TALKING PEACE

A POPULATION-BASED SURVEY
ON ATTITUDES ABOUT SECURITY,
DISPUTE RESOLUTION, AND
POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION
IN LIBERIA

JUNE 2011

HUMAN RIGHTS CENTER
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CONTENTS

Liberia's civil war between 1989 and 2003 left hundreds of thousands dead, and many more affected by the extreme violence that ravaged the country. Peacebuilding and reconstruction have been daunting challenges for a country that was divided and impoverished even before the war. The conflict destroyed or damaged almost all structures and institutions of the state, the economy, and everyday life. Much progress has been made since President Sirleaf's government assumed office in 2006, but enormous challenges remain. As the second presidential election since the end of the war nears, Liberia is once again at an important juncture on the path to its peaceful reconstruction.

This study was undertaken to contribute to a deeper understanding of: (1) the population's priorities for peacebuilding, (2) Liberians' perceptions of their post-war security, and (3) existing disputes and dispute resolution mechanisms. The study is based on extensive consultations with local organizations, interviews with key informants, and a nationwide survey of 4,501 respondents randomly selected in each of the counties to represent the views of the adult population in Liberia. The survey was implemented in November and December 2010. Results are representative of the population at the county level and for the Greater Monrovia district.

Findings

Key findings of the study are:

- There is a high degree of **socio-economic inequality** between Greater Monrovia and the rest of the country. Compared to residents in the capital region, respondents outside of Greater Monrovia were two to three times more likely to have no education

and belong to the poorest asset group. Women were more likely to have no education (45%) and be poorer (29% in poorest asset quintile) than men (respectively 25% and 18%).

- **Access to information** has improved since the end of the war for a majority of the population (66%), but respondents in the southeastern part of the country continue to rely predominantly on informal sources of information (e.g., friends, family) due to poor access to media. Elsewhere, radio is the main source of information. Women are more likely to rely on informal sources of information compared to men.

- Education, health, and employment were mentioned most frequently by the respondents as their main **priorities** as well as priorities on which the government should focus. Respondents further suggested the government should prioritize poverty reduction. There are regional differences, with roads being the most frequently cited concern in the southeast. Two-thirds of the respondents were not satisfied with their access to social services and job opportunities. Forty-two percent said no one helped improve living conditions in their community.

- The 14-year **civil war period** affected almost everyone in Liberia. Nearly four out of five respondents (78%) considered themselves a victim of the civil wars. A majority of respondents were severely affected by **war-related violence**, including displacement (77%), destruction of their house (61%), or looting and destruction of their crops (60%). Physical violence was also frequent, with 35% of the respondents reporting experience of a direct attack with a weapon, and 30% reporting being beaten by combatants. In addition, 8% of

the respondents reported having experienced sexual violence committed by combatants; among women, the prevalence rate was 12%. One in five respondents (20%) said they had been abducted or kidnapped during the wars. A majority (64%) held the view that greed and corruption were the causes of the conflict while 40% mentioned identity and tribal divisions, 30% mentioned poverty, and 27% mentioned inequalities. Former president Charles Taylor was named as a cause of the conflict by 45% of the adult Liberians.

- A majority of respondents is willing to **forgive** those who were responsible for the violence. They proposed financial compensation (65%), housing (45%), and education (45%) as measures for victims.

- Most Liberians are positive about the country's **prospect for peace**. The surveyed adult Liberians most frequently stated that in order to build peace, it was necessary to unite the tribes of Liberia (74%), educate the youth (57%), reduce poverty (46%), provide social services (40%), unite religious groups (26%), and/or address land ownership issues (25%).

- Considering Liberia's stable but fragile **security situation**, most respondents felt safe and reported improvements in security during the year prior to the survey. Nationally, two-thirds of Liberian adults (65%) reported no safety issues. Where a sense of insecurity existed, it was mostly associated with witchcraft, local crimes, and/or robberies. When asked what should be done to **improve security**, however, most respondents mentioned educating the youth (56%), as well as improving the capacity of the police (52%), reducing poverty (45%), providing social services to the community (36%), and uniting the people of Liberia (32%). One in three respondents (34%) stated that nobody **provides security in their locality**; another third (33%) listed the police as one of the actors providing protection. A majority of the population (74%) reported knowing how to contact the police if needed, and 84% said they would know where the nearest police station was.

- Although 49% of the respondents identified **ethnicity and ethnic divisions** as one of the causes of the civil wars, few respondents (4%) identified ethnic divisions or tribal violence as current factors of insecurity. However, 8% of the population reported experiencing problems along ethnic lines. Such problems were most frequently reported in Lofa (16%) and Grand Gedeh (10%).

- One in four adults had a **land dispute** during or after the conflict, the most common form of dispute among the population. The report explores various types of disputes and their impact. The results reiterate the prominent role of village and town chiefs in resolving disputes, in particular over land: 39% of those who had experienced land-grabbing since the war had consulted village or town chiefs to resolve the dispute. However, disputes over land were found to be far less likely to be resolved than other controversies, with just half the farm land-grabbing cases solved (53%) compared to a large majority (83%) of the non-land- related disputes. Most respondents acknowledged having either no (50%) or little (41%) knowledge of the **formal court system**. Just 28% described their access to the court system as easy.

- **Domestic violence** is a common occurrence, and 36% of the women and 16% of the men reported having experienced this during their lives. Many of them, 24% of the women and 10% of the men, experienced domestic violence in the year prior to the survey.

- Almost all (95%) respondents plan to vote in the upcoming **presidential elections.**

Recommendations

In the report the above results are expanded and additional data provided in greater detail, with statistics presented at the county level, and for Greater Monrovia. Based on these findings, the following steps are recommended to the government of Liberia, the civil society, and the international community:

- Develop specific measures reflecting the respondents' priorities under the Poverty Reduction Strategy framework to eliminate the chronic socio-economic disparities–especially among women and in rural areas–and promote investment in rural infrastructure, including roads, health centers, and schools.
- Support the development of an information network, which includes community and regional radio as well as cell phone connectivity, especially in the underserved southeast, so that the population can become informed participants in the reconstruction process, rather than be mere bystanders.
- Strengthen and professionalize the security sector, especially the Liberian National Police (LNP) so that they can effectively serve and address the main security threats at the community level. This may include, but should not be limited to, increasing accountability and transparency in LNP activities, including the implementation of existing operation guidelines and the vetting of any individual responsible for misconduct.
- Increase access to and quality of the formal justice system and strengthen existing dispute resolution mechanisms at the local level.
- Ensure that the electoral process takes place in an orderly and transparent fashion and that the security sector is deployed and able to mitigate and de-escalate potential crises.

- Continue to support a nationwide dialogue over the events that unfolded during the war and the root causes of the conflicts. This support should include additional outreach to ensure that the findings of the Truth and Reconciliation Committee are made available to the public and that there is continuation of an inter-ethnic dialogue.

Liberia's civil war between 1989 and 2003 left hundreds of thousands dead, and many more affected by the extreme violence that ravaged the country. The wars ultimately ended with the exile of then president Charles Taylor, the Comprehensive Peace Agreement of 2003, and the establishment of the National Transitional Government of Liberia, leading to elections in 2005.

The task of rebuilding Liberia, a divided and impoverished country even before the war, has been a daunting one. Almost all facets of the state and people's lives were damaged or destroyed. The challenges of post conflict reconstruction include the establishment of a legitimate and effective government, reform of the security and justice sectors, and economic and social revitalization. The war was fought between war lords who forced people to divide along ethnic lines. A major task for Liberians is, therefore, to rebuild trust between all sections of society and find ways to live together peacefully.[1] In 2005 the country voted for Liberia's (and Africa's) first elected female president, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf. Her government, along with strong support from the international community, began the transition from an emergency security and humanitarian support phase to a Post-Conflict development and reconstruction phase. To help address the wounds of war, the government funded an independent Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) that began in 2006 to look into the causes of the war and recommend steps to address the issue of accountability.

As the 2011 presidential election nears, Liberia is once again at an important juncture on the path to its peaceful reconstruction. Much progress has been made, but enormous challenges remain as the government continues to work to implement the country's Poverty Reduction Strategy. This study was undertaken to contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the population's priorities for peacebuilding, of Liberians' perceptions of their post-war security, and of existing disputes and dispute resolution mechanisms. The study is based on extensive consultation with local organizations, interviews with key informants, and a nationwide survey of 4,501 respondents randomly selected to represent the views of the population, implemented in November and December 2010. [2]

By providing county-level as well as national data, the results of this study give a voice not only to Liberians as a nation but also as residents of each of the 15 counties. This is particularly meaningful in Liberia because county lines were in part drawn around ethnic groupings, and different counties (and their specific populations) were impacted in different ways and at different times by the civil war. By presenting the priorities, perceptions, and attitudes of Liberians in each county, this report aims at contributing to the ongoing dialogue about how to make a successful transition from war to peace. The first part of this report focuses on understanding areas of tension and disputes among the population. The second half explores Liberians' views on ways to consolidate peace, resolve disputes, and prevent conflicts.

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[1] For a discussion of the broad challenges of Post-Conflict transition, Nicole Ball, "The Challenge of Rebuilding War-Torn Societies," in *Turbulent Peace: The Challenges of Managing International Conflicts*, eds. Chester A.Crocker, Fen Osler Hampson and Pamela R. Aall (Washington, DC: United States Institute of Peace Press, 2001).

[2] This is possibly the largest county-level nationwide survey on peace and reconstruction ever undertaken in Liberia.

For much of its 164-year history, Liberia has enjoyed a special status among Africa's nations. Founded in 1847 by freed slaves from the United States and the Caribbean, it was Africa's first independent black republic, and people across Africa considered it both an inspiration and a beacon of hope. Nevertheless, the relationship between the African-American arrivals, known as Americo-Liberians or "Congo" people,[3] and the many ethnic groups already present in Liberia, bore many similarities to European colonialism in the rest of Africa. To put in context the perceptions and attitudes of Liberians about their priorities for development, peace, and security, this section includes a brief background to the country and its people, a history of the civil wars, and the transition to peace.

Geography and People

Liberia is located along the Atlantic Coast of West Africa, between Sierra Leone, Cote d'Ivoire and Guinea. The territory is divided into 15 administrative counties. The capital, and by far the largest town, is Monrovia, located in Montserrado County, with a population of one million.

The rest of the country is mainly agricultural or forested, with other major towns having only around 50,000 inhabitants, namely the port town of Buchanan (Grand Bassa County) and the inland town of Gbarnga (Bong County).

Figure 1: Map of Liberia

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[3] The term "Congo people" or just "Congo" was commonly used first in Sierra Leone and later also Liberia to describe the non-native black settlers, due to the large number of slaves originating from the Congo basin, who arrived in these countries after the British naval forces captured slave ships to release their human cargo. They were later also joined by other settlers of African origin from the West Indies. Neighboring Sierra Leone was where "Black Poor" from Britain were being "repatriated" in as early as 1787, most of whom were former American slaves who sought refuge with the British during the American Revolution. This prompted the American Colonization Society to attempt to find a safe haven for the first group of freed American slaves in Sierra Leone, but eventually drifting further south to settle in 1822 at today's capital Monrovia, named in honor of US President James Monroe. Until recently, the Americo-Liberians were considered, or at least considered themselves, distinct and superior to the original Congos and others of African origin, which explains their aversion to the collective term Congo used by "native" Liberians. See Ellis, Stephen (2007). The *Mask of Anarchy: The Destruction of Liberia and the Religious Dimensions of an African Civil War*. New York: New York University Press; Cooper, Helene (2008). *The House at Sugar Beach*. New York: Simon & Shuster.

In 2010 Liberia had a population of around 4 million people, comprising 17 major ethnic groups, most of whom migrated to the region from different parts of Africa at different times, starting in 6000 BCE. Each has a different language and culture, and many have links across borders or with communities in other parts of Africa. The Mandingo, for example, are descendants of the Malian empire, and have links to related tribes across West Africa. The last to arrive, in the 1800's, were the Americo-Liberians, who now number about 5% of the population.[4]

Settlement of Liberia

The establishment of Liberia is linked to the abolition of slavery in the West, and the growing population of free African-Americans in the United States. In the early 1800's an alliance of diverse interest groups, including white abolitionists, clergymen, and slave-owners, formed the American Colonial Society (ACS) to look at the option of resettling African-Americans in Africa. Some wished to rid the United States of free black people who might challenge the institution of slavery, and others were pessimistic that blacks and whites could ever live together in peace. The society, funded mainly by Presbyterian churches that saw opportunities for evangelizing, began sending groups in 1820. Between 1821 and 1867 some ten thousand freed slaves were resettled on the Atlantic Coast of West Africa, as well as several thousand more from interdicted slave ships and Barbados. The first group founded the colony of Liberia, "Land of the Free." In 1847, the Liberians formally declared their independence from the ACS, creating the world's first black republic.[5]

Americo-Liberian Rule: 1847–1980

Americo-Liberians governed Liberia as a one-party state for 133 years. Their rule heavily influenced the development of Liberia, by introducing English as national language and a Western political and social structure.

Under Americo-Liberian leadership, the country was relatively stable. Through an elaborate patronage system, the Congo were able to satisfy all groups more or less equally by rewarding their leaders in return for loyalty and collecting taxes. The economy, which at first found it difficult to gain entry into markets dominated by colonial powers, was eventually supported by American foreign investment. In the 1920's, the Firestone tire company took over 4% of the territory for the world's largest rubber plantation, which provided a model for other plantation developments and provided the Americo-Liberians with significant cash resources.[6] In the post-World War II period, Liberia had its most prosperous years under President Tubman (1944-1971).[7]

However, at the same time the Americo-Liberians had a virtually segregationist policy. They rarely intermarried, membership of the only recognized party was limited to Americo-Liberians, and Liberians who couldn't prove Congo heritage (95% of the population) were excluded from serving in the government or military until the 1970's. Indeed, indigenous populations were not even recognized as citizens until 1904. As a result, the Americo-Liberians only governed the settlements and territories along the coast. Infrastructure, education, and other services barely entered the so-called "hinterland" of inland Liberia until well into the twentieth century.

In the 1970's, after most of the world had been decolonized, frustration with the repressive state structure began to grow among Americo-Liberians and newly educated indigenous Liberians. After demonstrations against rising food prices were violently put down by the Tolbert government, an indigenous sergeant in the army called Samuel Doe led a coup d'état. Tolbert and 13 members of his cabinet were executed, Doe claimed the

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[4] Estimates vary – see http://www.state.gov/r/pa/ei/bgn/6618.htm, accessed June 10, 2011.
[5] Liberian independence was recognized immediately by Britain and France, but the United States refused to recognize it until 1867.

