line and walk towards a rebel combatant in possession of a machete who carried out the amputation one after the other. Some victims state that they were forced to participate in macabre lotteries in which the victim had to select a piece of paper which indicated the 'type of amputation' to be received. The victims then received a stern order to lay their hand(s) on a stick and the amputation of the hand(s) ensued. The same 'process' was executed for the foot or finger. After the painful process, the amputee would then be ordered to report the incident to the president of Sierra Leone who, the rebels taunted "will provide the victim with a new hand, [finger or foot]." A displaced person in Kenema, eastern Sierra Leone, narrated how his daughter who had both hands amputated committed suicide shortly after the incident. According to the respondent, his daughter considered death to be a better alternative than living without limbs.

A respondent in the Lebanese Displaced camp in Kenema, eastern Sierra Leone, explained how a plastic gallon was lit up and the burning wax was dropped on a man's head and face till the outer skin became completely shred out and both eyes were destroyed. According to her, the victim died in the process of terror being unleashed on him. Others had the plastic wax dropped all over their bodies till the fore skin peeled off.

It is difficult to understand the rationale behind these amputations and torture. Initially, the RUF underscored the need to get rid of the APC. The APC, however, lost the 1996 elections to the SLPP but the rebels continued to amputate civilians. Is it really a rational behavior to kill and maim civilians who voted? Was it a calculated ploy to terrorize the people into submission with the aim of gaining ultimate power? Was it a strategy to continue to loot property and diamonds in the south and eastern regions? These questions remain unanswered because few scholars have been able to decipher the RUF's logic. As Abrahams (2001) points out, unlike other revolutionary movements, the RUF had no ideology but was a disorganized and uncoordinated group causing havoc while engaged in the accumulation of wealth. This is similar to what Ross (2002) referred to as booty markets as most of what was stolen was sent through Liberia to the global diamond markets.

Clearly, the forms of attack coupled with the numerous atrocities endangered the lives of people who had to adjust to the crisis situation. As Davenport *et al.* (2003) point out, when the integrity of the person is threatened, people will evaluate their ability to lead satisfying lives. The greater that threat is to a large group of people, the greater the likelihood that members of the group will choose to abandon their homes and livelihoods in favor of an uncertain life elsewhere. At the macro-level, they opine that negative cues or stimuli that are available to many people ultimately result in lowering their evaluation of the likelihood that the integrity of their person will be protected and as such, translate into decisions to abandon homes. This was the case of many civilians attacked in various parts of Sierra Leone. The victims' responses to such attacks are explored in the next section.

B. Initial Responses to Attacks

The civilian population responded to rebel attacks in a variety of ways which included flights to safe havens, and the development of local defense militias when the attacks became unbearable.

(i) *Move to a Safe Haven*

Some 20% of respondents initially escaped from the vicinity of the attack to a nearby village. Thereafter, they trekked long distances carrying whatever they were able to grab before their town was entirely overrun by the attackers. Most respondents maintained that the assailants were RUF rebels. Civilians narrated horrific episodes of the decrepit becoming unconscious during the traumatic times while trying to escape to a safer area. Women and children were amongst those who had to cope with this onerous burden.

(ii) *Refuge in Forest*

About 15% of respondents said that they had no alternative but to seek refuge in the forest, since the locations of some towns and villages were not proximate to a nearby safe town when the rebels struck. Respondents narrated that they stayed in the forests for durations ranging from two days to a year. They had to live in an environment with no shelter and among wild animals. As a result of lack of medical care, some who suffered from serious ailments died in the forest. Most of those who escaped to the forest were from the southeast where the forest vegetation is abundant.

(iii) *Move to a safe area within the same town*

In the major towns and cities, those respondents (about 22%) who were fortunate to escape death and abduction moved to relatively safer areas within the same town. During the

invasion of Freetown in January 1999, most civilians moved from the east and central regions of the capital to the west, which was safer due to the heavy presence of foreign and government troops.

(iv) *Did not move*

About 18% of respondents said that they stayed indoors when their locality was attacked. This strategy was predominant among respondents who lived in built up areas in big towns. According to them, they would lay flat on the floor in their homes since it would be too risky to venture out as bullets and shells were released continuously. Some were, however, hit by bullets while in their houses and some family members and friends that were with them lost their lives. These respondents managed to flee to IDP camps when there was a moratorium in the attacks.

(v) *Move to a safe haven in another country*

Those respondents (about 14%) who were close to Guinea and Liberia escaped to these countries when their towns/villages were attacked. About 7% escaped to the neighboring countries of Cote d'Ivoire, The Gambia when there were signs that attack on their towns/villages were imminent. They later returned to IDP camps in Sierra Leone.

(vi)*Defense militias*

In some towns and villages outside of the capital Freetown, civilians mobilized and defended their township with sticks, cutlass and hunter's guns against attackers. For instance, in the southern city of Bo, civilians armed with sticks and cutlasses repelled a Christmas attack in December 1994. As a consequence, the southern civil defense militia known as *kamajors* grew in number and strength and became the most effective deterrent to attacks, especially in the south. The *kamajor* consisted of male youths and able-bodied men who underwent military

training in collaboration with some ritual process in their secret societies (*wende* and *poro*). Other areas of the provinces that were not under the protection of the *kamajor* militia were frequently overrun by rebels. As a consequence, there were instances of multiple displacements of civilians in these areas as they had to move to other areas considered 'safe' when their last location was attacked.

On the whole, the initial response of interviewees to attacks were varied and primarily based on instantaneous decisions. Their initial response included movement to a nearby village, refugee in forest, movement within the same town, movement to another country. Some respondents did not move from their location as it was very risky to do so while others especially in the south, did not move because they were protected by the *kamajor* militia.

C. Possible Reasons For Spread of War

The frequency of attacks and the spatial spread of the war were due to a number of factors highlighted by respondents. It is important to point out that the war would not have spread to various parts of the country if it had not been facilitated by certain intricate factors like connivance and an unmotivated army. In fact, a number of these factors are different from the original reasons for the inception of the war though some may be related to them. It can be argued that without the interplay of these factors, the war might not have spread throughout the country and resulting in the magnitude of displacement that ensued. Below are the explanations that respondents give for the spread of the war.

(i) *Connivance*

Although respondents mention multiple reasons for the spread of the civil war, the response with the highest frequency (52%) was connivance. According to the interviewees, this

took different forms. Most unemployed youths fraternized with the rebels, accepted the "revolution" and supported them. Some unemployed youths that were envious of the rich utilized the rebel menace to loot private property, while some people who were opposed to APC rule, sympathized with the RUF. There were also defections from the national army. Many of these renegade soldiers joined the rebels in order to amass wealth.

(ii) *Military Unpreparedness*

The second major response (27%) was that the army was totally unprepared at the inception and during the course of the war. The soldiers were ill-equipped and as such were taken by surprise. As Ola- Davies (1991: 1024) notes:

> Sierra Leone's military strength is only 3,000. The soldiers may be well trained but are pathetically ill-equipped. There is no air-force, no military helicopters and radio links are in dismal state. Its small and equally poorly equipped navy can hardly take care of defaulting fishing trawlers on the country's territorial waters.

Massaquoi (1994: 1862) puts it similarly;

> Ill-equipped and ill-prepared to counter such an attack, the army floundered in the wake of a swift and ferocious assault by fighters who were high on drugs. It was like a knife going through butter, never mind the claims to the contrary by the APC political leadership then.

The protection of the life and property of Sierra Leoneans by the armed forces is an enshrined clause in the constitution of the country. The poor political leadership of the APC, coupled with enormous corruption in the army, significantly contributed to poor military preparedness which, ultimately contributed to the protraction and spatial dispersion of attacks.

(iii) *Dissidence within Army Ranks*

Seventeen percent of respondents point out that members of the Sierra Leone army were dissatisfied with their low salaries and poor conditions of service. This was particularly so for the

infantry men. Although considerable sums of money were appropriated by the army, the bulk of it was used by senior officers who, it may appear, were not subject to audits. The appalling job conditions did not motivate the infantrymen to fight and brought about a schism between the senior officers and the infantry men.