[6] Ellis 2007, p. 44.
[7] Ibid., pp. 47-50.

position of head of state, bringing an end to the Americo-Liberian rule in 1980.[8]

The Doe Regime: 1980–1989

The Doe Presidency began with great hope and support from most Liberians for its unseating of the Americo-Liberian oligarchy, despite its origins in a military coup. However, the government quickly turned into an oppressive military regime that destroyed the fragile economy.[9] Doe also created and exploited divisions that sowed the seeds for the later conflicts and the numerous ethnicity-based militias. He explicitly favored his own Krahn tribe from Grand Gedeh County, as well as the Mandingo, who are seen by many Liberians as foreigners despite their long residence in Liberia. He resisted almost all other ethnic groups, but particularly the Gio and Mano from Nimba County, eventually leading to violent clashes between the military and ethnic groups in this region.

The historic failure of governance continued under Doe. In 1985 the country held the first national elections open to candidates from all ethnic groups and formally ended the one-party state. However, Doe is widely believed to have rigged the election and stolen the presidency from a native of Nimba, Jackson F. Doe.[10] The United States, for its part, endorsed the result giving Samuel Doe some kind of legitimacy and signaling to opposing parties that Doe could no longer be removed through peaceful means. The U.S. also propped up the failing economy by delivering the

largest per capita amount of development and military aid in Sub-Saharan Africa.[11]

Toward the end of his reign, an isolated Doe had surrounded himself with fellow Krahn (as well as American and Israeli military advisors). An increasing number of Americo-Liberians were asked to run the country's economy, fueling resentment by many Liberians outside Monrovia. When armed rebellion broke out in 1989, led by Charles Taylor, Doe responded with brutal repression against civilians in the Gio and Mano tribes. On September 9, 1990, rebel leader Prince Johnson and his men tortured and killed President Doe and videotaped the entire event.[12] However, Doe's end was only the beginning of the first phase of the Civil War.[13]

The First Phase of the Civil War: 1989–1997

The first phase of the civil war began on Christmas Eve 1989 with a rebellion against Doe's government led by Charles Taylor, leading to Doe's execution, and ended with Taylor's victory in the 1997 elections. In between these events, Taylor waged a long and brutal campaign for power, and the country split into numerous military groups and factions, mostly along ethnic lines.

Charles Taylor was the son of an Americo-Liberian and a Gola tribe member from Arthington, close to Monrovia. Educated in the U.S., he returned to Liberia in 1980 and served as the head of procurement in Doe's government until he was charged with embezzlement. He fled to the U.S., where he was arrested and jailed pending extradition to Liberia. Taylor escaped from his Massachusetts jail and made his way to Libya where he received guerilla training and in 1989 returned to Liberia as the head of the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), a hitherto unknown group comprising former members of Doe's regime. On December 24, 1989, the

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[8] The United States is widely believed to have had a role in Tolbert's downfall and the installation of Doe as leader. Tolbert, unlike the strongly pro-American leaders before him, had started to open Liberia to the Soviets, a development not supported by the U.S., which had a large commercial, political and military presence in Liberia at this time, including their whole of Africa headquarters (Ellis, 2007, p. 52). It is notable that they did not warn Tolbert of the impending coup or seek to protect him.

[9] Sawyer, Amos (1992). *The Emergence of Autocracy in Liberia: Tragedy and Challenge*. San Francisco: ICS, p. 296.

[10] Ellis, 2007, pp. 55-60.

[11] Ellis, 2007, p. 63.

[12] Ellis, 2007, pp. 9-11.

[13] The Liberian Civil War is frequently described as two separate wars. Here, we use the terms "wars" and "war" alternatively.

NPFL attacked government army positions in Nimba County.[14] On New Year's Day 1990, Taylor announced the attack on the BBC and, without detailing either his own or the NPFL's ambitions, he urged Liberians to take up arms against the government.[15]

In the first months of the conflict the NPFL was disorganized and poorly armed, and its ranks used it as an opportunity to seek revenge on ethnic groups that the Doe regime had favored. However, the Government's attacks against civilians drove youth to the NPFL's ranks and it grew in strength. Taylor soon split from his former ally Prince Johnson, and also killed many of the educated and experienced political figures who joined his camp, leaving no moderate alternatives to his rule.[16] Among those killed was Jackson F. Doe, whom many believed had won the presidential election against President Doe five years earlier. In July 1990, both Taylor and Johnson independently laid siege to Monrovia, causing some of the most violent battles of the war, and ending in Doe's execution.

For the next seven years, Liberia was besieged by rebellions and counter-rebellions. The interim government, led by Does's replacement, Amos Sawyer, and others, for the most part did not extend beyond the Monrovia area, and completely depended on West African peacekeeping forces fro the Economic Community of West African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG) for its protection. Taylor controlled the rest of Liberia and set up a parallel government structure with its capital in the second biggest town of Gbarnga, Bong County. This enabled him to control and extract Liberian natural resources, including timber, metals, and diamonds. The proceeds, estimated at about 100 million USD per year, were needed not only to continue the war, but also to ensure loyalty of his commanders and inner circle.[17] At the same time, Taylor got involved in the Sierra Leone civil war by explicitly supporting a proxy force to take control of the

diamond mines in that country.[18] Counter-rebellions also challenged Taylor's control of territory, such as the Krahn and Mandingos' (who had been favored by Doe) formation of the United Liberation Movement of Liberia for Democracy (ULIMO) in 1991 which later split into two ethnic factions. In 1993, another counter-rebellion erupted in the southeast led by the Liberia Peace Council (LPC), representing the Sapo people.

Following years of battle and attempts to exclude Charles Taylor from any political solution, nationwide elections were finally held, including Taylor as a candidate. Many hoped Taylor's strong hand would bring stability to the country, and Taylor became the twenty-second Liberian President in 1997 with a full 75% of the vote.

The Second Phase of the Civil War: 1999–2003

Following Taylor's election, the international community supported a disarmament program and West African peacekeepers withdrew. Leaders from former antagonists' groups, such as ULIMO, were given important government posts in return for dissolving their rebel factions. However, within two years the tensions between ethnic groups and Taylor's continuation of old practices of corruption, repression of dissent, exploitation of ethnic divisions, and abject poverty for most Liberians, led to renewed conflict.[19]

The second phase of the Civil War comprised challenges to Taylor's rule by two rebel armies, the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) from its base in Guinea across the northern border, and later the Movement for Democracy in Liberia (MODEL) who attacked in the east from Cote d'Ivoire. At least initially, the LURD forces were primarily Mandingo and many of its members were also previously active in the

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[14] National Patriotic Front of Liberia.
[15] Schuster, Lynda (1994). The Final Days of Dr Doe. *Granta*, *48*, 41-95.
[16] Ellis, 2007, pp. 83-5.
[17] Ibid. pp. 89-91.

[18] Taylor was indicted for his role in the Sierra Leone conflict, and currently (March 2011) awaits the verdict in The Hague in the case against him.
[19] Kieh Jr, George Klay (2009). 'The roots of the second Liberian civil war'. International Journal on World Peace, 2009(1)..

Mandingo faction of ULIMO.[20] By 2003 they had taken control of much of west and northwest Liberia, with the backing of Guinea, Sierra Leone, and to some extent the United States[21]. They were highly disorganized, however, and continued the extremely violent tactics widespread in the years prior.[22] MODEL, considered a descendant of the Krahn-based ULIMO faction, joined the battle in early 2003. It was supported by the Ivorian president, Laurent Gbagbo.[23]

Despite ongoing peace talks, in mid-2003 Monrovia was under siege by both groups, and the city was becoming a humanitarian catastrophe. Under increasing international pressure, Taylor finally resigned on August 11, 2003, and voluntarily went into exile in Nigeria, leaving Vice President Moses Blah to negotiate on behalf of the government. On August 18, 2003, Taylor's Government signed the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) with LURD, MODEL, and with civil society representatives in Accra, Ghana, that formally ended the conflict.[24]

Impacts of the War

The impact of the war within Liberia has been tremendous. All sides to the conflict committed extreme acts of violence against civilians, often not for larger strategic goals but rather to raise revenue and to exert as high a human toll as possible, including torture, rape, and indiscriminate beating, killing, and abduction. The conflict was also used by individuals and groups to exact revenge for preexisting grievances over land use or other localized issues.[25] The Liberian Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) estimated that 250,000 people were killed by the conflicts, and one million were displaced.[26]

Liberia's wars also received world attention for their use of child soldiers. From the outset of the war, Charles Taylor's forces recruited young boys, initially drawing on war orphans, who were indoctrinated to become loyal and fearless soldiers. However, most–if not all–other parties, including ULIMO, LURD and MODEL also used children to fight, commonly referring to them as "Small Boys Units," or SBUs.[27] Children reportedly were given drugs and alcohol and were forced to kill family members to isolate them from their communities. Young girls were abducted by armies into sexual servitude and also served at the front lines. At the time of the peace accords in 2003, an estimated 21,000 child soldiers needed to be reintegrated into society.[28]

Finally, in addition to the human cost and the razing of homes, buildings, and infrastructure, the years of conflict ruined Liberia's economy and left it overrun with weapons. Massive displacement during the war led to a shutdown of public services, and maternal and infant mortality rose to levels "not seen in decades."[29] In 2010, seven years after the war, Liberia ranked 162 of 169 countries in the Human Development Index, making it one of the poorest countries in the world.

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[20] International Crisis Group/ICG (2003). Liberia: Security Challenges. Retrieved from http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/africa/west-africa/liberia/071-liberia-security-challenges.aspx, p. 10.

[21] Brabazon, James (2010). *My Friend the Mercenary*. Edinburgh: Canongate Books; ICG, 2003, p. 14.

[22] For a detailed insight on the nature of the LURD campaign as witnessed from within, see James Brabazon (2010).

[23] ICG, 2003, pp. 10-1.

[24] Peace Agreement Between The Government Of Liberia (GOL), The Liberians United For Reconciliation And Democracy (LURD), The Movement For Democracy In Liberia (MODEL) and The Political Parties, Accra, Ghana, August 18, 2003.

[25] See Ellis, 2007, p. 105. This phenomenon was also evident during the course of this study. Villagers reported that feuding groups—sometimes a tribe that had split up decades earlier over a dispute—would join a faction temporarily to gain access to weapons and then lead a group to attack certain villages.

[26] Republic of Liberia Truth and Reconciliation Commission, Volume 1: Preliminary Findings and Recommendations, 2009.

[27] SBU, sometimes standing for Special Boys Unit, was initially used as a term by Charles Taylor during the very beginning of the First Civil War; however, the term was later adapted by other factions as well who used the same tactic to attract war orphans, but later also forcefully abducted them from their homes (see 28).

[28] Amnesty International, "Liberia: The promises of peace for 21,000 child soldiers", 17 May 2004.

[29] UNFPA, "Escalating Conflict In Liberia Threatens Health of Millions Across West Africa, Unfpa Warns." Press Release June 9, 2003, AFR/640, POP/865.

Transition to Peace

The transition to peace began on August 1, 2003, when the U.N. Security Council passed a resolution to support a ceasefire. West African peacekeepers were the first on the ground, eventually being subsumed within the overall UN Peacekeeping mission.[30] The Accra CPA of August 18, 2003, established the National Transitional Government of Liberia until national elections could be held in October 2005. The CPA also called for the United Nations to set up a peacekeeping operation in the territory. In October 2003 the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL)[31] became the largest such peacekeeping mission ever established. By 2005 the UN mission was fully deployed and began a demobilization process, as well as coordinating national elections. These elections were won by Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, another Americo-Liberian who had previously been a minister in the Tolbert government.

During the past six years since the end of the war, Liberia has remained relatively stable, and President Sirleaf has presided over an influx of international aid and funds. The United Nations mission continues to be responsible for the country's internal security but plans to reduce its presence following the upcoming elections.

To deal with the crimes and human rights violations committed during the wars, the CPA mandated a Truth and Reconciliation Commission to "provide a forum that will address issues of impunity […] to get a clear picture of the past to facilitate genuine healing and reconciliation."[32] The Commission was established in 2005 and conducted hundreds of hearings in Liberia and with the Liberian Diaspora in the U.S., including hearing admissions of guilt from perpetrators of enormous atrocities. In 2009 the TRC issued its final recommendations to the government.[33] One of its recommendations was to establish an "Extraordinary Criminal Court for Liberia" to try those accused of committing very serious crimes during the war.

Continuing Tensions

Despite progress, observers have pointed to ongoing tensions that may have the potential to spark renewed conflict, and some fear that civil war along ethnic lines will break out again once the UN peacekeepers leave. Former MODEL and LURD leaders still command a certain number of followers. Liberians were also implicated in violence that erupted in Guinea in 2007 and 2010. In addition, a number of Liberian mercenaries participated in the conflict in Cote d'Ivoire on both sides following the 2010 elections, and their return to Liberia is perceived as a threat to the elections there.[34] Sporadic violence has also flared up between ethnic groups, such as between the Mandingo and Loma tribes in February 2010.[35] Others also point to disputes over land ownership, which the International Crisis Group in 2009 called "the most explosive issue in Liberia today.[36] Systems for settling disputes are still predominantly local and informal, but capacity is limited to deal with the massive displacement from the wars and the

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[30] Like earlier West African military support, the force was arranged by the regional economic bloc ECOWAS, led by the Anglophone West African states, and principally Nigeria. The new force would be known as ECOMIL and was directly incorporated into the UNMIL force as of October 1, 2003, when UNMIL was established by the arrival of the Special Representative of the Secretary General of the United Nations, Jacques Paul Klein.

[31] The initial Security Council Resolution 1497 of August 1, 2003, broadly authorized the use of force to support a ceasefire agreement that had been in place. Resolution 1509 was adopted on September 19, deciding that UNMIL would need to be established by October 1, 2003.

[32] Article XIII of the CPA. For the original text of the agreement, see http://www.usip.org/files/file/resources/collections/peace_agreements/liberia_08182003.pdf.

[33] Steinberg, Jonny (2010). A truth commission goes abroad: Liberian transitional justice in New York. African Affairs, 110, (438), 35-53.

[34] http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2011-06-08/return-of-mercenaries-may-destabilize-liberia-before-election-ecowas-says.html.

[35] http://allafrica.com/stories/201003011647.html. The initial trigger for the violence was said to be the discovery of the body of a young Loma woman, which was quickly blamed on the Mandingos, igniting protests against the predominantly Muslim group. It has been alleged that the woman was victim to a ritualistic killing, which has a longstanding tradition in Liberia, and which can have a direct impact on political events (cf. Ellis, 2007). It has also been said that the underlying conflict between Mandingo and Loma tribes is due to ongoing land disputes between the two groups. The Mandingos are alleged to have seized land from Lomas during the conflict.

[36] (seee.g. Unruh, 2008; Corriveau-Bourque, 2010)(ICG, 2009, p. 8).

expropriation of farmland and plantations. Finally, national identity, and the troubled relationship between the Americo-Liberian cultural elite and "native" Liberians, is also relevant to considerations of lasting peace.

The 2011 Elections

The next Liberian general election will be held late 2011. Liberians will have the opportunity to elect a new president, a new House of Representatives, and half of a new Senate, but most attention is on the presidential race. President Sirleaf is seeking a second term against several high-profile candidates.[37]

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[37]http://www1.voanews.com/english/news/africa/butty-liberia-president-reelection-26jan10-82658982.html.

This study attempts to evaluate the needs, views, and priorities of Liberians about post-war recovery, sources of insecurity, and dispute resolution. It aimed at collecting detailed data on:

1. Basic priorities and access to services
2. Security concerns and perception of security providers
3. Post-war disputes and resolution mechanisms, including land disputes, ethnic tensions and social cohesion
4. Traditional, formal, and transitional justice: Access to and perceptions of judicial mechanisms and TRC recommendations
5. Impact of the wars and recovery process.

To achieve its objectives, the study used a mixed methods approach, including extensive consultation with local organizations, interviews with key informants, and a nationwide survey. The survey, with a total of 4,501 interviews, constitutes the largest representative nationwide survey on peace and reconstruction at the sub-national level in Liberia. The survey was designed to provide results that are representative of the population down to the county level, with additional distinction between respondents in Greater Monrovia and those in Rural Montserrado. The present study seeks to complement other research on the reconstruction that has shared the voices of Liberian communities and individuals affected by the war.[38] Most studies, however, have focused on specific regions or counties. The present study covers all counties as well as Greater Monrovia, which allows it to explore regional differences in attitudes and perceptions about peace and

reconstruction.[39] Such differences may reflect socio-economic and cultural differences as well as various degrees of exposure to the wars.

Survey Design and Sample

The selection of respondents for the survey was based on a standard random multi-stage cluster sampling procedure. We first selected Enumeration Areas (EAs), which are geographic areas developed for census canvassing by the Liberian government.[40] Researchers used the latest available information on each EA's population size and geographic location (including GPS coordinates) to select EAs randomly in proportion to the overall population size. A total of 260 EAs were selected throughout the country. The number of EAs assigned to each county reflected the population size of that county relative to the national population, with a minimum of 12 EAs per county.[41]

At the second stage, researchers selected 16 households within each EA using a geographic method (EPI method). Interviewers identified the center of the EA and randomly selected a direction. In that direction, interviewers would select every other settlement unit. In each selected household

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[38] A list of reports and papers focusing on peace and reconstruction in Liberia is available from the authors

[39] The terms "Greater Monrovia" or "Monrovia" used in this study refer to one of the five districts in Montserrado County, which encompasses the city of Monrovia and practically all the surrounding suburbs. "Rural Montserrado" is used to refer to the remaining four districts of the county, although they also contain some smaller towns. Because of the stark differences between the capital and the rest of Montserrado, there is no composite value used to represent all of Montserrado as a county. The Greater Monrovia district accounts for 87% of the population in Montserrado County, according to the 2008 census.

[40] Available at the Liberia Institute of Statistics & Geo-Information Services, 2009.

[41] The number of EAs selected and the number of interviews per EA were computed to reach a minimum target sample size of 4,160. Additional interviews were randomly conducted to adjust for non-response and incomplete interviews. At the end of the survey, a total of 4,501 interviews had been completed.

(defined as a group of people normally sleeping under the same roof and eating together), interviewers randomly selected one adult to be interviewed from a list of all eligible respondents. Three attempts were made to contact a household or individual before replacing them with another. Due to the sensitivity of some questions, the interviewers were assigned to same-sex respondents. Thus, male interviewers were assigned to male respondents and female interviewers were assigned to female respondents.

Figure 2: Sample Distribution
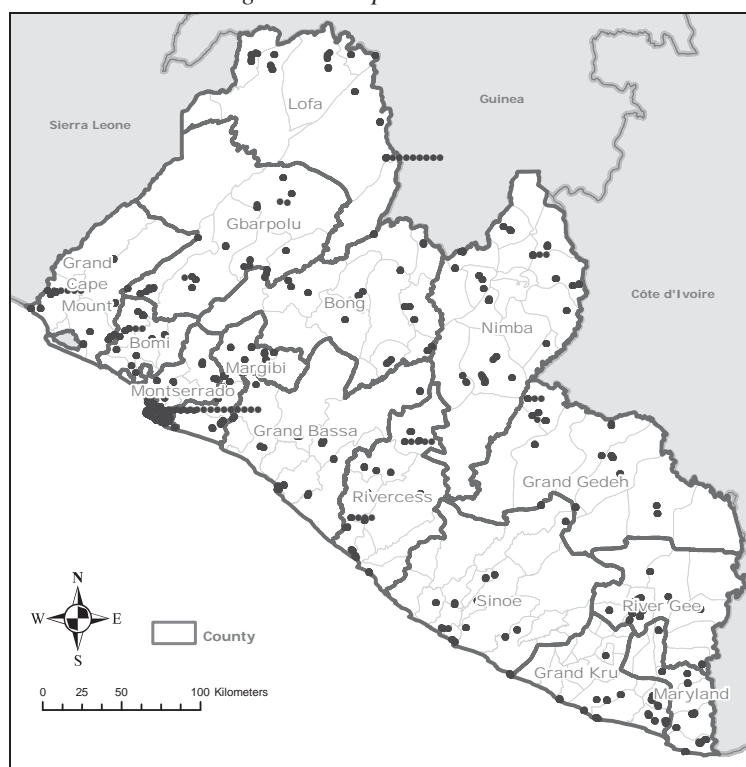
Within the 260 EAs, a total of 4,955 settlements (houses) were approached. Among them, interviews were conducted in 4,501 households (91%). No interviews were conducted in 454 cases (9%), most frequently because the settlement was clearly abandoned (45% of the cases), because no one was eligible (28%), or because all the eligible members of the household refused to participate (23%). From the 4,501 selected, eligible, and agreeable households, the teams interviewed 4,501 respondents out of 4,789 who were approached (94%). Most of the selected individuals who did not participate in the survey were away and could not be contacted within the survey timeline (61%), although some also refused to participate (28%).

The Committee for the Protection of Human Subjects at the University of California, Berkeley reviewed and approved the study protocol. The Liberian Ministry of Internal Affairs granted permission to implement the research. Approval to conduct interviews was also obtained from local authorities at each survey site. The interviewers obtained oral informed consent from each selected participant; neither monetary nor material incentives were offered for participation.

Research Instruments

The interviewers collected information using a standardized structured questionnaire with open-ended questions. The questionnaire included 16 sections and took an average of one hour and five minutes to administer. The sections were: (1) demographics, (2) socio-economic status, (3) priorities and services, (4) health, (5) security, (6) social and ethnic relations, (7) elections, (8) disputes (general), (9) land disputes, (10) other disputes and domestic violence, (11) the justice system, (12) peacebuilding, (13) the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, (14) exposure to violence, (15) measures to help survivors, and (16) trauma.

A team with expertise in this type of research developed the questionnaire after consultation with local experts and representatives from non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the government, and multilateral institutions. Response options based on pilot interviews were given to interviewers for coding purposes, but interviewers did not read these

options to study participants except for questions employing a scaling format (e.g., Likert scale). Every question had an open-ended field to record complete responses. The researchers prepared the questionnaire and consent documents in English, and local translators then adapted them into Liberian English to ensure that the language would be appropriate for respondents with no or limited education. Finally, the team validated the instruments using independent back-translation and pilot surveys.

Once the questionnaire was finalized, it was programmed into a Personal Digital Assistant (PDA) using KoBo, our custom data collection package.[42] The use of PDAs allows enumerators to enter the data directly as they conduct interviews. The forms contain a built-in verification system that reduces the risk of skipping questions or entering erroneous values, resulting in higher quality of data. Daily synchronization with a central computer allows the lead researchers to check data for consistency and outliers during data collection.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection took place over six weeks, from November 1 to December 13, 2010. Ten teams of four individuals (two men and two women per team) implemented the study under the guidance of the lead researchers and field supervisors. The interviewers were Liberian university students or professionals with research experience. Prior to collecting the data they participated in a seven-day training workshop that explained the objectives and content of the study, survey and interview techniques, use of the PDA, troubleshooting, and solving technical problems. The training included mock interviews and pilot-testing with randomly selected individuals at non-sampled sites.

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[42] Since 2007, the authors have developed KoBo, a set of tools to facilitate electronic data collection based on Open Data Kit. The tool was first piloted in northern Uganda and bears the Acholi name, KoBo, which means "transfer."

At the survey sites, the research plan required each interviewer to conduct four interviews per day. They conducted the interviews one-on-one, anonymously, and in a confidential setting. At the end of each day of data collection, the supervisor of each research team electronically aggregated the data and sent it to a central database. Once the data collection was completed, the database was imported into Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 16 for data analyses. All results presented here account for the complex sampling methodology and weight factors.

Limitations

The present study was developed and implemented carefully to ensure that the results would accurately represent the views and opinions of the adult Liberian population. We must, however, acknowledge some limitations. First, the sample was designed rigorously to be representative of the adult population resident of Liberia, resulting in a large sample size of 4,501 respondents. However some selected individuals could not be interviewed for various reasons (see sample section). It is uncertain how respondents who could not be interviewed differ from the sampled individuals, but we designed the sampling approach to reduce any potential selection bias. Results are valid for the Liberian population only at the time of the survey. Opinions may change over time. Second, the study relies on a self-reported method of data collection, including key informant interviews and a population-based survey. A number of factors may have affected the quality and validity of the data collected, such as inaccurate recall of past events, misunderstanding of the questions or concepts, reactivity to the interviewer due to the sensitive nature of the questions, or intentional misreporting (i.e., for socially unacceptable answers). We minimized such risks through careful development of the questionnaire to make the questions sufficiently clear and reduce potential bias (see "Research Instruments"). The interviewers conducted the interviews anonymously, and all interviewers underwent rigorous training on data collection and interview techniques.

Table 1: Characteristics of Respondents

	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
n (sample size)	224	285	223	277	224	254	237	288	251	237	695	402	279	219	173	233	4501
Weighted n (%)	2%	10%	2%	6%	4%	4%	2%	8%	6%	4%	28%	13%	2%	2%	4%	3%	100%
Sex (% women)	50%	49%	50%	49%	50%	50%	52%	51%	52%	52%	50%	51%	50%	50%	51%	51%	50%
Age (average)	36.5	37.6	37.3	38.3	35.3	39.5	38.4	38.5	38.6	36.6	36.7	37.6	38.7	38.6	36.2	37.5	37.4
Marital Status																	
Single, never married	11%	15%	8%	15%	7%	13%	14%	14%	16%	21%	29%	12%	10%	7%	21%	12%	18%
Married monogamous	48%	57%	63%	61%	48%	51%	51%	50%	49%	46%	37%	51%	52%	64%	42%	54%	48%
Married polygamous	5%	6%	5%	4%	17%	11%	9%	8%	3%	8%	3%	6%	15%	11%	4%	11%	6%
Partner/living together	25%	17%	20%	12%	23%	18%	21%	17%	24%	20%	24%	21%	18%	11%	29%	18%	21%
Divorced/separated	4%	3%	1%	3%	1%	2%	2%	4%	4%	1%	3%	3%	2%	4%	1%	2%	3%
Widowed	7%	4%	3%	5%	3%	5%	3%	7%	4%	4%	4%	8%	4%	4%	4%	3%	5%
Religion																	
Christian	63%	87%	73%	95%	34%	91%	90%	75%	90%	90%	89%	90%	91%	95%	91%	92%	86%
Muslim	37%	3%	22%	1%	66%	2%	1%	21%	9%	2%	10%	4%	3%	1%	9%	1%	10%
Other	0%	10%	5%	4%	0%	8%	9%	4%	1%	8%	1%	7%	6%	4%	1%	7%	4%
Read and write? (% yes)	47%	42%	45%	49%	46%	56%	50%	48%	54%	51%	78%	60%	51%	41%	65%	54%	59%
Education level																	
None	40%	52%	49%	48%	46%	37%	39%	49%	43%	38%	17%	37%	36%	48%	31%	34%	35%
Primary	23%	20%	25%	16%	24%	25%	25%	12%	15%	19%	10%	15%	25%	24%	21%	29%	16%
Secondary and higher	38%	28%	26%	35%	31%	37%	36%	39%	43%	43%	73%	48%	39%	28%	48%	38%	48%
Ethnic group																	
Kpelle	16%	77%	38%	8%	13%	2%	0%	5%	58%	2%	15%	3%	2%	3%	41%	2%	20%
Bassa	4%	9%	3%	79%	5%	2%	0%	0%	16%	2%	21%	1%	1%	91%	6%	3%	16%
Grebo	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%	3%	53%	0%	1%	82%	10%	1%	87%	1%	5%	10%	10%
Mano	2%	6%	1%	1%	3%	2%	0%	0%	2%	0%	5%	37%	1%	1%	3%	0%	8%
Gio	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	4%	48%	1%	1%	0%	1%	8%
Kru	1%	0%	1%	2%	1%	2%	46%	0%	1%	10%	10%	0%	3%	2%	6%	35%	6%
Loma	5%	2%	3%	0%	2%	0%	0%	38%	6%	0%	7%	1%	0%	0%	6%	1%	6%
Krahn	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	78%	0%	0%	0%	1%	4%	5%	1%	0%	1%	5%	5%
Vai	8%	0%	1%	1%	51%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	5%	0%	0%	1%	3%	0%	4%
Gola	44%	1%	23%	0%	8%	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%	14%	0%	4%
Kissi	11%	1%	1%	4%	4%	0%	0%	23%	6%	0%	5%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	4%
Gbandi	2%	0%	9%	1%	2%	0%	0%	17%	2%	0%	4%	0%	0%	1%	2%	0%	3%
Mandingo	0%	1%	3%	0%	2%	1%	0%	15%	4%	1%	4%	2%	1%	0%	1%	0%	3%
Sapo	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	39%	2%
Belle	0%	0%	14%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Other	5%	1%	3%	1%	9%	3%	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%	2%	1%	0%	9%	1%	2%

Results for this study are based on a total of 4,501 interviews conducted nationwide with randomly selected adult (i.e., above the age of 18) residents of Liberia between November 1 and December 13, 2010. This chapter provides the socio-economic characteristics of the sample, which was designed to be representative of the adult Liberian population. These characteristics provide context for the analysis in subsequent chapters, but are also of value in themselves for understanding the demographics and socio-economic situation of respondents.

Demographics

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the sample across counties. The sample comprised an equal proportion of men and women (50% each). The average age of the respondents was 37.4 years old, with 29% below the age of 30 and 14% aged 50 or above.

Most respondents were in a marital relationship or partnership, with 48% reporting monogamous marriage, 6% reporting polygamous marriage, and 21% reporting a partnership. Polygamous marriages were most frequent in Grand Cape Mount (17% of respondents) and River Gee (15%).