(iv) *Secondary Explanations*

Other reasons advanced by respondents which could be considered secondary were that the war served as financial support for some individuals. In addition, although the military and the militias were fighting the same enemy, they were not united under one command. The absence of a strong military administration allowed the rebels to gain ground. Eight percent of respondents suggested that members of all the factions in the war, including the army, obtained some gains from looted properties and so had a vested interest in the continuation and expansion of the war. Other secondary explanations were that mercenary support of the RUF contributed significantly to a successful rebel military campaign and the RUF guerilla tactics were unfamiliar to the government forces that were more conversant with conventional warfare.

The RUF was initially successful in brainwashing and cajoling some civilians through the flowery presentation of their 'ideology', which emphasized improvements in the welfare of Sierra Leoneans. The RUF skillfully disguised themselves as civilians in towns and villages, when on espionage activities. The ferocity of the drug-addicted RUF soldiers intimidated government soldiers and other militias most of whom abandoned their posts.

These factors resulted not only in the spread of war, but also sustained the war for a considerable period of time. The gradual and eventual wide spread nature of attacks resulted in

multiple displacements as the displaced had to move from one area to another as the rebels advanced.

D Association between Frequency of Attacks and Degree of Displacement

Conventional wisdom suggests that there is a positive linkage between number of civil war attacks and displacement of the civilian population. In this section, I examine this relationship in the four regions of Sierra Leone using chi-square analysis. This type of analysis is important to gain insights into the patterns of population movements (systematic or random) during the war. The chi- square analysis involves a two by three contingency table computation between number of attacks and levels of displacement during the civil war. In this framework, war is examined in relation to number of attacks (once and twice) on respondents and the level of displacement is categorized as high, medium and low. For the displacement variable, those displaced once are ranked low, those twice are ranked medium, and those displaced three or more times are ranked high. My theoretical assumption is that there is a significant association between frequency of attacks and level of displacement in all regions of the country. The computation is at two degrees of freedom for each region. The default level is 0.05 at the 95 percent confidence level and the critical value of chi-square at this level is 5.99.

The result of the χ^2 analysis indicates that there is a great deal of association between number of attacks and levels of displacement in the Southern Province during the civil war (Table 12). The data for this region indicate that over half of the respondents in the region were attacked twice and the modal value of displacement is medium. The medium level of displacement can be attributed to an array of reasons, including the facts that a considerable number of respondents in the region initially migrated from the Eastern Province particularly

Kono and Kailahun districts (that were areas of heavy military combat) to Kenema. Some went home when there was semblance of stability in their districts. Subsequent attacks may have resulted in further movement to the Southern Province. Insecurity, fear of amputation, the obliteration of several villages/towns in their original region/locality and persistent sporadic attacks may have caused them to settle in the southern region. The southern region particularly Bo and Pujehun districts, were more secure than many other areas because of the vigilance and dedication of the local militia, the *kamajors*.

Table 4 Summary of output table of chi-square test between number of attacks and level of displacement of the four regions

Region	χ^2	Critical value of chi-square at 0.05 sig.	Degrees of freedom
Southern Province	**22.38	5.99	2
Eastern Province	**56.05	5.99	2
Northern Province	*1.51	5.99	2
Western Area	**75.30	5.99	2

** Highly Significant * Not Significant

In the Eastern Province, the chi-square result indicates that there is considerable association between number of attacks and level of displacement. The data show that over half of the respondents in the Eastern Province were attacked twice and the modal value of displacement is medium. The medium level of displacement can be attributed to the following factors: some respondents ventured to their areas of origin after the initial attacks as a coalition of government and foreign troops secured the areas but had to relocate following subsequent attack(s); others moved to big towns like Koidu and Kailahun town after the initial attacks on their

towns/villages. Subsequent attacks resulted in further movement to IDP camps in Kenema, Eastern province. Other IDPs who ventured to their original villages could not resettle because everything had been completely burnt down and their source(s) of livelihood, especially their farms and cattle, were completely destroyed. Some villagers did not bother to return home when they received news about the condition of their villagers. As a result, they had to remain in a displaced location. Even with the presence of pro-government forces in some rural areas, sporadic attacks by the RUF resulted in insecurity and fear by civil population and as such most remain displaced.

The results for the Northern Province show that there is no relationship between number of attacks and level of displacement. Although a significant number of respondents recorded being attacked more than once, and the modal level of displacement was medium this did not reflect in the chi-square computation. This implies that there was only a random association between number of attacks and degree of displacement and not a systematic association as in the other regions. This random association may be related to the fact that since the first attack, most of these respondents were not able to venture to their original settlement due to the intensity and prolonged nature of fighting in most parts of the north and central Sierra Leone. The devastation of the north occurred in a period in which pro-government troops were not in a position to repel rebels who had captured and occupied over 80% of the region. In fact, the rebel headquarters was moved to the north following ECOMOG repulsion of the invaders in January 1999. Their inability to return to their original location was also due to an array of factors, including, fear of abduction, fear of being maimed, and the devastation of their communities in the initial attack.

In the case of the Western Area, the result of the chi-square demonstrates that there is a great deal of association between number of attacks and level of displacement. The data indicate that nearly half of the respondents in the Western Area reported that they were attacked twice and the modal value of displacement is low. The low modal level of displacement can be attributed to two main factors. First, about half of these respondents were initially located in the Western Area and only migrated once. Second, most of those who migrated to this region from the provinces saw no reason to migrate further since the presence of foreign troops in the capital secured their safety. It is salient to mention that most people in the Western Area migrated to the west of Freetown during the rebel invasion of Freetown in January 1999, because of fear of being maimed/ further amputation and the complete destruction of their original villages/towns. In fact, the magnitude of amputation of civilians reached its highest level during the invasion of Freetown. This is clearly reflected in the data as 42 % of the IDP amputees interviewed were initially located in the east of Freetown. The overwhelming presence of pro-government troops (the national army and ECOMOG) in the west of the capital city Freetown not only provided security for the civilians, but also thwarted the goal of the RUF which was to overrun the city.

The chi-square analysis reveals that there is a systematic association between frequency of attacks and level of displacements in the south, east and west of the country. This is consistent with theoretical assumption and makes intuitive sense. The important lesson to be obtained from the analysis comes from the north where there is no association between frequency of attacks and level of displacement. In the other regions, some respondents ventured to their original location when there was semblance of peace following the recapture of territories that were occupied by RUF. In most instances, however, they were additional attacks by the RUF leading to further

impelled migration. In the case of the north, this was not the case as people flee at random and could not attempt to return due to the intensity and continuity of attacks and the protracted occupation of most areas by the RUF. This may have accounted for a non-significant association between number of attacks and levels of displacement in the north.

This analysis has shown that the theoretical association between frequency of attacks and level of displacement does not always hold. There are other factors that may account for a counter-intuitive result that can be revealed only through micro-level analysis that involves victims' input. Spontaneous and sustained attack in a heavily contested region and continuous occupation of an area by anti-government insurgents can result in a random rather than a systematic association between frequency of attacks and level of displacement.

E. Spatial movement of Internally Displaced Persons

This section looks at the migratory movement of IDPs with particular reference to areas of origin and destination. This analysis is designed to explore whether the volume of flows were skewed or fairly uniform. A skewed distribution would lead to congestion at some destinations and may have resulted in fierce competition for the basic necessities of life that were not readily available in an emergency situation. A uniform distribution, however, may reduce these acute survival problems. The subsequent result could serve as a guide for humanitarian relief agencies in planning for complex emergency situations, the provision of logistics and training of IDPs to become gradually self-reliant, and for eventual resettlement programs.

The prolonged nature of the war coupled with its spatial expansion resulted in considerable impelled migration. The patterns of movements of victims were from south to

north, east and west; east to north, south and west; north to south and west; and west to west. It should be noted that there was some intra-regional movements also (Figure 3).

Of the 57 respondents (11.4% of total respondents) who initially lived in the south, 5.3% moved to the north, 10.5% to the east and 33.3% to the west. About 51% of them were intra-migrants. In the case of the east, 261 respondents (52.2% of total respondents) initially resided in this region. Of these, 4.6% migrated to the north, 34.5% to the south and 17.2% to the west while 43.7% of them were intra-province migrants. For the north, there were 79 respondents (15.8% of total respondent) who initially resided there. Of these, 1.3% migrated to the south, 41.8% moved to the west while 56.9% were intra-province migrants. None of those respondents from the north migrated to the east. The scenario was quite different for the west as there was no movement to IDP camps in the other provinces. The 103 respondents (20.6% of the total respondents) who initially resided in the west were intra-province migrants.

The disproportionate volume of migrants was primarily contingent upon the security situation in the various regions. Proximity to camp was therefore secondary as it was dependent on the security in that area. The south accounted for the smallest number of migrants to IDP camps and this can be attributed to the *kamajor* militia that provided tight security in the region. The north had the second lowest number of IDPs in camps since a number of people had migrated to Guinea which was not only proximate but was safe. The continuous contestation in this region in the latter part of the war coupled with the insecurity of routes leading to the west may have forced a number of northerners to move to Guinea.

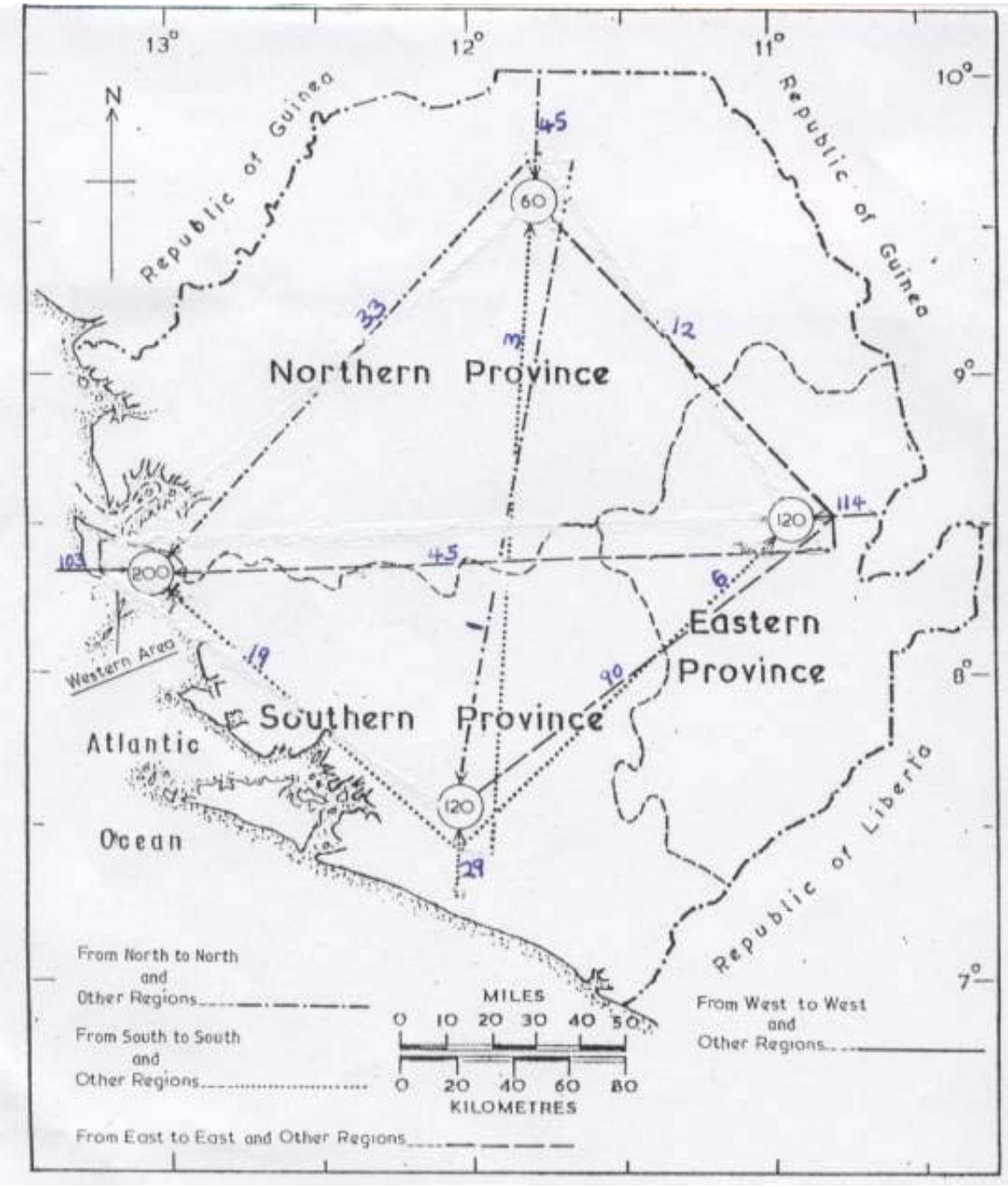

Figure 3 Migratory Flows of IDPs

By far, the greatest number of respondents (about half of the total) in IDP camps was from the Eastern Province. The preponderance of IDPs from the east can be attributed to an array of factors: the continuous occupancy of the greater parts of the east by the RUF; fighting in Liberia

restricting movement to it even though it is closed; and the continuous contestation between pro-government troops and the RUF. In fact, the eastern districts of Kono and Kailahun suffered the most destruction in the country. About a fifth of IDPs were from the west. This was primarily due to the invasion of Freetown in 1999 that resulted in the destruction of the outskirts, the east and central parts of Freetown. It should be noted that over 6,000 houses were burnt in those affected areas of the west.

(i) *Movement from The South*

According to the survey, very few respondents moved from the south to the northern camp during the civil war. This may be due to the facts that the *kamajor* militia in the south, particularly in Bo, provided some security for IDPs in the south and a large part of the Northern Province were under rebel control as of 2001.

The movement of victims from the south to the east was very low. This low south to east movement can be attributed to insecurity in the east due to sporadic fighting between pro-government troops and RUF. In addition, many southern locations were relatively safe due to the tight security provided by the *kamajor* militia.

There were moderate movements of IDPs from the south to the Western Area. . At the inception of the war, most IDPs from the south moved to the west but some of them returned when they learnt of the effective operation of the civil militia in their region. As a result, about a third of them were found in the west during the survey. Another factor that may have reduced the likelihood of south to west movement was the sporadic rebel attacks in the central parts of the country between 1997 and 2001.

(ii) *Movement from The East*

Very few respondents from the east moved to the northern camp. Even though most parts of the east were under rebel control and the region was heavily contested, most people were reluctant to move from the east to the north because the latter was just as heavily contested and marked by serious rebel activity.

About a third of the respondents from the east moved to the southern camps. This could be attributed to the following reasons: the eastern districts of Kailahun and Kono were the main areas of contestation between the RUF and pro-government troops as the rebel headquarters was in Kailahun and their diamond hold was in Kono district; the fighting in Liberia reduced possible movement to that country though it was close by; and the perseverance of the pro-government civil militia, the *kamajors*, in the south may have served as a pull factor for these migrants. This last factor may also have contributed immensely in reducing further movement from the region.

Slightly below a fifth of respondents from the east moved to the west of the country. As earlier indicated, the east was a volatile region for much of the war and the security situation in the Western Area, particularly in Freetown, may have attracted these migrants. At the initial stage of the war (prior to the formation of the civil defense force), the south was unsafe and, as such, some earlier migrants might have moved to the west which was the most secure region.