A majority of the respondents surveyed reported being Christian (86%), and 10% indicated being Muslim. There were important differences across counties, with a majority of the population reporting to be Muslim in Grand Cape Mount (66%), and over one in five respondents in Bomi (37%), Gbarpolu (22%), and Lofa (21%).

In terms of education, 35% of the respondents indicated having no formal education, 16% had only primary education, and 48% had at least some secondary education. On average, respondents in Greater Monrovia, Rural Montserrado and Nimba were most educated.

Men were significantly more likely than women to be literate and educated. Less than half the women (45%) reported being able to read and write simple messages compared to 73% of the men. Similarly, 45% of the women reported never having attended primary school, compared to 25% of the men.

With regards to ethnicity, the ethnic composition of the sample is representative of the national distribution. The Kpelle are the largest group (20%) and are especially frequent in Bong, Margibi, Gbarpolu, and Rural Montserrado. Other ethnic groups include the Bassa (16%), Grebo (10%), Gio (8%), Mano (8%), Kru (6%), Loma (6%) and Krahn (5%), among others. Other groups that represent less than 5% of the total population include the Vai, Gola, Kissi, Gbandi, Mandingo, Sapo, Belle, and Mende. The distribution of the different ethnic groups shows strong differences across counties. For example, the Grebo are a large majority of the population in Maryland (82%) and River Gee (87%).

	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Poverty																	
Poorest quintile (household assets)	45%	32%	34%	25%	40%	32%	42%	24%	26%	24%	13%	17%	29%	35%	25%	29%	23%
Poorest quintile (per capita income)	21%	24%	19%	20%	20%	33%	34%	26%	13%	27%	16%	15%	36%	33%	20%	30%	21%
≤0.5 USD/day/capita (%)	82%	74%	75%	72%	74%	80%	79%	76%	65%	69%	56%	65%	79%	82%	74%	75%	68%
≤1.25 USD/day/capita (%)	98%	94%	93%	88%	92%	95%	95%	91%	89%	88%	81%	89%	93%	97%	93%	95%	89%
Main Household Activity																	
Agriculture	48%	72%	73%	42%	46%	74%	63%	73%	27%	50%	4%	60%	65%	80%	36%	61%	43%
Business/seller	14%	12%	14%	16%	14%	9%	8%	10%	19%	22%	39%	20%	13%	4%	18%	16%	22%
Day labor	5%	5%	1%	8%	8%	1%	3%	4%	23%	4%	9%	4%	3%	2%	6%	1%	7%
Private company employee	11%	0%	1%	11%	9%	1%	1%	1%	10%	4%	10%	3%	0%	2%	12%	3%	6%
Skilled labor	5%	2%	2%	3%	7%	3%	3%	3%	5%	5%	9%	3%	2%	1%	7%	6%	5%
Teacher	2%	3%	4%	4%	3%	3%	6%	3%	3%	6%	5%	3%	3%	2%	6%	2%	4%
Other gov't employee	3%	2%	0%	2%	0%	1%	2%	0%	1%	3%	7%	2%	1%	2%	4%	2%	3%
Other	12%	5%	5%	14%	13%	7%	13%	6%	12%	8%	16%	6%	13%	7%	13%	10%	11%
Perceive Remittances	2%	5%	2%	8%	2%	10%	3%	6%	9%	5%	24%	7%	4%	2%	10%	7%	11%

	Women	Men	No education	Primary education	Secondary education or above
Poverty					
Poorest assets quintile (%)	29%	18%	38%	31%	10%
Poorest income /capita (%)	27%	14%	30%	22%	13%
≤0.5 USD/day/capita (%)	72%	64%	82%	76%	55%
≤1.25 USD/day/capita (%)	90%	87%	95%	95%	81%

Wealth and Occupation

Wealth

Three indicators were used as a proxy for the standard of living. First, the total number of assets owned was assessed using a standard list of non-productive assets such as tables and chairs. The 20% of households with the lowest number of assets were identified as the "poorest assets quintile." Second, self-reported information on household total income was used to identify (1) those with an average income below 0.5 US$ per day per capita, and (2) those 20% of respondents who reported the lowest income ("poorest per capita income quintile"). These proxy measures for wealth are not adapted for comparison with other countries because, for example, the list of assets may change, but they provide valuable information for comparing wealth across counties within Liberia.

The results presented in Table 1 suggest a large rural and urban divide in wealth. Respondents in Greater Monrovia were least likely to be within the poorest assets and lowest per capita income quintile. A high proportion of respondents belonged to the poorest quintiles in Bomi, Grand Cape Mount, Grand Gedeh, Grand Kru, River Gee and Rivercess.

The results also reveal a gender divide. Women were significantly more likely than men to belong to the poorest wealth quintile: 29% of the women belonged to the poorest assets quintile, compared to 18% of the men. Similarly, 27% of women respondents belonged to the lowest per capita income quintile, compared to 14% of men. This may reflect lower income in households where women were selected, or differences in reporting.

Finally, the results suggest a strong association between wealth and education. Over 30% of respondents who indicated having no formal education belonged to the poorest assets and income quintiles, compared to about 10% among those with at least some secondary education. Similarly, income levels, on average, increase with higher levels of education.

Occupation

To sustain their livelihoods, respondents' households most frequently reported farming activities (43%), or commercial activities (seller, business–22%) as their main occupations. Skilled and unskilled (day) labor was the main occupation for 7% and 5% of respondents, respectively. In addition to their main occupation, 11% of the respondents indicated that their households received remittances from outside of the country at least occasionally. Remittances were most frequent in Greater Monrovia (24% of respondents), Rural Montserrado (10%), and Grand Gedeh (10%).

Mass Media Access and Consumption

Sources of Information

Public information is increasingly recognized as contributing to individuals' awareness, knowledge, and ultimately perceptions and attitudes about events and programs happening around them, including efforts at building peace and resolving conflicts. Since access to information may shape perception, we included a series of questions on access to media, consumption habits, and perception of various sources of public information.

In general, one-third of the population reported being *not at all* or *very little* informed about events in the community (34%), and over half felt the same about events happening in Liberia in general (54%). In comparison with the other counties, respondents in Greater Monrovia were most likely to report being well informed about events happening in Liberia. However, they were also on average least informed about events happening in their community.

Sixty-three percent of the respondents identified the radio as their main source of information, and 29% mentioned friends or family, an informal source of information. The counties in which people relied most frequently on friends and family were Grand Kru (61%), River Gee (54%), and Rivercess (54%).

	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Perceived level of information (% not at all or very little)																	
On community events	41%	23%	30%	20%	40%	36%	39%	28%	26%	39%	42%	33%	37%	30%	39%	33%	34%
On events in Liberia	71%	61%	61%	52%	72%	61%	74%	51%	43%	64%	44%	54%	72%	76%	52%	70%	54%
Main source of information																	
Radio	69%	52%	66%	63%	60%	52%	31%	54%	70%	52%	77%	64%	35%	37%	72%	46%	63%
Friends, family	30%	32%	29%	27%	39%	41%	61%	35%	25%	39%	18%	29%	54%	54%	23%	49%	29%
Local leaders, authorities	0%	14%	1%	7%	0%	5%	4%	8%	4%	4%	0%	5%	4%	6%	3%	3%	4%
Other	0%	2%	4%	3%	0%	2%	5%	3%	1%	5%	5%	3%	7%	3%	2%	3%	3%
Radio listening habits – Number of days																	
Everyday	34%	29%	35%	43%	31%	25%	13%	36%	50%	35%	54%	43%	19%	21%	44%	24%	41%
2 to 6 times/week	25%	22%	28%	20%	25%	15%	17%	21%	19%	14%	21%	18%	9%	21%	20%	19%	20%
Once/week	21%	19%	11%	13%	21%	19%	20%	12%	12%	20%	12%	19%	29%	17%	19%	25%	16%
2 to 3 times/month	5%	7%	3%	5%	3%	4%	6%	4%	4%	3%	2%	5%	5%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Once/month	1%	1%	0%	1%	3%	4%	5%	0%	1%	3%	3%	1%	5%	4%	2%	3%	2%
Once or a few times/year	3%	1%	0%	0%	3%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%
Never	11%	21%	23%	18%	32%	39%	26%	14%	25%	7%	15%	33%	34%	11%	25%	17%	
Radio listening habits – Number of hours																	
Never	11%	21%	23%	18%	15%	32%	39%	26%	14%	25%	7%	15%	33%	34%	11%	25%	17%
< 1 hour/week	31%	22%	24%	22%	27%	20%	25%	21%	24%	27%	26%	27%	28%	28%	30%	21%	25%
1 -2 hours/week	28%	33%	27%	29%	36%	23%	21%	24%	30%	19%	23%	28%	20%	23%	29%	35%	27%
3 - 5 hours/week	17%	19%	20%	22%	16%	16%	11%	21%	20%	16%	18%	20%	13%	8%	14%	15%	18%
5 - 10 hours/week	9%	4%	5%	9%	3%	5%	3%	8%	8%	8%	10%	7%	3%	6%	8%	4%	8%
> 10 hours a week	5%	1%	1%	1%	4%	4%	0%	1%	3%	5%	16%	4%	5%	1%	8%	1%	6%
Radio Stations Audience																	
UNMIL	37%	66%	53%	74%	25%	58%	48%	65%	75%	60%	57%	49%	26%	53%	59%	70%	58%
Star Radio	46%	12%	19%	25%	32%	7%	4%	11%	33%	11%	61%	18%	12%	7%	56%	5%	31%
BBC	15%	27%	22%	27%	12%	26%	25%	29%	39%	30%	37%	24%	38%	19%	24%	22%	29%
ELBC	38%	24%	29%	30%	28%	13%	2%	15%	34%	1%	49%	6%	4%	7%	39%	1%	27%
Truth FM	19%	0%	2%	3%	10%	0%	0%	0%	4%	0%	35%	1%	0%	1%	24%	0%	12%
Radio Veritas	14%	0%	6%	1%	4%	0%	1%	1%	7%	0%	25%	1%	0%	1%	22%	0%	9%
Radio ELWA	2%	2%	1%	4%	0%	2%	3%	0%	3%	1%	19%	1%	7%	1%	9%	2%	7%
SKY FM	3%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	0%	2%	0%	14%	0%	0%	0%	8%	0%	5%
Radio Nimba	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	27%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%
Radio Bomi	59%	0%	19%	0%	16%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%
Other	9%	30%	16%	48%	54%	24%	3%	38%	43%	27%	6%	37%	25%	27%	10%	33%	25%

Figure 3: Main Source of Information

Local leaders / authorities, 4%

Other, 3%

Friends, family, 29%

Radio, 63%

Figure 4: Radio Program Types

News, 72%
Music / entertainment, 49%
Religious programs, 38%
Talk shows, 26%
Political programs, 21%
Peace, recovery, and development , 19%
Social Issues , 17%
Justice , 5%
Reintegration of ex-combatants , 1%
Other , 3%
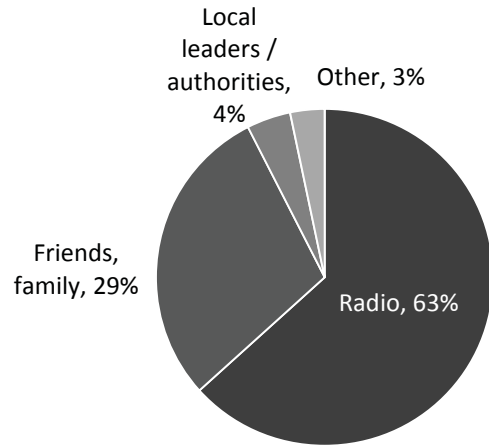
Radio Consumption

While 63% of the population identified radio as the main source of information, as many as 83% reported listening to the radio at least occasionally. In Greater Monrovia and Margibi, half the population reported listening to the radio every day (respectively 54% and 50%).

Results presented in table 2 show that respondents listened to a range of radio stations, most frequently national stations, including UNMIL Radio (58%), Star Radio (31%), and ELBC (27%), and internationally, BBC (29%). Local radio stations also had an important role in providing information to the population in certain regions, however. For example, 59% of the respondents in Bomi indicated listening at least occasionally to Radio Bomi.

The most popular programs on the radio were news broadcasts, reportedly listened to by 72% of respondents, followed by music/entertainment (49%), and religious programs (38%).

Newspapers and TV Consumption

Although newspapers were seldom mentioned a s the main source of information (1%), nearly a third of respondents indicated reading newspapers at least occasionally (29%). As Table 3 illustrates, only in Greater Monrovia did a sizeable percentage of the population report reading newspapers on a daily basis (15%). Inversely, newspaper readership was least frequent in Bong, Gbarpolu, Grand Kru, Lofa, Rivercess, and Sinoe. The most commonly read newspapers were the *Daily Observer* (21% of population), the *Inquirer* (11%), and the *New Democrat* (10%).

Similarly, 1% of the population identified the television as their main source of information, but a significantly larger proportion used television as a source of information at least occasionally. In fact more Liberians reported watching television at least occasionally (32%) than they did reading newspapers (29%).

Table 4: Media Consumption (2)

	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Newspapers Consumption – Number of Days																	
Everyday	0%	0%	0%	5%	0%	1%	0%	0%	4%	0%	15%	1%	0%	1%	4%	3%	5%
2 to 6 times/week	1%	1%	0%	5%	2%	1%	0%	1%	5%	0%	18%	3%	0%	0%	4%	0%	7%
Once/week	7%	3%	3%	7%	5%	4%	1%	3%	10%	2%	19%	6%	3%	0%	15%	0%	9%
2 to 3 times/month	4%	2%	1%	4%	3%	3%	0%	2%	4%	3%	4%	4%	3%	1%	5%	1%	3%
Once/ month	2%	2%	1%	0%	4%	7%	3%	2%	2%	6%	4%	8%	5%	4%	7%	3%	4%
Once or a few times/year	3%	0%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%
Never	83%	92%	94%	77%	85%	82%	94%	91%	74%	87%	39%	76%	88%	93%	63%	92%	71%
Newspapers readership																	
Daily Observer	11%	5%	4%	17%	13%	10%	4%	7%	20%	10%	45%	16%	9%	6%	22%	4%	21%
The Inquirer	5%	3%	3%	7%	5%	5%	2%	3%	9%	5%	26%	8%	5%	3%	9%	3%	11%
The New Democrat	10%	2%	4%	4%	7%	2%	1%	2%	8%	2%	25%	5%	3%	1%	13%	2%	10%
News	1%	3%	1%	7%	1%	1%	1%	2%	7%	3%	13%	4%	0%	1%	6%	1%	6%
Analyst	4%	1%	1%	4%	2%	2%	0%	1%	5%	2%	14%	3%	1%	1%	4%	0%	5%
Independent	1%	1%	1%	4%	2%	2%	0%	2%	6%	3%	10%	4%	2%	1%	1%	2%	5%
Others	5%	1%	1%	4%	5%	6%	1%	1%	4%	3%	8%	4%	3%	1%	6%	1%	5%
Watch TV at least occasionally	18%	8%	11%	18%	26%	16%	9%	11%	25%	15%	69%	21%	13%	4%	44%	8%	32%
Changes in Access to Information 2005 - 2010																	
Better	86%	60%	77%	72%	84%	52%	42%	68%	69%	49%	71%	61%	43%	54%	67%	54%	66%
Same	13%	39%	20%	28%	15%	41%	45%	32%	29%	43%	27%	36%	49%	37%	30%	39%	32%
Worse	2%	1%	4%	0%	1%	7%	14%	1%	2%	8%	2%	4%	8%	9%	3%	7%	3%

	Women	Men	Poorest assets quintile	Poor assets quintile	Average assets quintile	Rich assets quintile	Richest assets quintile	No education	Primary education	Secondary education or above
Never listen to radio (%)	28%	6%	34%	18%	10%	5%	3%	32%	19%	4%
Never reads newspaper	81%	61%	91%	77%	66%	56%	40%	99%	92%	43%
Main source of information										
Friends/family	45%	13%	49%	35%	23%	10%	7%	49%	36%	12%
Radio	47%	80%	39%	58%	71%	85%	87%	41%	56%	82%

Trust and Changes in Access to Information

Overall, Liberians indicated a high level of trust in the media. Just 15% believed journalists had no or very little freedom to report on social and political events in Liberia. Less than a third did not trust journalists on the radio (not at all or very little–26%), or what is printed in the newspaper (27%).