(iii) *Movement from the North*

Very few respondents from the north moved to the southern region during the civil war. Since a large part of the east and central regions of the country were under frequent rebel attacks, most people in the north could not gain access routes to this region. As a result, some of them

moved to neighboring Guinea. A secondary reason could have been that northerners share cultural similarities with ethnic groups across the border in Guinea.

About two-fifth of respondents from the north moved to the west of the country during the civil war. These northerners must have moved to the Western Area prior to 1998 when it was safe to travel to this region. It should be noted also that as of 1998, the central parts of Sierra Leone and the outskirts of the Western Area were unsafe due to fighting and may have forestalled further movements from the north to the west. As stated earlier, a number of civilians in the north had moved to Guinea and this may have also reduced the movement to the west

(iv) *Intra regional movement*

The data indicate that the majority of the IDPs were engaged in what could be regarded as intra-regional movements. Intra-regional movement accounted for the following percentages: south, 50.9%; east, 43.7%; north, 56.9% and west, 100%. Apart from the east, intra-region migration accounted for more than half of migratory flows. In fact, the west accounted for 100% of intra-regional migration. As stated earlier, the presence of pro-government forces provided security in the Western Area which must have immensely contributed to the non-movement to other regions. The RUF invasion of Freetown, however, resulted in the mass movement of people to the western parts of the Western Area at an alarming rate. Some estimates are that 2,000 people moved westwards daily during the first week of the invasion. The same can be said of initial attacks in the eastern districts of Kailahun and Kono at the budding stages of the war (1991 to 1992) when thousands of people moved to the Bo District in particular. These intra-regional movements often resulted in chaos for food and other essential amenities in the IDP

camps due to the volume of flow. This chaos was more pronounced in camps in the west and southern parts of the country.

These various movements highlighted above were mainly impelled by attacks on civilian settlements. The analysis reveals that there were spontaneous movement to IDP camps, intra-regional movement was common and that there was apparently no movement from the west to the other regions. The security in Freetown, the seat of government, was effective prior to the RUF invasion in 1999. The invasion was from the east of the city and people could only move west of the city because of two reasons. First, there is only one road route linking Freetown and the rest of the country which was heavily contested by the RUF and ECOMOG and, second, the ECOMOG bases in the west of Freetown provided security in that part of the city. The rapid convergence of IDPs in displaced camps may have resulted in congestion and lack of adequate amenities since humanitarian relief agencies were not fully prepared for the volume of flows. Humanitarian agencies might wish to plan to provide food and other essential resources in quantities proportional to the affected country's population. They should also think of strategies to expedite the distribution of relief items to the affected people in emergency situations. The analysis indicates that some respondents have been displaced for over five years. The provision of relief items at the initial stage of displacement is a welcome gesture but should IDPs be always dependent? Relief agencies might wish to complement relief supplies with vocational, technical and agro-based training and logistics for IDPs in displaced camps so that they will eventually become self-reliant. The skewed nature of flows is also of concern. The data indicates that more people were displaced from the east than in other regions. Government and NGOs would have to critically examine the quantum of damage in each region of the country which

will guide in the appropriation of resources for re-settlement during peace and stability. In this regard, the financial input that might be needed for the re-building of the eastern districts of Kono and Kailahun might be higher than other districts. Also worthy of consideration is the higher number of IDPs from the east. A carefully and well organized resettlement program may be necessary to ensure a smooth and effective result. The international community's effort is needed in accomplishing these goals.

CHAPTER 5

COPING MECHANISM OF THE DISPLACED

The displacement of a considerable number of Sierra Leoneans from their communities has had significant effects on the livelihood of the population. It has resulted primarily in a distortion of lifestyle, customs, practices and other norms as IDPs adapted to life in displaced camps that is significantly different from life in their original settlements. This chapter therefore explores the demographic structure (sex composition and adult/children ratio) of the IDPs, and discusses their coping strategies in the camps.

A **Demographic Profile of IDPs**

A number of scholars have maintained that displaced populations are normally skewed with a very high preponderance of females and children (Cohen and Deng, 1998a; Vincent and Sorensen, 2001). Some scholars posit that females and children constitute over 80% of IDPs (Vincent and Sorensen, 2001; Cohen and Deng, 1998). They also maintain that females consistently make up a higher percentage of IDPs than males. In the case of Sierra Leone, the data reveal that while there are more women than men, the difference is not significant. The male/ female ratio of Sierra Leone's population prior to the war was 49/51 and this is not significantly different from the male/female ratio of 46/54 in the IDP camps. The small difference between the two sexes in the Sierra Leone case may be attributed to the fact that both men and women were abducted in considerable number by the rebels. Young men were conscripted into the fighting force and women played dual roles as fighters and as "wives" to rebel combatants.

According to the survey, men constitute 22.6% of the IDP population, women 26.8% and children 50.6%. These figures are significant in an environment in which the social fabric has been seriously devastated. The increase in the number of women has some social ramification is a predominantly patriarchal society. For instance, laws of inheritance and access to land are male biased. Children constituted about 42% of the population prior to the war but this figure has increased by approximately 20 %. Parents and guardian have to cope with the increase of children/ward in a new milieu.

This demographic profile sets the stage for exploring the life of the displaced with emphasis on their adaptation strategies to their new situation. The increase in the number of children to household in IDP camps may have an impact on children's education and living conditions. The increase in the number of females may also affect the adaptation strategies to life in displaced camps. They may have been forced to engage in activities different from their pre-war activities as they grapple with new life conditions and new geographic environments.

B **Life of The Displaced**

In this section, I compare the socio-economic conditions of the IPDs prior to the war, explore changes in their livelihoods brought on by the war, and examine their coping strategies to these new conditions.

(i) *Economic Activities*

Prior to the war, most Sierra Leoneans were engaged in primary economic activities which included agriculture (farming, cattle rearing and extracting marine resources), mining and lumbering. About 50% of the labor force worked in government offices and business enterprises, while about 40% of the economically active population was in the informal sector.

Displaced persons are engaged in a number of economic activities which include wood cutting and selling, petty trading, middle man petty trading ("gbara"), and small scale farming, teaching in IDP schools, road maintenance and begging (Table 5).

Table 5 Economic activities of IDPs

Main income generating activity	No. of respondents before displacement	No. of Respondents after displacement	% of those IDPs who are engaged in economic activities
Medium to large scale farming	182	2	1.1
Petty trading	60	40	21.9
Large-scale business	14	2	1.1
Teaching	14	10	5.5
Small scale farming	30	10	5.5
Begging	1	9	4.9
Soap making	4	6	3.3
Tailoring	3	5	2.7
Gardening	20	5	2.7
Middle-man trading 'gbara'	2	12	6.6
Carpentry	8	4	2.2
Driving	10	4	2.2
Wood cutting and selling	4	64	34.9
Policeman	4	1	0.5
Diamond digger	4	0	0.0
Nurse	4	3	1.6
Road maintenance	0	6	3.3

* About 50% of IDPs were not engaged in any economic activity while the rest were students
Source: Compiled by the author

About 50% of IDPs who are economically active are unemployed. Amongst those who are involved in some form of economic activity, 34.9% cut and sell fuel wood, 21.9% are petty traders, 6.6% are involved in "gbara", 5.5% are engaged in teaching, 5.5% in small-scale farming and 4.9% are beggars. Some IDPs make soda soap (3.3%) and others participate in road maintenance (3.3%). Most of the IDPs point out that their present economic activity is much different from their pre-war economic activity.

Those interviewees who had been engaged in large scale business are now involved in petty trading. Most who were farmers are unemployed while some of them cut and sell fuel wood. A number of women are engaged in cutting and selling of wood, an activity that was male dominated in pre-war situation. About 50% of those who were initially petty traders were totally unemployed as a result of displacement.

Ninety-five percent of respondents report that they have experienced a reduction in income and only 5% have been able to maintain the same level of income as in their pre-war activities. Most respondents mention that their incomes have decreased by over 200% in relation to what they used to earn while those who had increases maintain that it is about 20% of what they use to earn.