Figure 5: Changes in Access to Information, 2005−2010
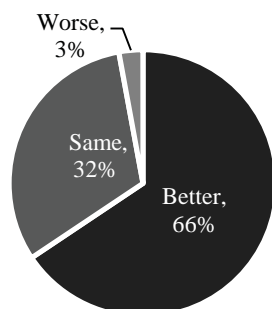
Respondents were further asked to rate the changes in their access to information since the 2005 presidential election. A large majority reported that access to information had improved (66%), and a third felt it had stayed the same (32%). Few believed it had worsened (3%). Only in Grand Kru did a sizeable proportion of the population (14%) report a worsening of their access to information over the 2005 to 2010 period.

Access to Information by Gender, Education and Wealth

Women were significantly more likely than men to say that they were not at all or very little informed about events in the community (45% of women vs. 22% of men), and nationwide (68% of women vs. 40% of men). Women were also much more likely to depend on informal sources of information such as friends and family (54%) as their main source of information compared to men (13%). More generally, women listened to the radio and read the newspapers even less frequently than their male counterparts: 28%

of the women never listened to the radio compared to 6% of the men, and 81% of the women never read newspapers compared to 61% of the men. There were, however, no differences in the percentage of men and women that watched TV at least occasionally.

Differences in access to information between men and women may in part reflect differences in education, especially for reading the newspaper. As many as 57% of the respondents with at least some secondary education reported reading a newspaper at least occasionally, compared to 8% of those with primary education and less than 1% of those with no education. Similarly, reliance on friends and family as the main source of information decreased rapidly with education, from 49% among those with no education to 12% among those with secondary education or above.

Finally, access to information was associated with wealth. The data analysis shows that self-reported levels of information on events in the community and nationwide increased with wealth. Inversely, reliance on informal sources of information decreased with wealth: 49% of the individuals in the poorest assets quintile relied on friends and family as their main source of information, compared to just 7% of those in the richest quintile.

Table 5: Priorities (1)

Respondents Priorities	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Education (school fee)	58%	57%	59%	62%	52%	49%	49%	56%	57%	50%	58%	55%	51%	37%	56%	51%	56%
Job/employment/business	55%	36%	46%	43%	56%	37%	46%	41%	45%	44%	51%	40%	41%	49%	40%	52%	45%
Health	35%	68%	60%	53%	25%	26%	34%	64%	63%	27%	34%	56%	29%	31%	30%	30%	45%
Money/financial	50%	37%	27%	41%	47%	30%	37%	37%	33%	37%	34%	43%	31%	41%	34%	38%	37%
Peace	27%	43%	40%	44%	22%	15%	11%	44%	48%	16%	26%	37%	15%	12%	24%	12%	31%
Housing	50%	39%	29%	35%	39%	27%	23%	37%	28%	25%	26%	29%	29%	29%	24%	30%	30%
Caring for children	35%	39%	37%	43%	23%	18%	24%	43%	37%	25%	18%	30%	23%	31%	23%	29%	29%
Food	23%	37%	15%	29%	21%	16%	20%	35%	36%	14%	19%	30%	22%	23%	17%	13%	25%
Security	18%	27%	27%	26%	13%	8%	4%	35%	31%	5%	20%	28%	6%	2%	19%	2%	21%
Land to farm	5%	19%	11%	18%	5%	13%	9%	17%	16%	8%	4%	18%	8%	11%	16%	5%	12%
Water	12%	18%	12%	10%	6%	6%	7%	13%	10%	6%	8%	10%	7%	6%	3%	8%	10%
Justice	2%	9%	9%	5%	0%	2%	4%	9%	7%	1%	4%	5%	3%	3%	2%	2%	5%
Electricity	11%	5%	5%	2%	5%	4%	3%	3%	5%	4%	7%	6%	4%	1%	1%	2%	5%
Roads	0%	3%	1%	0%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	3%	1%
Agriculture	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	3%	1%	0%	1%	2%	0%	1%	2%	6%	0%	0%	1%
Other	5%	2%	3%	2%	2%	9%	7%	2%	3%	5%	6%	4%	6%	6%	6%	9%	4%

Post-Conflict Liberia has given high priority to peacebuilding programs, including the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (see "Background"). In order to set more nuanced priorities for peacebuilding and conflict resolution, this study assessed how the population itself defines its priorities and the priorities for the government. In addition, the study assessed respondents' perception of a series of services and reconstruction efforts.

Priorities

Respondents' Priorities

When asked about their personal priorities, the Liberian respondents gave a wide range of answers. About half mentioned education (56%), health (45%) and employment (45%) as their priorities. In other words, most respondents focused on social services and employment. One-tenth to one-quarter of the respondents mentioned survival needs, food and water, respectively. The results suggest that most Liberians have begun to move from prioritizing immediate physical needs to demanding a higher level of social services.

In addition to social services, employment, and basic needs, many respondents further identified peace (31%) and security (21%) among their priorities. These responses were significantly more frequent in the central and northern parts of the country, with over 40% of the population identifying peace as a priority in Margibi (48%), Lofa (44%), Grand Bassa (44%), Bong (43%), and Gbarpolu (40%), compared to less than 20% in the southeastern and western counties. The counties in the southeast and west of Liberia have many similarities in respondents' own priorities vis-à-vis the center and north of the country. When ranking the priorities named in

each county, the issues of jobs, employment, money, and finance were all named far more frequently than health or peace. Although questions for wealth and occupation do not reflect this pattern, there is a striking regional difference for how these substantive issues are viewed.

Figure 6: Respondents' Priorities
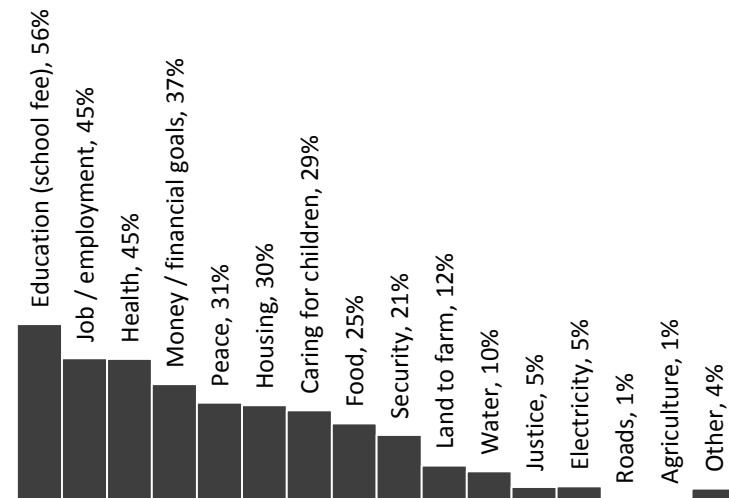
Table 6: Priorities (2)

	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Priorities for the government																	
Education programs	67%	75%	74%	83%	59%	54%	56%	79%	74%	60%	67%	74%	56%	57%	63%	59%	69%
Job/employment/business	65%	61%	55%	68%	57%	34%	46%	67%	73%	38%	63%	60%	42%	37%	57%	43%	59%
Health services	45%	55%	63%	55%	38%	31%	47%	55%	57%	40%	28%	42%	43%	50%	38%	46%	42%
Reducing poverty	46%	44%	44%	50%	34%	22%	27%	43%	51%	31%	38%	43%	22%	31%	39%	25%	40%
Roads	44%	44%	63%	41%	34%	43%	72%	49%	35%	63%	21%	41%	61%	62%	20%	73%	39%
Water	32%	47%	29%	40%	35%	24%	21%	31%	40%	20%	34%	33%	23%	32%	23%	30%	34%
Security and safety	17%	33%	27%	30%	12%	8%	6%	35%	34%	9%	28%	38%	13%	4%	23%	3%	26%
Money/financial	26%	23%	15%	30%	26%	16%	21%	25%	22%	13%	9%	18%	19%	19%	15%	13%	17%
Electricity	13%	12%	8%	12%	12%	6%	4%	10%	17%	10%	29%	22%	5%	2%	15%	4%	17%
Food	15%	17%	10%	13%	20%	11%	16%	18%	12%	14%	11%	11%	13%	12%	13%	11%	13%
Fighting corruption	13%	13%	12%	10%	14%	6%	6%	13%	12%	6%	9%	14%	5%	3%	6%	4%	10%
Establishing rule of law	5%	11%	10%	13%	4%	4%	3%	10%	15%	3%	6%	12%	4%	0%	4%	1%	8%
Resolving land issues	5%	11%	7%	8%	3%	4%	3%	9%	7%	2%	4%	15%	3%	1%	2%	1%	7%
Information	7%	11%	14%	8%	4%	2%	3%	8%	13%	3%	4%	7%	3%	1%	2%	4%	6%
Strengthening justice	4%	11%	12%	8%	1%	2%	2%	9%	9%	1%	3%	8%	3%	1%	0%	1%	6%
Toilet	9%	2%	1%	3%	4%	0%	3%	1%	4%	3%	1%	2%	0%	7%	1%	3%	2%
Other	9%	4%	5%	4%	9%	17%	10%	7%	5%	9%	5%	5%	15%	15%	9%	19%	7%

Priorities for the government

In addition to their own priorities, the survey asked respondents to identify what they thought the government should prioritize. The most frequent responses reflected and reinforced their own priorities: education (69%), employment (59%), and health services (40%). Respondents further suggested the government should prioritize poverty reduction (40%).

In contrast to their own priorities, respondents more frequently mentioned the need for road maintenance and construction. This need has been voiced most strongly in Liberia's famously remote counties: River Gee, Maryland, Grand Kru, Sinoe, Rivercess, and Gbarpolu (61% or higher). Respondents in Sinoe and Grand Kru were particularly concerned about this priority, as over 70% of the population mentioned a need for roads/road improvement. The fact that few mentioned roads among their own priorities may simply suggest they see road construction and maintenance as the government's responsibility and not their own. This assumption was also confirmed during detailed consultations with village and town representatives or elders in these counties, who named accessibility and road construction (by the government, an international aid agency, or a logging company) as a precondition for all other developmental priorities.[43]

Similarly, one out of ten respondents identified water as a personal priority, but a larger proportion (34%) said it should be a government priority. Again, this suggests that water provision is seen as a responsibility of the government as opposed to an individual one. Inversely, the focus on food as

an individual priority (25%) is not reflected in government priorities (13%), most likely because it is seen as an individual responsibility.

Figure 7: Priorities for the Government

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[43] Many of the villages visited by the research team that were located off the major axes were only reachable by foot and/or canoe, since many bridges and roads have disintegrated during the wars and have not yet been rebuilt. In particular, many of the bridges now found collapsed were built several decades prior to the civil wars by logging companies who were given concessions by the government and then remained responsible for maintaining roads and bridges in their areas. Although logging exploitation remains far below their pre-war levels, the same model appears to be employed again today by the government. This in turn has been echoed by village elders who name only the government as the mediator to bring international donors and logging companies to the area to perform the actual work, or at least finance a local company to do so.

Table 7: Services and Living Conditions

	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Perception of Services and Living Conditions (% bad or very bad)																	
Housing	58%	42%	39%	37%	56%	54%	54%	39%	34%	49%	29%	35%	57%	51%	41%	44%	39%
Access to water	42%	53%	37%	38%	46%	47%	33%	43%	60%	39%	46%	48%	45%	69%	51%	52%	47%
Access to food	68%	38%	40%	43%	66%	46%	44%	39%	47%	52%	42%	34%	47%	44%	50%	44%	43%
Work opportunities	91%	79%	73%	75%	89%	82%	76%	78%	70%	78%	82%	74%	85%	87%	81%	74%	79%
Access to farm land	27%	26%	10%	39%	33%	22%	16%	30%	69%	40%	82%	34%	17%	5%	56%	13%	47%
Access to school	56%	67%	48%	59%	55%	65%	48%	61%	64%	62%	68%	57%	57%	57%	60%	58%	62%
Access to health care	59%	83%	71%	63%	70%	64%	48%	72%	70%	49%	57%	63%	69%	64%	66%	60%	64%
Access to information	63%	80%	72%	73%	63%	76%	78%	74%	73%	70%	51%	74%	82%	82%	60%	79%	67%
Road conditions	73%	79%	90%	75%	75%	98%	97%	98%	66%	96%	74%	90%	97%	87%	83%	98%	82%
Access to the police	54%	75%	75%	55%	64%	62%	64%	57%	52%	54%	44%	55%	69%	68%	58%	65%	56%
Sources of assistance in improving living conditions																	
Nobody	46%	41%	33%	46%	57%	39%	49%	25%	41%	54%	47%	34%	42%	62%	34%	54%	42%
The community	20%	45%	35%	34%	14%	24%	19%	48%	40%	18%	31%	40%	29%	16%	31%	17%	33%
The NGOs	17%	23%	20%	12%	7%	21%	32%	40%	11%	23%	8%	25%	23%	16%	12%	20%	18%
Local leaders	5%	23%	8%	16%	3%	10%	12%	23%	22%	8%	17%	24%	9%	11%	17%	7%	17%
The central government	8%	15%	12%	17%	8%	9%	11%	23%	16%	10%	16%	22%	7%	7%	18%	10%	16%
Myself	0%	8%	4%	4%	1%	17%	16%	8%	3%	15%	9%	10%	15%	12%	10%	13%	9%
The traditional leaders	1%	7%	4%	3%	0%	4%	4%	6%	2%	3%	0%	7%	4%	5%	5%	6%	4%
My family	0%	5%	1%	2%	2%	8%	9%	4%	1%	12%	3%	3%	9%	6%	4%	6%	4%
Rubber company	14%	0%	0%	4%	13%	0%	0%	0%	10%	0%	0%	3%	0%	1%	7%	2%	2%
God/church	1%	0%	6%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	0%	1%	3%	0%	1%
Other	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	4%	3%	1%	2%	1%	5%	2%	3%	3%	5%	8%	3%
Government program performances (% bad or very bad)																	
Reducing Poverty	19%	57%	43%	57%	27%	46%	43%	53%	59%	44%	46%	56%	52%	48%	44%	52%	49%
Creation of jobs	23%	57%	45%	52%	29%	46%	41%	57%	54%	43%	48%	57%	52%	44%	47%	49%	50%
Having peace in Liberia	0%	7%	6%	5%	2%	3%	2%	7%	6%	4%	4%	9%	3%	3%	5%	3%	5%
Reducing crimes	4%	21%	14%	24%	8%	19%	11%	18%	22%	15%	23%	24%	15%	15%	25%	15%	20%
Bringing unity	1%	5%	3%	6%	3%	6%	3%	8%	5%	5%	9%	9%	6%	6%	8%	6%	7%

Services and Living Conditions

Liberians' priorities may be impacted by their access to services and their living conditions. To understand adult Liberians' perceptions of their situations, they were asked to rank a series of issues from very good to very bad, thereby indicating the participant's view of his or her conditions and access to basic services.