(ii) *Political authority/ Camp Administration*

Chieftaincy was a fundamental aspect of political leadership in the country. The paramount chief was the head of chiefdom and `was assisted by a council of elders. There were also section chiefs who had to report to the paramount chief of that area. The role of chieftaincy was much more pronounced in the provinces, although there were tribal heads in Freetown who also presided over local court cases and performed other administrative duties. At the national

level, there were members of parliament who represented their constituencies and were supposed to serve as liaison between them and the government.

Displaced persons find themselves under political authorities that are different from those that existed under pre-war condition. In the IDP camps they are under the authority of the head of the camp, known also as the chairman in some camps. Next to the head in the hierarchy are the deputy head and the secretary general. These political heads were selected by the local and international humanitarian agencies based on information from some IDPs about their previous community roles. They were then presented to the IDP population in a "barreh" who were asked whether or not they want those selected for office. The IDPs normally respond in the affirmative. In short, the selection process was not democratic. About half of the interviewees are dissatisfied about the appointment process. Some maintain that the political executives are not truly representative of the various sections and that some senior officials seek only the welfare of their own people. It was observed that camps, particularly in the countryside, were divided into sections according to the chiefdoms of origin of the displaced persons.

The camps executives are in charge with regard to the maintenance of law and order, and sanitation activities. They are however, subordinate to expatriate of relief agencies with regards registration of IDPs, relief distribution and decisions in regard to other logistics. The local camp executives therefore have very little say in the needs of the IDPs of which many of them were dissatisfied.

(iii) *Living conditions*

Prior to the war, most people in the rural areas of Sierra Leone lived in houses made of either clay and thatched roof or zinc. Each family had a large compound in which several houses

were built. Those who could afford it, built houses made of mud, plastered with cement and covered with corrugation roofs. Urban homes were typically cement brick, wooden or zinc. Most of these houses had four or more rooms with areas varying in size from 9 square feet to 14 square feet. The number of occupants per room was two adults and varied between two and three children (National Curriculum Development Centre: NCDC, 1991). Adults in urban and rural areas slept on beds and most children in urban areas slept on beds. In the rural areas, however, most children slept on mats.

The decade long civil war, however, changed these conditions. About a tenth of the interviewees said that they had earlier lived in the forest for a time period ranging from a few days to years before moving to displaced camps. These displaced narrated that while in the forest, they slept underneath trees and were exposed to wild animals, reptiles, insects and birds. Only a few of them were able to erect makeshift shelters with palms and sticks. "… life was totally appalling and discouraging" narrated a respondent who spent some time in the forest. In the camps, IDPs live in very poor and hastily constructed structures, often made of earth or plastic sheets on wooden frames. Most of the structures in IDPs camps in the north, south and east of the country are made of earth. In the Western Area, most of the sheds in the camps are constructed with plastic sheets supported by frames made with sticks. The typical camp "house" is small in size (6 to 8 square feet) and often with one bedroom which in most instances, is inadequate for the average IDP household of 10 persons.

Displaced persons live in squalid conditions in all of the camps covered by the survey. About 70% of the displaced lamented that they live in congested huts/sheds with between four and twenty people living in a single room. Younger displaced persons sleep on the floor since

the number of beds exceeds the household size. Those who sleep on beds complain that the beds are very hard since the mattresses are made of grass and they complain of suffering from body aches.

As mentioned earlier, IDPs live in poorly constructed structures. Due to the congested nature of dwelling units on the camps, some IDPs utilize the limited unused space in some camps to mount tents where some members of the family sleep. Youths in particular sleep in the tents. As a result of the congestion in camps, some household ensure that all males sleep in one room while females and children sleep in the living room. This is a deviation from what used to operate in pre-war social relations. Prior to the war, couples slept together and most children slept in rooms. The IDPs also have to cope with leaking roof during the rainy season. In fact, during the survey I noticed that the displaced put buckets and cups in spots where water drips from the roof. They also have to shift their beds, benches and other items to prevent them from getting wet.

(iv) *Social Condition*

Community was a fundamental aspect of Sierra Leonean life especially in the rural area (80% of the country's population was rural prior to the civil war). A number of households that were related through marriage lived in the same compound, ward or section of the chiefdom. The extended family system was also of primary importance, as relatives could visit their kin for a considerable period of time during which it was obligatory for the host to provide lodging, food and entertainment for the guest, and to give him/her 'transport' (money to pay for the return journey and some gifts) when he/she was about to leave. In most instances, the visitor brought farm products for urban hosts. In cases where the visit was to a rural area, the visitor was

expected to bring western merchandise for relatives. Children were also sent to relatives in cities, who took care of them by providing, amongst other things, education. Communal life was further cemented through village activities like farming and self-help programs like road or bridge making in which various members participated.

The war tremendously transformed this social pattern as people fled for safety in different directions, eventually ending up in the camps. Displaced camps are isolated communities with varying lifestyles contingent upon the location of the camp. Death, amputations, abduction, and missing family members are a common predicament for most IDPs. Most families have missing relatives and this has tremendous psychological and economic repercussion on them. Some families have amputee parent(s), others are made up of predominantly youths as both parents have been killed, while other families consist of adult only as children are missing or have been abducted by rebels.

The displaced live in a heterogeneous setting with people from a variety of ethnic and tribal affiliations. Rival ethnic groups who used to maintain distant relationship now have to live in the same environment with people with different socio-cultural backgrounds. Social transformation in this kind of setting is not always peaceful and there are numerous disputes over water, toilet facilities and back yard gardens.

(v) *Food*

Prior to the war, a variety of food was produced in the country since the primary economic activity of 70% of the population was agriculture. Rice is the staple and other foodstuffs include cassava, coco-yam, yam, sweet potatoes, numerous vegetables, palm oil, and aquatic products- fish, oysters, cockle, lobsters and shrimps. Most of the tubers were eaten

during the 'hungry' season just before harvest. A variety of fruits, including, mangoes, bananas, oranges and apples were also available in most parts of the country. Some rural and urban communities supplemented their diets by hunting monkeys, deer and bush pig for their meat. Most people in the rural areas also reared sheep, goats and chicken. Poultry rearing was common in much of the country.

In the camps, displaced persons feed on a variety of food much of which is not normally part of their pre-war diets. According to respondents, the predominant foodstuffs include bulgur, corn mill, corn flour, beans and lentils, which are all foreign provisions. Most of the interviewees receive food supplies from food relief agencies including the Catholic Relief Services (CRS), Save the Children, Red Cross, and Council of Churches in Sierra Leone (CCSL), Care International, Adventist Development Relief Agency (ADRA) and World Food Program (WFP). The last is the most dominant food providing agency. Some respondents mention that they find the new diet monotonous, because the aid packages always contain the same items. As a result, some IDPs sell part of the relief food supply and use the money obtained to buy rice, bread and a few groceries. A number of respondents complain both about the quantity and quality of the aid. Many IDPs bemoan the fact that their new diets contain neither fish nor meat, which are essential to most Sierra Leonean dishes. A respondent in Nyandeyama Camp Eastern Province said that most times she prepares potato leaves (a popular Sierra Leone fish/meat dish), with garden eggs, groundnut and palm oil and serve it with corn mill just for her children and herself to survive. During my trips to the Lebanese displaced camp, I observed that a few respondents ventured into the forest in search of wild fruits to supplement their aid packages.

A typical day in the life of a displaced household consists of two meals. The displaced persons wake up at 6.30 a.m., say some prayers if they are religious, and about 9 a.m., eat a breakfast made of bulgur, gari and rice with some sauce made of potato leaves, palm oil and garden eggs ("*pemaoou*"). After breakfast, the next worry is food for the evening meal. If a member or two from the household is engaged in some economic activity, money is solicited from the individual(s) to augment relief supplies. A sauce made of potato leaves/ cassava leaves/ groundnut soup will most likely be prepared towards the evening and eaten with the bulgur, corn mill and rice if they can afford to buy it. Many of the displaced (70%) complain that they are constantly hungry and that there are few opportunities to supplement the aid packages. For many IDPs, therefore, the main nutritional adaptation is to skip meals and put up, as much as possible with the foreign foodstuffs in the aid packages.

(vi) *Medical conditions*

Prior to the war, the public health sector comprised of 730 Primary Health Units (PHU) and 21 Government District Hospitals. The PHU encompassed the Community Health Care (CHC), the Community Health Post (CHP) and the Mother and Child Health Post (MCHP) (Bousquet, 2003). There was also the traditional health sector with an unspecified number of herbalists, bonesetters and spiritualists in various sections of the country. Unfortunately, even at the best of times, public health care in rural areas was not satisfactory. A health survey in 1986 revealed that 66% of doctors, nurses and midwives were located in cities like Freetown, Bo, Kono and Kenema. It was also reported that 37% of the rural population had little access to basic health care (www.hsph.harvard.edu/takemi/RP133.pdf-54K). Nevertheless, during 1990 the government embarked on efforts to expand health care and to reduce the rural-urban disparity

in medical facilities. Mobile health units made periodic visits to, many rural areas. In addition, in 1990 the government embarked on a drive to reduce the high infant, child and maternal mortality rates in the country by expanding immunization and sensitization programs. Much of the rural population, however, continued to rely on traditional medicine.

Even though pre-war health care was problematic, the health situation in IDP camps was even more so. According to most respondents, medical supplies are provided to the camps by relief agencies like the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), Adventist Development Relief Agency (ADRA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), and United Nations High Commission for Refugee (UNHCR), Africare, GOAL Ireland, and *Medicin Sans Son Frontieré* (MSF), the main supplier of health service to the IDP camps. A number of respondents rant that the medication that is provided by the relief agencies is inadequate and that they have to buy expensive medicines in drug stores. Most IDPs receive financial assistance from relatives and friends for this purpose. A respondent in the Lebanese camp, eastern Sierra Leone lamented that the few tablets given to him by the aid agency when he was sick was not adequate to cure his illness and he had to solicit help from his elder brother in Kenema town. Though risky in a war situation, many IDPs venture into the forest to search for herbs to cure a number of diseases, including, malaria, fever, stomach ache, dysentery and diarrhea. Rural health care was insufficient prior to the war, but the war worsened the situation. Aid relief underestimated the volume of care required and often misdiagnosed diseases. Under these conditions, nearly 100% of respondents believe that their health care situation is exacerbated by the war.

(vii) *Education*

Formal education was gradually expanding in the rural areas in the immediate pre-war years, most villages in the country had at least one primary school, and the number of high schools all over the country was also increasing. In fact, in 1990 there were 2,007 primary and 210 high schools in Sierra Leone (Ministry of Education, Youths and Sports, 1994). The colleges and constituent arms of the university, though located in urban areas drew in students from the top rural schools. Adult education was also on the ascendancy in various parts of the country as farmers were encouraged to attend classes in the evenings while adults who performed manipulative duties in offices and business institutions were allowed to attend adult literacy classes during the day. Koranic education was another important form of education for the Moslems and even those who were in schools attended koranic classes after school.

Some IDP camps, organize evening adult education classes but many of the displaced tend to be too emotionally traumatized to concentrate on education. Most adult respondents (96%) with children point out that their children's and wards' education has been enormously affected by the war. Only 4% maintain that the war did not affect their children/ward's education as their towns had not been badly destroyed by the war. Several respondents point out that were it not for the war and the subsequent multiple displacement, their kids should have completed schooling four to five years prior to 2001. A student mentioned that she spent three years in a single grade in high school as a result of multiple displacements. As a result of the educational setback, she decided to enroll in the non-formal system of education in order to acquire some education. This involves courses like basic reading and writing, arithmetic and

some courses on social studies. It is relevant to mention that about 50% of the IDPs were children whose educational advancement has been adversely affected by the civil war.

Children and adults have to adapt to educational improvisation in order to acquire some form of education. Adult education classes are held in make-shift structures. There are non-formal programs which include recreation, peer education clubs and girl's social clubs to encourage young women to continue their education. There are also semi-formal education programs which include courses in peace and reconciliation.

Students have to cope with very large class sizes some as many as 100 students per teacher. Some students have to bring benches/chairs from home to sit because of insufficient seating space in the classrooms and some students have to sit on the floor if their families cannot provide them with benches/chairs. Pre-war schooling required school uniform but children in the IDP camps wear whatever clothing they can find. About 90% of respondents are dissatisfied with the educational provision in the camps because it falls short of what their children acquired prior to the war.

(viii) *Socio-cultural condition*

The population of Sierra Leone is made up of Christians, Moslems and traditionalists. A good number of the Christians and Moslems are also engaged in traditional beliefs which included animal sacrifices, ancestral worship and traditional norms and mores. An important element of traditional practice was the parading of masked devils for example during holidays. The majority of Sierra Leoneans belonged to one of the principal secret societies like the *poro, wende* and *ojeh* for men, and *bondo, sande* for women, while *hunting*, *geledeh* and *ogunugunu* were for both sexes. Others, particularly those who resided in Freetown, were members of the

free mason society. The pre-war conditions were marked by religious tolerance in the country and people of various religious beliefs co-existed quite amicably.

Eighty-five percent of respondents while in the displaced camps state that they are able to perform their religious rites. About 70% of respondents, however, lament that they were cut off from their specific denomination and from the religious members of their original center of worship. Fifteen percent mostly traditionalists, point out that they cannot perform religious rites, as a place of worship is non-existent at the camp.

Ninety-one percent of interviewees emphasize that the abrupt abandonment of their original location made it impossible for them to continue cultural practices like traditional rites, traditional festivals, and secret society practices. This has adversely affected the initiation of new members into secret societies. The few (9%) respondents who were able to continue their traditional functions state that they have made some improvisation at the camps. For instance, members of the *bondo* society made a small society hut at the back of the dwelling units in IDP camps to perform their rituals which include the initiation of girls.

In spite of the tremendous impediments to cultural practices, some of the IDPs have been able to continue to engage in periodic sacrifices and the preservation of certain taboos albeit with some modification. For instance, some IDPs occasionally prepare food for their ancestors which is placed on a hole by the side of their sheds. Food for ancestors was normally place in family shrines located in the family compound in the pre-war era.

In summary, the war has resulted in socio-economic changes that have profoundly affected the lives of the IDPs and they have had to adapt to these new conditions. Economically, about half of the IDPs who were engaged in economic activities are unemployed. Majority of

those who manage to engage in a form of economic activity earn far less than what they used to earn prior to the war. The war has sharply reduced the economic independence of most IDPs and has devastated their income capacity.

Politically, IDPs are faced with a new system of political and general administration. Their basic democratic rights in local politics have been obliterated. Their participation through consultation is no longer feasible as their local heads are not accountable to them but to expatriates of relief agencies. They are also faced with a leadership that may be of a different region and ethnic group and as such uncomfortable with its administration.

Socially, the war has deprived most victims of their ability to engage in cultural practices, an essential tenet of the personal, family and community life. A reduction in the availability and access to medical and educational facilities has also had a serious negative impact on the lives and livelihoods of IDPs. Since about half of the IDPs population surveyed are children of school going age, the unavailability of educational opportunities has created a social vacuum that has long-term implications for the country. The increase in the number of children/ward per parent/guardian, sharp reductions in household incomes, increases in the female: male ratio in a predominantly male-dominated society, are all manifestations of the obstruction to the socio-economic equilibrium that was in place prior to the war. The war has also severely affected the self-esteem of IDPs as they have become dependent on relief agencies.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

A. Summary

The civil war in Sierra Leone (1991-2001) was of a scale and intensity unprecedented in the country. A number of explanations have been advanced for the outbreak of the war. In the literature, internal political, economic and social factors are recognized as proximate factors for the inception of the war. Ultimately, however, the war is attributed to two external factors: the invasion of rebels from Liberia and the Libya's pre-financing and training of RUF. One of the major outcomes of the war has been displacement of population and its attendant consequences.