Employment and road conditions emerged as the most widespread issues of concern. The population most frequently said that their opportunities to find work (79%) and the road conditions (82%) were bad or very bad. Residents of the southeastern counties as well as of Lofa county almost unanimously ranked road conditions bad or very bad

Figure 8: Perception of Services (% bad-very bad)
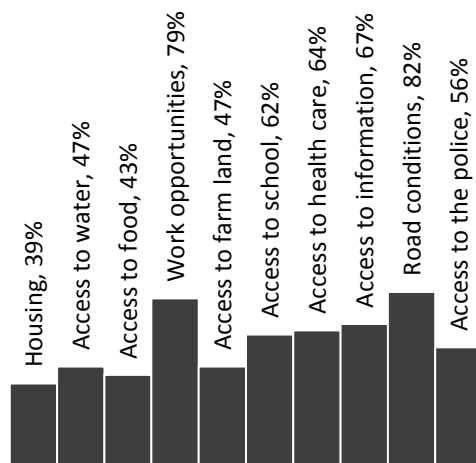
In respect to services, about two-thirds of the population ranked their access to information on government programs (67%), access to health care (64%), and access to schools (62%) as being bad or very bad. However, less than half ranked negatively their access to land (47%), access to water (47%),

access to food (43%), and housing (having shelter) (39%). Access to land was perceived as bad or very bad by over half the population in Monrovia, Rural Montserrado, Margibi, and Maryland. Land issues are discussed in detail in the subsequent chapters.

The survey also found that many people do not believe they are receiving outside help to improve their standard of living. Asked who, in their opinion, helped improve living conditions in their community, almost half said nobody (42%), and a third said people in the community themselves (33%). Less than one in five surveyed adult Liberians mentioned NGOs (18%), local leaders (17%) and the central government (16%). NGOs and local and central governments got better reports than the average in two counties: Lofa and Nimba. This reflects the government and aid community's current geographic priorities for providing peacebuilding and reconstruction assistance. Inversely, the counties in which people felt the most isolated from services and assistance programs, in that they reported nobody was working to improve lives, were Rivercess (62%), Grand Cape Mount (57%), Sinoe (54%), and Maryland (54%). Among other sources of support, the rubber and private companies were frequently mentioned in Grand Cape Mount (13%).

In addition to the above services, respondents were asked to rank the central government's performance in reducing poverty, creating jobs, building peace, reducing crimes, and bringing unity.

Respondents' rankings on government's achievements in poverty reduction and job creation were mixed: about half of them ranked the government's performance in these areas as being bad or very bad (respectively 49% and 50%). In the areas of peacebuilding and security, however, less than one in five respondents ranked the performance poorly, including reducing crimes (20%), bringing unity (7%), and maintaining peace (5%). These results suggest that some progress toward peace and security has been made, but more progress is needed on social and economic reconstruction.

*Table 8: Root Causes of the War*

	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Root Causes of War																	
Greed/corruption	57%	60%	71%	71%	56%	54%	44%	62%	76%	52%	69%	60%	49%	48%	58%	45%	63%
Identity (tribal/ethnic)	30%	42%	35%	42%	32%	30%	23%	52%	52%	26%	39%	47%	25%	29%	38%	31%	40%
Poverty	28%	34%	35%	37%	25%	20%	30%	33%	36%	30%	28%	27%	27%	33%	35%	31%	30%
Inequalities	17%	33%	27%	34%	17%	14%	11%	31%	37%	15%	31%	32%	11%	8%	23%	9%	27%
Land tenure/access	3%	4%	4%	4%	3%	2%	1%	4%	2%	1%	3%	6%	2%	0%	1%	1%	3%
Food crisis/food prices	2%	0%	1%	0%	3%	3%	3%	0%	1%	4%	1%	0%	2%	5%	1%	7%	1%
Don't know	22%	24%	13%	12%	22%	24%	25%	19%	13%	21%	15%	24%	26%	23%	23%	23%	19%
Other	9%	8%	7%	7%	9%	13%	13%	11%	5%	11%	10%	6%	9%	11%	8%	11%	9%
Identified groups or people responsible for the war in Liberia	77%	74%	74%	83%	76%	70%	71%	76%	82%	68%	79%	73%	71%	72%	80%	72%	76%
Groups and individuals at the root of the wars*																	
Charles Taylor	59%	51%	38%	44%	53%	40%	35%	48%	41%	42%	43%	42%	35%	51%	43%	48%	45%
Prince Johnson's INPFL	40%	50%	38%	49%	36%	28%	25%	43%	48%	32%	45%	40%	25%	28%	42%	29%	42%
ULIMO	35%	48%	44%	48%	39%	17%	21%	56%	49%	23%	40%	43%	18%	25%	42%	19%	40%
LURD	40%	43%	40%	46%	40%	17%	19%	47%	43%	16%	40%	41%	17%	23%	40%	21%	38%
NPFL	21%	43%	32%	44%	21%	24%	26%	47%	54%	27%	36%	38%	23%	29%	38%	26%	37%
MODEL	26%	32%	28%	42%	24%	13%	24%	27%	32%	15%	30%	32%	21%	24%	25%	25%	29%
Samuel Doe	19%	18%	7%	17%	16%	5%	8%	12%	12%	8%	12%	24%	7%	9%	9%	8%	14%
AFL	4%	13%	6%	11%	5%	4%	3%	8%	14%	4%	10%	17%	1%	5%	9%	9%	10%
Krahn	12%	5%	5%	7%	17%	7%	11%	6%	8%	12%	10%	8%	13%	8%	10%	7%	9%
Gio	11%	7%	6%	5%	14%	11%	7%	4%	6%	9%	10%	4%	9%	8%	9%	6%	8%
Mandingo	11%	9%	6%	4%	10%	2%	0%	13%	10%	2%	7%	8%	3%	4%	6%	2%	7%

* Responses included over 30 groups or individuals. Only those responses mentioned by at least 10 percent of respondents in any county are presented here.

The current tensions and disputes in Liberia are better understood by considering the context of 14 years of civil war. In particular, how the population views the causes and actors in the previous wars, and the losses that they sustained during the war, may impact disputes today. The survey included a series of questions on what surveyed adult Liberians identify as the root causes of the wars and how the wars affected them.

Root Causes of the Civil War

There are various explanations for the outbreak of war. Liberian scholars offer a range of explanations for the years of conflict including ethnic divisions, predatory elites who abused power, a corrupt political system, and economic disparities. The Truth and Reconciliation Commission found that underlying those proximate causes, the seeds of conflict were sown by the historical decision to establish Liberia as a state divided between natives and settlers, and the use of force to sustain the settlers' hegemony (see "Background").

In this study, the surveyed adult Liberians identified greed and corruption most frequently as the causes of the conflict (63%). Another 40% mentioned identity and tribal divisions, while less than one in three adult Liberians mentioned poverty (30%), and inequalities (27%). Nearly one in five said they did not know what the root causes of the conflicts were, and few mentioned land issues (3%) or food issues (1%). The results on the direct causes of violence perceived by the population may not highlight structural deficiencies that allow greed, corruption or inequalities to exist and eventually lead to conflict, but nevertheless they suggest that conflict results partly from elites' behavior.

Figure 9: Root Causes of Wars

Greed / corruption, 63%
Identity (tribal/ethnic), 40%
Poverty , 30%
Inequalities, 27%
Land tenure / access, 3%
Food crisis / food prices, 1%
Don't know, 19%
Other, 9%
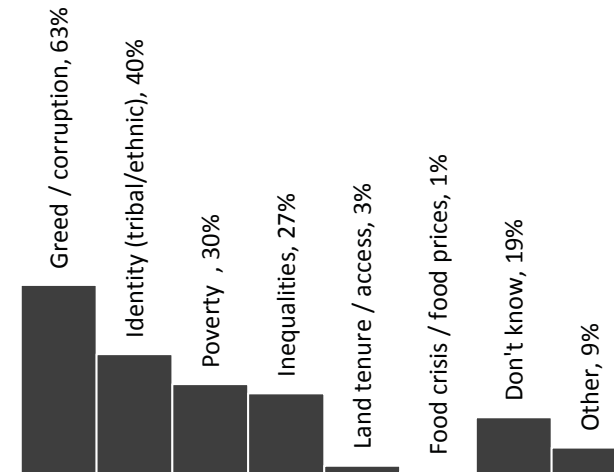
Respondents were also asked whom they considered responsible for the conflict or parts thereof. Three-quarters (76%) named groups or individuals, although opinions varied. The most frequently named were Charles Taylor (45%), Prince Johnson's Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia (INPFL) (42%), ULIMO (40%), LURD (38%), NPFL (37%), and MODEL (29%). One in four respondents in Nimba County named former President Doe (24%), while only 5% in Doe's home county Grand Gedeh listed him as sharing responsibility. Three ethnic groups were mentioned by at least 10% of respondents in some counties: the Krahn (9%), Gio (8%), and Mandingo (7%). Americo-Liberians (or "Congo") were mentioned by only 4% of the respondents to be responsible. These results suggest that the often-multi-ethnic military factions receive far more blame for the violent

Table 9: Exposure to War-Related Violence

	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Self-identified as victims	93%	78%	75%	68%	90%	85%	89%	76%	68%	81%	74%	74%	88%	96%	88%	90%	78%
Experience of violence due To fighters' action																	
Displaced	91%	68%	74%	70%	87%	85%	65%	76%	78%	76%	80%	71%	76%	74%	85%	70%	77%
House destroyed	75%	63%	61%	60%	73%	78%	53%	76%	64%	54%	52%	56%	66%	76%	61%	73%	61%
Looting/ destruction	79%	59%	65%	57%	80%	67%	60%	66%	57%	56%	56%	53%	62%	75%	64%	71%	60%
Attacked with a weapon	43%	45%	36%	30%	43%	32%	38%	34%	28%	31%	32%	29%	39%	53%	39%	43%	35%
Being beaten	26%	40%	38%	29%	34%	21%	33%	29%	26%	27%	21%	22%	32%	48%	24%	31%	27%
Witness violence due to fighters																	
Looting/ destruction	75%	66%	66%	63%	75%	46%	64%	46%	63%	59%	71%	63%	73%	79%	78%	69%	66%
Beating or torture	84%	74%	69%	70%	83%	54%	70%	51%	67%	67%	75%	66%	76%	81%	82%	71%	71%
Killing of family member	38%	36%	35%	32%	42%	34%	26%	28%	24%	30%	32%	33%	38%	45%	41%	41%	33%
Killing of other person	47%	54%	44%	42%	52%	39%	35%	37%	38%	36%	51%	47%	44%	54%	61%	49%	47%
Deaths due to the wars																	
Lost parents	33%	24%	31%	22%	38%	40%	27%	32%	27%	27%	24%	26%	34%	29%	30%	37%	28%
Lost children	27%	19%	23%	15%	29%	23%	17%	21%	17%	16%	12%	14%	25%	24%	24%	21%	17%
Lost brother or sister	52%	51%	54%	47%	53%	66%	46%	62%	47%	49%	40%	50%	60%	65%	44%	61%	49%
Lost other family	84%	75%	74%	70%	87%	84%	69%	81%	73%	71%	75%	74%	77%	83%	77%	86%	76%
Lost a friend	88%	71%	78%	72%	84%	84%	61%	81%	75%	65%	76%	79%	74%	76%	76%	74%	76%
Lost a neighbor	87%	72%	76%	69%	84%	81%	58%	79%	73%	64%	76%	73%	70%	74%	78%	75%	75%
Sexual Violence by a fighter																	
Sexual Violence (self)	5%	10%	10%	11%	8%	2%	7%	10%	8%	4%	7%	8%	6%	9%	9%	5%	8%
Sexual violence (self, among women only)	6%	19%	18%	20%	13%	2%	10%	19%	15%	4%	9%	14%	8%	14%	12%	7%	12%
Witness rape or sexual abuse of a woman	25%	33%	23%	26%	31%	24%	21%	24%	24%	22%	25%	26%	26%	39%	28%	31%	27%
Witness rape or sexual abuse of a man	4%	5%	4%	4%	8%	9%	6%	5%	5%	5%	9%	5%	10%	10%	10%	6%	7%
Coerced by Fighters																	
To carry loads/do work	48%	51%	47%	41%	47%	27%	39%	35%	34%	30%	24%	23%	41%	56%	39%	40%	34%
To loot or destroy things	7%	11%	10%	8%	9%	8%	12%	11%	6%	10%	8%	6%	12%	14%	8%	11%	9%
To beat someone	2%	8%	3%	3%	1%	2%	5%	3%	3%	4%	3%	3%	7%	5%	3%	3%	3%
To kill someone	0%	3%	1%	2%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	0%	1%	1%
Abducted (% yes)	29%	36%	28%	19%	28%	19%	18%	22%	15%	19%	16%	12%	27%	32%	22%	23%	20%

conflicts than the major tribes backing them, which allows for some hope regarding the perceived feuds among ethnic groups.[44]

War-related Violence

Direct Experience

Widespread civilian displacement and civilian trauma are common components of civil war. This survey partially explored the conflict's toll on the Liberian population. The surveyed adult Liberians reported displacement (77%), destruction of their house (61%), or looting and destruction of their crops (60%). Nationally, 78% of the population considered themselves a victim of the civil wars. The proportion was lowest, but still high, in Margibi (68%) and Grand Bassa (68%). Four out of five or more respondents were displaced in the counties of Bomi (91%), Grand Cape Mount (87%), Grand Gedeh (85%), Rural Montserrado (85%), and Greater Monrovia (80%). Physical violence was also frequent, with 35% of the respondents reporting experience of a direct attack with a weapon, and 30% reporting being beaten by fighters.