In chapter three, explanation for the war given in the literature are compared with the experiences of respondents. Unlike the literature, respondents attribute the war primarily to "hatred minds" amongst Sierra Leoneans. Though link to the greed and grievance explanation in the literature, the respondents' view at it, is based neither on ethnic grievance, nor on grievances against the government. It is essentially, envy, hatred animosity, rivalry, all in one. Although there is consistency between the literature and respondents with regard to socio-cultural attributes like neglect of youths, tribalism and nepotism, respondents emphasize these factors to a far less degree than one finds in discourse.

The literature extensively discusses a number of elements of the neopatrimonial state that was in existence in Sierra Leone as explanations for the war but only one element of it, the patron-client relationship, is emphasized by respondents. Respondents, however, attest to other secondary political reasons like access to land, one party rule, APC/SLPP rivalry and that

deprived politicians wanted to rule. These factors are completely absent in the literature, probably because they are grounded in culture.

Economic explanations like absence of economic opportunities, the clandestine economy and the 'diamond curse' are addressed extensively in the literature but are not underscored by respondents. In fact, respondents overwhelmingly believe that the war was of a social and political, rather than an economic nature. The literature examines the intricacies of macro and micro-economic indicators; when respondents refer to economic problem at all, they cite instances of individual or group corruption as segments of the population tried to amass ill-gotten wealth.

Socio-economic explanations in the literature point to distributional grievances, urban bias and rural isolation. Respondents, on the other hand, emphasize lack of basic rights while other socio-economic explanations are secondary. In all, one-fourth of respondents pinpoint socio-economic explanations for war.

Discussions in the literature differentiate between internal and external causes. External explanations include the role of Libya's Green Book ideology and Charles Taylor and the NPFL in the inception of the war. In general, respondents give little significance to external factors and maintain that hatred and greed amongst Sierra Leoneans capture the crux of the matter.

The differences in emphasis between the literature and respondents emphasis may be due to the latter's experiences on the ground. One perspective (discourse) is guided in its analysis by broad political theories and empirical similarities between the Sierra Leone case and other civil wars. The other perspective (respondents) is guided by a lifetime of experience. The differences between the two perspectives demonstrate the need for scholars to complement grand theories

with idiosyncratic, context-based research. No political theory has attributed a civil war to "hatred mind" but, according to the actual victims in Sierra Leone, this is the pivot on which everything else hangs.

Chapter four examines the forms of attacks, respondents' reaction to it and the migration flows to IDP camps. Respondents pinpoint the various types of attacks used by the rebels and noted that the attacks were often associated with a number of atrocities, including, abduction, sexual abuse and amputation of body parts. One geographic outcome of the attacks was population displacement. According to the survey, the spatial spread of displacement is rather skewed. The highest number of IDPs are from the Eastern Province than from other regions because of the continuous contestation over territory in that region, close to the rebel headquarters in Kailahun. The data also reveal that there is apparently no migration from the west to other regions of the country. This may be primarily attributed to two factors. First, the region was well secured (prior to 1999) by foreign and government troops. Second, during the invasion of the west in 1999, civilians were not able to move out of the region as the only route from Freetown to the rest of the country was heavily contested by the RUF and pro-government forces.

The chi-square analysis indicates that there is a positive association between number of attacks and level of displacement in the Western Area, Southern and Eastern Provinces. This is consistent with theoretical assumptions and makes intuitive sense. The salient lesson to be learned from the analysis comes from the Northern Province where there is no association between frequency of attacks and level of displacement. In other regions, some respondents ventured to their original location when there was a semblance of peace after the first attack but

had to flee due to subsequent attacks. This was not the case in the north where respondents were not able to venture to their original location after the initial attacks. This may account for this counter-intuitive result in the north.

The demographic profile (male/female and adult/children ratio) reveals that there are more females than males and a preponderance of children as in other cases of displacement. These large numbers of children are faced with the inadequacies of educational facilities in the camps and have to adjust to new conditions. About half of the respondents who are engaged in economic activities carried out something quite different from their pre-war activities. The predominant economic activity for both sexes is wood cutting and selling. There is a significant reduction in the earning capacity of most respondents and about half of the respondents who belong to the labor force are unemployed.

The displaced live in a heterogeneous social setting and have to interact with people of a variety of tribal affiliations. Rival ethnic groups that did not normally interact have to live in the same environment and such interactions are not always peaceful.

With reference to food, a number of respondents are concerned about the poor quality and quantity of food and lament that some people did not even receive food rations. Most respondents express dissatisfaction over the fact that they are given food with which they are unfamiliar. A number of respondents find alternative strategies to obtain rice and other ingredients to which they are accustomed.

The problem of medical supplies is another issue of concern as limited medicine is provided by relief agencies. Most people who could not afford to buy drugs are forced to go to the forest to obtain herbs while others receive assistance from relatives in urban areas.

Almost all respondents lament the fact that the war has greatly affected their children/ward's education. Though informal education is provided in most camps, it is not equivalent in quality to formal education. Children attend classes with any apparel they can obtain and take benches along for classes. Others who do not have benches or chairs sit on the floor in 'school.'

Socio-cultural issues are also of concern in these camps. Most respondents maintain that they are able to carry out their religious practices but missed their denomination and members of their original congregation. Others who are predominantly traditionalist are unable to perform their religious rites. In particular, most respondents cannot carry out their secret society practices and cultural dances. Their inability to initiate young men and women into secret societies is a cause for concern to most respondents.

This study has addressed the internal and external contributory factors that led to the civil war and has looked at attacks on civilian populations and their subsequent displacement. It has also examined the life of the displaced. The study leads to a number of specific conclusions: for respondents, socio-cultural explanations for the civil war takes precedence over the politico-economic factors espoused in the literature; the theoretical association between number of attacks and level of displacement is not necessarily significant when examined at a micro-regional level; displacement may be skewed contingent on the security measures at destinations; IDPs whose socio-cultural fabric has been destroyed adopt a number of coping and adaptation strategies as they grapple with live in camps.

The conclusions drawn from these analyses, suggest a number of theoretical contributions and recommendations which I will organize here around the objectives outlined in chapter one.

B Theoretical Contributions

1. *Micro-level analysis*

The study reveals that the causes of the Sierra Leone war transcend the broad theoretical politico-economic explanations gleaned from other civil wars. Scholarly and policy analysis of civil war must, therefore, engage micro-level explanations to ferret out factors that may be unique to the Sierra Leone case.

2. *Victims' insight*

Another aspect of consideration in theorizing the explanations of the civil war is victims' insights. The literature normally draws on political theories that are based on the evolution of civil institution and how they interact with each other. Often, these theoretical insights invoke universalities which completely ignore experiential reactions that may be germane for understanding human behavior and culture. Victims' insights may result in new and unique factors that may be useful in theorizing precipitants of civil wars.

3. *Displacement and number of attacks do not always co-vary*

Displacement and number of attacks do not co-vary in the Northern Province. There are local factors like continuous contestation and varying security conditions that can alter this generalized pattern. It is, therefore, necessary for scholars and policy makers to engage in much more micro-level investigations at various scales to see how far counter-intuitive outcomes can emerge.

4. *Displacement does not necessarily follow a uniform geographical pattern*

While there is a tendency to move to areas considered safer, it is not necessarily contingent on geographic proximity. The flow may not necessarily be uniform as a number of

factors play a role in the process. Those who flee due to imminent danger may have the latitude to choose their destination while those who had to flee when under attack, may not have enough time to find alternative destinations. It will be necessary for scholars to investigate explanations for non-uniform patterns of displacement.

In conclusion, the study reveals that IDPs are dissatisfied with the provisions supplied by relief agencies. By far the most important area of dissatisfaction is food supply. Since the foodstuffs are foreign to IDPs, it would be necessary for relief agencies to undertake preliminary surveys of IDPs to find out their staples and try to supply food that are as close as possible to the dietary habits of IDPs. For this to be achieved, greater financial input may be required from international humanitarian organizations especially the UN. It will, therefore, be necessary for humanitarian agencies to appropriate their available funds in such a way that the bulk of the money will be spent on humanitarian needs (which are their primary goal) rather on administrative overheads.

As most respondents who belong to the labor force population have lost all of their possessions and are unemployed, the provision of soft loans can help those who want to engage in retail trading and the production of local goods like soap making, *gara* dying and *gari* production. Perhaps, part of the money obtained by humanitarian agencies following the scaling down of their administrative overheads may help the IDPs to undertake such ventures. Unemployment was a problem in the pre-war situation but was exacerbated during the war. As a consequence, job opportunities should be provided in various regions of the country as part of a post-war reconstruction effort. The mining sector should train and employ more nationals rather than foreign expatriates. Agro-based industries should be set up which can also contribute in

reducing unemployment. The recruitment of workers by the Sierra Leone human resources departments, the establishment secretariat and the ministry of labor, should, however, be based on knowledge and experience, rather than as the pattern of "selective employment" that was prevalent in pre-war Sierra Leone.

Some judicial mechanisms should be put in place to punish the main perpetrators of the civil war, to serve as a deterrent to future insurgents. A peace and reconciliation commission should ensure that revelations are made public and that the culprits should show remorse for the crimes they committed. The establishment of a special court in the adjudication of justice for the 'ringleaders' of the conflict should expedite trials and should be as impartial as possible in the dispensation of justice.

National security should be given serious consideration by the government of Sierra Leone. Though other factors may have set the stage for the civil war, the actual inception was due to an invasion from Liberia. An effective military could have prevented the initial attack. The spread and subsequent escalation of the civil war was due, in part, to military inefficiency. A better trained military and police force with much more lucrative conditions of service, could prevent a possible re-emergence of war.

The civil war resulted in numerous devastating impacts including displacement and household destabilization. The restoration of peace and stability is a welcome improvement but much more effort is needed by the Sierra Leone government, the UN and ECOWAS, if it should be sustained. Peace and reconciliation is an area of utmost concern in restoring an integrated society. The national government and the international community have a gigantic task at hand

if Sierra Leone should move towards stability, peace, reconciliation, re- integration and rehabilitation, which are all important steps towards development.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE SCHEDULE

THE CIVIL WAR IN SIERRA LEONE

SCHEDULE A- Demographic Information

Household size 1. Total number_____ 2.No. of Males_____ 3. No. of Females____

4. No. of Children_____ 5. No. of Adults_____
6. Name---------- 7. Region Western Area 1
Southern Province 2
Eastern Province 3
Northern Province 4
8. Age _____ 9. Sex M F 10. Marital Status: Married 01
Separated 02
Divorced 03
Widow/Widower 04

11.Education: None 00
Primary incomplete 01
Primary complete 02
Secondary incomplete 03
Secondary complete 04
Vocational 05
Technical 06
Tertiary 07

12. Occupation_____

13. Religion Christian 01
Islam 02
Traditional 03
None 04
Any other 05

SCHEDULE B - Causative Factors of the War

1. What do you think was the main cause of the war?
_____
2. Was there a need for a revolt the time it happened? Yes No
3. If yes, Why? _____
4. If no, Why? _____
5. What do you think caused the war to spread throughout the country spontaneously?
01 sudden attacks 02 unpreparedness of the army 03 connivance
04 forceful conscription 05 complexity of problems 06 others (specify)

SCHEDULE C - THE WAR ITSELF

6. When did the rebels attack your town/village? _____
7. What form did the attack take? _____
8. How did you respond to the attack? _____
9. Where you able to return to your home Yes No
10. If yes, how soon? _____
11. What were the damages you observed on your return?
    01 burnt private houses 02 burnt public buildings 03 looting of private houses
    04 looting of public buildings 05 destruction of plantations 06 destruction of cattle
    07 destruction of kitchen garden
12. Was there a second attack on your town or village? Yes No
13. If yes, where you able to return to your town/village? Yes No
14. If yes, assess the level of damage_____
_____
15. If no, did you get feedback on the level of damages from people who went there?
    Yes No
16 If yes, specify the types of damages
_____

17 What was the security situation prior to the second attack?
    01 few government troops 02 a few government troops 03 several government troops
    04 Kamajor 05 Donso 06 Kapra 07 Tamaboro 08 active youths

18 Was your town/village occupied for a very long time which eventually turned to a rebel base?
    Yes No
19 If yes, approximately how long
_____

20 During the era of the AFRC, where you able to return to your locality?
    Yes No
21 If no, why?
_____

22 Was there stability in your area on the signing of the Abidjan Peace Accord?
    Yes No
23 If yes, where you able to return?
    Yes No
24 If no, why?
_____

25 What was the security situation in your area after the signing of the Lome Peace Accord?

SCHEDULE D HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATION

1. Were there human rights violations in your area? Yes No
2. If yes, what were these violations? _____
_____
3. Who committed these violations?
01 Soldiers 02 RUF 03 CDF 04 Active youths 05 Local hunters
4. Give any three incidence of gruesome atrocities you witnessed._____
_____
5 Were you abducted by the rebels?
Yes No
6. If yes, what were you asked to do?
_____
7. How long did you stay with them?_____
8. Were you released or did you escape?
Release Escaped
9. Explain briefly your life in captivity
_____
_____
10. How many members of your family sustained injury during the attacks on your village/town?
01 (1-5) 02(6-10) 03(11-15) 04(16-20) 05(>20)
11. What type of injury?
01 Shot dead 02 Beaten to death 03 Stabbed to death 04 Decapitated
05 Hacked to death 06 Burnt to death 07 Raped 08 Others (Specify)
12.How many of your relatives were killed during the attacks?
00 None 01(1-5) 02(6-10) 03(11-15) 04(16-20) 05(>20)
13.How many of your relatives/family members were arrested and detained without trial?
00 None 01(1-5) 02(6-10) 03(11-15) 04(16-20) 05(>20)

SCHEDULE E LIFE AS DISPLACED

1.Where did you seek refuge?
01 displaced camp 02 relatives 03 friends 04 church/mosque compound
05 community-center/town hall 06 others (specify)_____
2. (For formerly displaced) While in your displaced location, what was your housing setup?_____
3.What were you feeding on?_____
_____
4. Where did you get this foodstuff?_____
5. Was there any medical facility? Yes No
6. If yes, from what sources?
_____
7. Was there a place of worship close to your area? Yes No

8. Where you able to carry out your traditional functions? Yes No
9. If yes, how?_____
10.If yes, how?_____
11. Where you able to engage in leisure activities? Yes No
12. If yes, what form of leisure activities?_____
13.Was it the same as you use to do in your original location? Yes No
14. If no, what were your original leisure activities prior to being displaced?
_____
15. What form of authority were you under in your displaced location?
01 Paramount Chief 02 Section Chief 03 Tribal head 04 Head of camp
16 Were your children's education affected? Yes No
17. What did you do to earn a living?
_____
18. Was it the same as you used to do in your original location? Yes No
19. If no or yes, where you able to earn more profit/salary/wages? Yes No
20. How do you feel as a displaced?
_____
21. How do you feel when you recollected atrocities you witnessed?
22. How do you feel when you reflect on the attack on your town/village, sounds and light of weapons?_____
23. How do you feel when you recollect the destruction of life and property by arson attacks?
24. Do you know of anyone who has gone insane as a result of war trauma? Yes No
25 If yes, can you state the amount of people you know in that state?
01 1-2 02 3-4 03 5-7 04 8-10 05 10-15

Name of interviewer_____
Date of interview_____
Place of interview_____