Witness Experience and Family Losses

The long-term toll of the wars on human capital is also illustrated in the high proportion of respondents who witnessed some form of violence, such as beatings (71%), destruction and looting (66%), and killings (47%). One in three respondents (33%) reported witnessing the killing of a family member. Nationally, three out of four respondents had lost a friend (75%) or at least one distant family member (76%). As many as one in two respondents indicated losing a sibling (49%), one or both parents (27%), and/or their children (17%).

War-related Sexual violence

Liberia has not been immune to war-related sexual violence. Eight percent of the respondents reported having experienced sexual violence committed by fighters. Among women, the prevalence rate was 12%. The actual prevalence of sexual violence may be higher as the respondents may not have reported it due to the sensitivity of the question. A larger proportion indicated having witnessed sexual violence against women (27%), and against men (7%). Reports of sexual violence were higher in certain counties, especially Grand Bassa (20%), Lofa (19%), Bong (19%), and Gbarpolu (18%). The strongest differences between women's reporting having experienced sexual violence and witness reports of sexual abuse against women were found in Rivercess (14% vs. 39%), Sinoe (7% vs. 31%), and Grand Gedeh (2% vs. 22%), which could be related to different attitudes among ethnic groups.[45]

Coercion and Abductions

The conflict in Liberia has led to well-documented abductions, forced labor, and forced recruitment of civilians and children by armed groups. One in three respondents (34%) reported being forced to carry loads or perform other labor for rebel groups at some point during the wars. Some were coerced to commit violent acts, such as being forced to loot or destroy properties (9%), to beat someone (3%), or to kill someone (1%).

One in five respondents (20%) said they had been abducted or kidnapped during the wars. In most cases (73%), the abduction lasted a month or less, with 12% reporting abduction of less than one day, and 20% reporting abduction of one day to a week.

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[44] Eight percent of adult Liberians in Nimba and 7% in Grand Gedeh identified the Krahn, whereas 11% in Grand Gedeh and 4% in Nimba named the Gio as an ethnic group sharing responsibility for the war. Given the strong difference between both counties' perception of President Doe as the root cause of the wars, it suggests that his government and rule is being considered as one of the fighting parties, rather than a representative of the ethnic Krahn group.

[45] By contrast, the smallest differences were found in Lofa (19% vs. 24%), Gbarpolu (18% vs. 23%), and Grand Bassa (20% vs. 26%).

Table 10: Participation in the War

	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Took part in the war	4%	6%	3%	3%	3%	6%	2%	3%	4%	0%	3%	8%	2%	1%	1%	3%	4%
General comfort with ex-combatants																	
Comfortable	32%	53%	58%	56%	30%	62%	51%	46%	53%	51%	40%	66%	47%	33%	47%	53%	49%
Somewhat comfortable	19%	24%	16%	20%	25%	22%	29%	28%	23%	27%	29%	21%	27%	31%	23%	26%	25%
Uncomfortable	49%	23%	26%	24%	45%	16%	20%	25%	25%	23%	30%	13%	26%	36%	30%	21%	26%

	Women	Men
Took part in the war	2%	6%
General comfort with ex-combatants		
Comfortable	39%	59%
Somewhat comfortable	25%	25%
Uncomfortable	35%	16%

Participation in the War (if took part)

Figure 10: Abduction

by fighters (88 out of 153, 58%), or by their parents (6 out of 153, 4%). One-third (55 out of 153, 38%) indicated being minors (below 18 years old) when they joined the war. About a quarter of them (42 out of 153, 23%) stayed with armed groups for less than a year, while one in three reported spending over five years with the armed groups (49 out of 153, 35%)

In respect to the type of participation, most mentioned controlling guns and shotguns (82% and 87% respectively), and over half (67%) went into the battlefield to fight. Just 45% (n=70) went through the DDRR program.

In half the cases, those who experienced abduction reported being freed by escaping (58%), while a quarter (27%) indicated being freed by their abductors. A minority (7%) was freed through military action.

Participation

By the end of 2004, 103,019 combatants and individuals associated with armed groups had gone through the Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation, and Reintegration program (DDRR).[46] This represents approximately 3% of the total Liberian population.

Four percent of the surveyed adult Liberians admitted having actively taken part in the war. Among them, 116 (76%) were men and 37 (24%) were women. Most reported that they had joined the war against their will, forced

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[46] DDRR Consolidated Report Phase 1, 2 & 3. National Commission on Disarmament, Demobilization, Rehabilitation and Reintegration (NCDDRR). p.1. January 16, 2005. Retrieved from
http://www.lr.undp.org/DEX/DDRR%20Consolidated%20Report%20Phases%201,2,3%20-%2022%20Aug%202004-%2016%20Jan%202005.pdf ; and UNDP Liberia Country Programme 2004-2007 – Terminal Evaluation Final Report. September, 2009. p.20. Retrieved from http://www.lr.undp.org/Documents/RecentPublic/_Final_report_UNDP-Liberia_Evaluation-Final.pdf.

Table 11: Perception of Former Combatants

	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Perception of ex-combatants (% agree)																	
Should have same rights as everyone else	75%	84%	83%	83%	78%	88%	79%	82%	87%	78%	89%	91%	78%	75%	81%	82%	85%
Should be allowed to be among the town leaders	46%	70%	71%	64%	48%	69%	64%	66%	71%	59%	65%	82%	58%	50%	66%	57%	66%
Should not be allowed to vote	34%	40%	30%	32%	40%	48%	32%	39%	34%	35%	52%	50%	32%	37%	53%	37%	43%
Make your village or town less safe	63%	41%	39%	38%	61%	32%	42%	42%	41%	39%	47%	33%	37%	49%	44%	41%	43%

	Women	Men
Perception of ex-combatants (% agree)		
Should have same rights as everyone else	79%	92%
Should be allowed to be among the town leaders	55%	78%
Should not be allowed to vote	43%	44%
Make your village or town less safe	51%	33%

Perception of Former Combatants

The reintegration of former combatants in Liberia has been facilitated by benefits payments and formal or vocational training. Reintegration is typically assumed to be challenging because of the low absorptive capacity of the labor-market, and difficulties for communities to accept individuals who held some sort of power during the conflict and at times perpetrated violence.[47]

The survey data suggest that adult Liberians did not particularly stigmatize ex-combatants. Three out of four respondents indicated being generally either somewhat comfortable (25%) or comfortable (49%) in the presence of ex-combatants, with just 26% indicating discomfort. Most respondents also agreed that ex-combatants should have the same rights as anyone else (85%), and a majority (66%) were not opposed to see ex-combatants becoming town leaders. Nevertheless, a significant proportion of the population agreed with the proposition that ex-combatants should not be allowed to vote (43%), and that the presence of ex-combatants makes the area less safe (43%). These seemingly contradictory views point to the mixed views that many still hold toward former combatants.

Women on average held more negative views of ex-combatants. Roughly one-third of the women (36%) described themselves as generally uncomfortable in the presence of ex-combatants, compared to 16% of the men. Women also less frequently agreed that ex-combatants should have the same rights as everyone else, or that they should be allowed to be town leaders.

Attitudes toward ex-combatants were most negative in Bomi and Grand Cape Mount, which are counties that reported the highest level of internal displacement. In both counties, nearly half the population indicated being generally uncomfortable in the presence of ex-combatants (respectively 49% and 45%). These are also the only two counties where less than half the population believed ex-combatants should be allowed to be town leaders, and, inversely, over half the population believed ex-combatants make the town or village less safe. To a somewhat lesser extent, respondents in Rivercess mirrored these sentiments, with over a third indicating discomfort in the presence of ex-combatants (36%) and half of the population thinking they should be allowed as town leaders while they consider their presence to make the area less safe (50% and 49%, respectively). Conversely, residents of Nimba and Grand Gedeh agreed least with the idea that ex-combatants made their towns less safe (33% and 32%). A possible reason for this pattern lies in the course of the civil wars, in particular the final years of the second one. Grand Cape Mount, Bomi, and Rivercess saw arguably the most extreme back-and-forth between Taylor's forces and LURD in the west, and MODEL in the east. Interviews with key informants in these areas have shown that the exact frontline between the groups often stretched over large areas, with both sides staging indiscriminate burn-and-run attacks against villages outside their area of control, trying to punish villagers suspected of supporting the other side, and attempting to find and kill fighters hidden in a village, to show force and ruthlessness to the other side, to replenish food stocks, or simply to break the frustration of entrenchment.[48]

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[47] See among others, Morten Bøås, Anne Hatløy, 'Getting in, getting out': militia membership and prospects for re-integration in post-war Liberia, *The Journal of Modern African Studies* (2008), 46: 33-55.

[48] Civilians in Rivercess tried to flee many towns reported to have been attacked regularly by both sides, since neither force was able to capture the area but wanted to scare the other or punish villages for supposedly helping the opposite side. For an illustration of this particular type of warfare during course of the LURD campaign in the west, see Brabazon (2010).

Table 12: Security and Crimes

	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
General Sense of Safety																	
Not at all/not very safe	24%	25%	18%	17%	26%	20%	18%	17%	19%	21%	36%	21%	16%	22%	37%	14%	25%
Neither safe nor unsafe	18%	14%	18%	18%	21%	13%	15%	13%	23%	22%	27%	16%	18%	21%	21%	15%	20%
Safe/very safe	58%	61%	64%	65%	53%	66%	67%	70%	58%	57%	37%	64%	66%	58%	42%	71%	55%
Crimes (% experienced in one year)																	
Witchcraft	9%	24%	8%	19%	5%	14%	20%	19%	12%	17%	13%	21%	28%	35%	15%	23%	17%
Robbery or burglary	9%	9%	7%	13%	13%	18%	6%	12%	8%	14%	26%	11%	16%	7%	18%	7%	15%
Victim of bribery	3%	7%	3%	9%	1%	6%	8%	7%	6%	10%	11%	10%	7%	16%	6%	9%	9%
Beaten	7%	6%	5%	5%	5%	8%	4%	4%	6%	4%	11%	5%	7%	6%	10%	5%	7%
Harassed for sex	5%	5%	3%	7%	3%	3%	3%	3%	6%	5%	4%	5%	3%	6%	2%	3%	4%
Other criminal acts	6%	2%	7%	1%	1%	4%	1%	4%	2%	3%	6%	3%	4%	2%	4%	1%	4%
Experienced violence involving a weapon over previous year	6%	6%	4%	2%	4%	4%	5%	4%	3%	4%	12%	5%	6%	5%	13%	6%	7%

Figure 11: Safety and Security Concerns
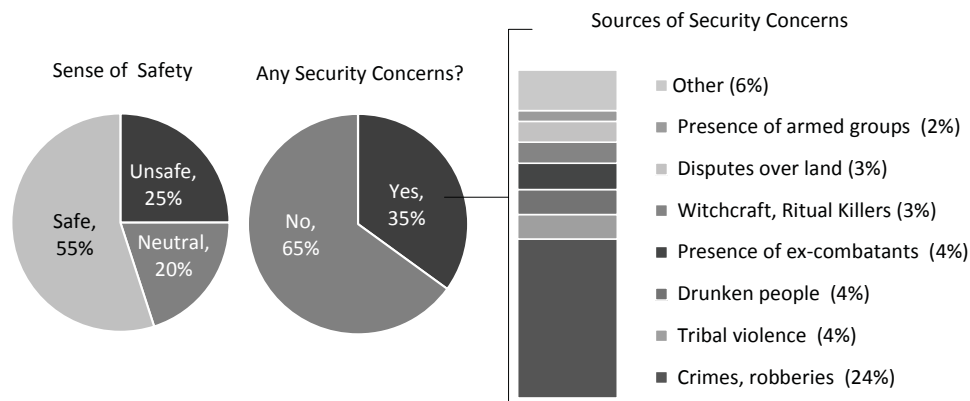
CURRENT SAFETY THREATS AND DISPUTES

The study's results indicate Liberians' most pressing concerns are access to services and economic opportunities. However, many also mentioned the need to strengthen peace and increase security. The objective of this study was to examine what issues might cause tensions and disputes, as well as which approaches may help consolidate peace and prevent conflicts. This section examines specifically the threats to security and local disputes that Liberians experience.

Sense of Safety

The study found that many Liberians felt safe in Liberia, and where a sense of insecurity existed, it was mostly associated with local crime and robberies. Over half the surveyed adult Liberians reported their communities to be generally safe or very safe (55%), although one in four (25%) considered their communities to be not at all safe or not very safe. The regions perceived to be the least safe were Greater Monrovia and Rural Montserrado (respectively 36% and 37%).

In respect to specific safety issues, nationally two-thirds of people (65%) reported no safety issues. One in four (24%) mentioned crimes and robberies, although this increased to as many as 43% of the population in the urban center of Greater Monrovia. Nationally, few respondents mentioned other sources of insecurity, but those that did mentioned tribal violence (4%), drunken people (4%), and the presence of ex-combatants (4%). Some safety issues were specific to locale. Tribal violence, for example, was mentioned as a factor of insecurity by 13% of the respondents in Lofa and 8% in Nimba, while those in other counties rarely mentioned this issue at all. Lofa was also the only county where tribal violence was perceived a greater security concern than crime and robberies. On the other hand, Lofa, as well as Sino (where only 1% of the population named tribal violence) both had the highest proportion of people saying they felt safe or very safe (70% and 71%, respectively). For 11 out of 16 administrative regions, witchcraft and ritual killings were either the second or third most commonly named safety issue.

Crimes

As mentioned, crimes such as robberies were the leading sources of perceived insecurity among respondents. However, the surveyed adult Liberians were also asked which crimes they had directly experienced in the year prior to the survey. The most commonly reported event overall was being a victim of witchcraft (17%). This figure was higher in two counties: one-third of the respondents in Rivercess (35%) and one-quarter in River Gee (28%) reported having been a victim of witchcraft. The high prevalence of this measure is in line with long-standing religious beliefs across most of Liberia, expressed and reinforced through a number of so-called secret societies, such as the Poro in the center and north, who continue to have an important role in Liberian society to this date.[49]

The reported one-year incidence of robbery or burglary was 15%, being a victim of bribery or corruption was 9%, and being beaten with or without a weapon was 7%. In total, the study indicates that 7% of the respondents experienced a crime that involved a weapon in the year prior to the survey.

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[49] For a thorough descriptions of the role of secret societies and the importance of various religious beliefs in Liberia, see Ellis (2006), pp. 220-80.

Table 13: Ethnic Relations

	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Relations with other ethnic groups (% good or very good)	86%	91%	92%	90%	87%	91%	84%	84%	90%	87%	91%	88%	87%	87%	90%	91%	89%
Interaction with other ethnic groups																	
Daily interaction	79%	62%	83%	70%	71%	71%	51%	63%	72%	56%	83%	68%	58%	53%	80%	62%	71%
At least once a week	92%	80%	96%	84%	85%	88%	68%	83%	87%	78%	95%	85%	80%	80%	96%	85%	87%
Perception (% agree)																	
Some tribes are favored	31%	27%	28%	30%	36%	33%	38%	25%	24%	38%	33%	29%	36%	41%	28%	31%	31%
My tribe has not enough voice	26%	15%	23%	14%	31%	40%	38%	17%	14%	38%	30%	20%	32%	40%	22%	37%	25%
Ethnic groups problems	9%	6%	5%	5%	6%	10%	3%	16%	8%	7%	9%	7%	7%	9%	7%	3%	8%

Problems with:	%	n	Reason:
Mandingo	5%	178	*They are violent (66%), they hate us (32%), treat us unfairly (29%), and follow a different religion (28%)*
Gio	1%	70	*They are violent (53%), they hate us (30%) and treat us unfairly (30%)*
Krahn	1%	55	*They are violent (51%), they hate us (30%) and treat us unfairly (30%)*
Others	3%	125	

By ethnic groups:	Problem with ethnic group %	n	Problems with….
Loma	19%	41	Mandingo (17%), Bassa (1%)
Mandingo	13%	13	Loma (7%), Gio (4%), Kpelle (4%), Vai (1%), Kru (1%), Bassa (1%), Gbandi (1%), Mano (1%), Vai (1%), Krahn (1%), Kissi (1%)
Kissi	12%	32	Gio (7%), Mandingo (4%), Mano (2%), Grebo (1%)
Krahn	12%	20	Mandingo (11%), Krahn (2%), Gio (2%), Gbandi (1%), Mano (1%), Mende (1%)
Gio	10%	23	Mandingo (8%), Krahn (3%)
Vai	9%	13	Mandingo (7%), Bassa (2%), Congo (1%), Gio (1%), Kpelle (1%), Kru (1%)
Grebo	8%	48	Krahn (3%), Mandingo (2%), Gio (1%), Kru (1%)
Bassa	6%	17	Mandingo (4%),Gio (3%), Mano (2%), Mende (2%), Krahn (1%), Gbandi (1%), Kissi (1%)
Belle	6%	45	Mandingo (4%), Bassa (1%), Gio (1%), Krahn (1%)
Gbandi	6%	7	Mandingo (3%), Bassa (2%)
Gola	6%	12	Mandingo (3%), Congo (1%), foreigner (1%),Krahn (1%)
Kpelle	6%	41	Mandingo (3%), Congo (1%), Gio (1%), Mano (1%)
Kru	5%	13	Mandingo (4%), Krahn (1%)

Robberies and beatings were reported most frequently in Greater Monrovia, where respectively 26% and 11% of the respondents reported experiencing these crimes in the year prior to the survey. The second area most affected by these crimes was Rural Montserrado (18% and 10%). It is also in Greater Monrovia and surrounding Rural Montserrado that the proportion of surveyed adult Liberians having experienced a crime involving a weapon was highest, meaning in the past year such incidents have been almost twice as likely to occur in Montserrado than in the rest of the country.

Inter-Ethnic Relations

Ethnicity and ethnic lineage have had an important role in the Liberian conflicts, and continue to contribute to tensions and occasional violence in the country (see "Background"). Although 40% of the respondents identified ethnicity and ethnic divisions as one of the causes of the civil wars, few respondents (4%) identified ethnic divisions or tribal violence as current sources of insecurity. The survey covered a series of questions to understand better Liberians' relations and interactions with the community at large, and with members from other tribal and religious groups.

A large majority of the population described its relationship with other ethnic groups as good or very good (89%), and 71% said they had daily interactions with members of other ethnic groups. An overwhelming number of respondents (95%) said they would have no problems with relatives (son, daughter) marrying someone from another ethnic group. Despite these positive results, 8% of the population reported having problems along ethnic lines. Such problems were most frequently reported in Lofa (16%) and Grand Gedeh (10%).

The survey further asked the surveyed adult Liberians with whom they had problems, and the sources of those problems. The objective is not to attribute blame or single out any particular group or individual, but rather to understand the complex dynamic of ethnic tensions. Out of 332 respondents who reported ethnic problems, 178 reported problems with the Mandingo ethnic group (5% of the respondents), 70 reported problems with the Gio (1% of the respondents), and 55 reported problems with the Krahn (1% of the respondents). Problems with any other ethnic groups were reported by less than 1% of the population.

Respondents attributed ethnic problems to (1) perceived inherent violence of the opposed group, (2) pre-existing hatred from the other group, and (3) perceived unfair treatment by the opposed group. Twenty-eight percent of the respondents who reported problem with the Mandingo also mentioned their different religion.

Sources of tension can also be inferred by analyzing the ethnic group of respondents against their responses on which ethnic groups cause problems:

- Among the Loma, 19% reported ethnic problems, the highest proportion in any ethnic group. They almost uniquely associated ethnic problems with the Mandingo (17%).
- The Mandingo had the second highest rate of reported ethnic problems, but the problems were associated with 11 other groups, including the Loma (7%), Gio (4%), and Kpelle (4%).
- Among the Krahn, 12% reported ethnic problems, and 11% mentioned problems with the Mandingo.
- Similarly, 10% of the Gio reported ethnic problems, and 8% associated these problems with the Mandingo.
- Among the Kissi, 12% reported ethnic problems, including 7% that mentioned problems with the Gio.

The Loma, Mandingo, and Kissi are mostly located in Lofa County, where they account for respectively 38%, 15%, and 23% of the population. These results confirm that this county is more likely to be impacted by disputes along ethnic lines. The Krahn on the other hand account for 78% of the population of Grand Gedeh. The Gio are primarily in Nimba, where they

Table 14: Groups and Associations

	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Relationship (% good or very good)																	
Family	86%	96%	94%	97%	84%	91%	91%	97%	94%	89%	88%	95%	88%	92%	83%	95%	92%
Neighbors	90%	93%	92%	94%	84%	89%	91%	93%	91%	90%	89%	94%	90%	89%	89%	91%	91%
Community	86%	89%	92%	88%	84%	91%	88%	90%	86%	90%	86%	87%	86%	87%	86%	89%	87%
Member of groups or associations																	
Any	55%	70%	73%	62%	65%	73%	69%	69%	54%	67%	55%	77%	79%	74%	52%	70%	64%
Number of affiliations																	
None	45%	30%	27%	38%	35%	27%	31%	31%	46%	33%	45%	23%	21%	26%	48%	30%	36%
1	24%	19%	32%	22%	34%	32%	33%	19%	23%	40%	27%	29%	45%	36%	24%	34%	27%
2	17%	15%	18%	15%	18%	25%	16%	21%	12%	13%	18%	18%	18%	23%	16%	19%	17%
3 or more	14%	36%	23%	25%	12%	17%	21%	30%	19%	15%	10%	30%	16%	15%	13%	16%	20%
What group?																	
Farming group or Koo	10%	40%	28%	17%	15%	25%	17%	35%	14%	12%	1%	32%	19%	17%	10%	12%	18%
Cultural/art group	4%	1%	2%	2%	1%	5%	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Sports team	9%	15%	14%	15%	13%	14%	15%	9%	11%	13%	10%	16%	16%	16%	15%	21%	13%
Religious group	22%	30%	26%	38%	12%	34%	42%	26%	28%	45%	32%	31%	50%	49%	27%	41%	32%
Political group	0%	5%	2%	10%	0%	3%	6%	5%	7%	7%	7%	6%	4%	4%	4%	2%	5%
Women's group	15%	10%	21%	11%	17%	12%	8%	16%	8%	6%	12%	16%	9%	12%	10%	9%	12%
Youth group	13%	15%	12%	8%	26%	13%	9%	13%	6%	7%	10%	15%	10%	7%	12%	16%	12%
School committee	6%	4%	2%	4%	2%	6%	8%	5%	2%	6%	5%	5%	4%	6%	1%	4%	4%
Town/village committee	9%	11%	9%	12%	10%	7%	10%	15%	11%	5%	4%	9%	7%	11%	6%	9%	8%
Money club or Susu	3%	22%	7%	16%	3%	14%	8%	17%	12%	12%	10%	21%	7%	7%	6%	6%	13%
Poro or Sande	12%	23%	8%	7%	10%	0%	1%	10%	3%	1%	1%	8%	1%	1%	8%	1%	6%
Other	4%	5%	8%	6%	2%	7%	8%	9%	4%	7%	6%	12%	8%	3%	3%	6%	7%

	Women	Men
Member of any group	53%	76%

account for 48% of the population. In that county, the Kissi account for 11% of the population. These results highlight the potential risk of renewed ethnic conflict in Lofa, Grand Gedeh, and Nimba counties.

Community Interactions and Group Membership

Earlier research in Liberia suggests that traditional social structures and cross-community activities, such as voluntary groups, associations, and traditional societies are common across villages or groups of villages, and may be a source of social cohesion and stability. Accordingly, the study explored membership in these groups, associations, and societies by county and gender. [50]

In respect to family and community relations, most adult Liberians viewed their relationships with family members, neighbors, and the community in general very positively. They also indicated high involvement in community groups. Two-thirds of the respondents (64%) indicated being a member of a group or association: 27% were members of one group or association, 17% indicated two groups or associations, and 20% indicated three or more. Membership in such groups or associations was least frequent in Bomi, Margibi, Monrovia, and Rural Montserrado, with just 52% to 55% of the respondents in these counties reporting any group membership.

Religious associations were the most frequent type of group mentioned (32% of all respondents), followed by farming groups (13%), sports teams (13%), women's groups (12%), and youth groups (12%). Over 40% of the population belonged to a religious group in the counties of Grand Kru

(42%), Maryland (45%), River Gee (50%), and Sinoe (41%). Inversely, such groups were least frequently mentioned in Grand Cape Mount (12%) and Bomi (22%). Farming groups were especially frequent in Lofa (30%), Bong (28%), Nimba (25%), and Gbarpolu (23%). Bong, Lofa, and Nimba also had the highest proportion of individuals that belonged to three or more groups and a significantly higher proportion of individuals who were members of a Susu (rotating credit group) and/or Koo (farmer's self-help group).

Traditional societies such as the Poro (for men) and Sande (for women) are also known to have a powerful role in community life and dispute resolution in the center and north of Liberia. Nationally, 6% of the respondents reported being a member of such societies. In Bong, however, the percentage was as high as 23%, followed by Grand Cape Mount (10%), Lofa (10%), and Nimba (8%). Given the traditional secrecy of the Poro, as well as similar societies, their membership may have been underreported by respondents.

Overall, adult women were significantly less likely than men to be a member of any group or association with just over half the women reporting such membership (53%), compared to three out of four adult men (76%). Women tended to be members of religious groups (27%) or women's groups (23%) almost exclusively. Men reported more, and a wider range of, community involvement, including religious groups (36%), sports teams (24%), farming groups (19%), youth groups (19%) and town/village committees (15%). Notably, membership in youth groups was mostly limited to young male adult Liberians. Among those who reported membership in a youth group, 80% were men.

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[50]For the purpose of analysis, a wide array of groups, associations, and societies (such as the Poro or Sande) have been grouped in this section. Clearly, their purpose, level of involvement, nature of membership, or even rules for sharing information with non-members differ greatly, especially among traditional solidarities such as the Poro. For further details on this subject, see Sawyer, A. (2005).Social capital, survival strategies and their potential for post-war governance in Liberia. UNU-Wider Research Paper No. 200515; See also Joint Programme Unit for UN-Interpeace Initiatives , Liberia Programme (2008), Nimba County Reconciliation Project.

Table 15: Land Disputes

|	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Disputes																	
Land - during the war	9%	11%	11%	8%	9%	24%	18%	13%	10%	15%	19%	20%	20%	17%	24%	19%	16%
Land - after the war	8%	11%	7%	7%	11%	25%	13%	15%	12%	16%	20%	20%	18%	15%	16%	10%	16%
Land (before or after)	13%	17%	14%	11%	14%	33%	22%	19%	17%	22%	28%	28%	28%	26%	30%	22%	23%
Other - after the war	12%	6%	8%	6%	13%	8%	7%	8%	7%	9%	15%	10%	7%	11%	15%	5%	10%
Any - after the war	18%	15%	14%	12%	21%	32%	19%	19%	16%	22%	32%	26%	25%	23%	28%	15%	23%
Any - (before or after)	22%	20%	20%	16%	24%	38%	27%	23%	22%	28%	39%	33%	33%	33%	41%	26%	30%
Access to land (% yes)	50%	73%	55%	61%	58%	83%	82%	74%	55%	79%	65%	82%	78%	83%	59%	82%	69%
Land ownership																	
Given by town chief	23%	22%	42%	11%	19%	27%	35%	15%	10%	18%	1%	13%	26%	46%	11%	28%	14%
Own (simple fee)	31%	40%	33%	53%	37%	28%	29%	39%	61%	31%	68%	53%	30%	13%	55%	23%	49%
Rent	3%	5%	2%	6%	4%	2%	1%	2%	10%	18%	18%	5%	6%	2%	13%	5%	9%
Borrowed	25%	13%	15%	11%	32%	25%	23%	22%	12%	23%	8%	14%	23%	20%	16%	26%	15%
Just using it	1%	1%	3%	0%	0%	3%	5%	2%	2%	1%	0%	2%	4%	6%	0%	6%	2%
Inherited/family land	12%	16%	4%	13%	8%	12%	7%	18%	4%	9%	3%	11%	8%	9%	3%	11%	9%
Other	5%	3%	0%	6%	1%	3%	1%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	4%	4%	3%	1%	2%
No ownership document	53%	50%	61%	31%	54%	57%	57%	51%	26%	37%	5%	27%	54%	76%	14%	68%	33%
House plot land-grabbing during the war	5%	9%	10%	8%	6%	20%	17%	11%	9%	14%	18%	18%	17%	11%	23%	16%	14%
Farm land-grabbing during the war	6%	4%	5%	2%	5%	11%	2%	6%	2%	5%	1%	8%	8%	9%	6%	6%	4%
House plot land-grabbing since end of the war	4%	6%	4%	4%	4%	15%	8%	8%	8%	9%	10%	11%	9%	6%	11%	5%	9%
Farm land-grabbing since end of the war	2%	4%	3%	0%	3%	5%	1%	6%	2%	2%	1%	5%	3%	4%	2%	2%	3%
Dispute over land boundaries since the end of the war	4%	5%	3%	4%	4%	9%	4%	8%	7%	5%	11%	8%	7%	4%	6%	3%	7%
Other land dispute since the end of the war	5%	5%	3%	1%	2%	7%	3%	6%	5%	7%	5%	7%	6%	4%	4%	2%	5%
Payment of rental fee	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Inheritance dispute	1%	3%	1%	0%	1%	3%	2%	4%	3%	3%	2%	3%	3%	2%	2%	0%	2%
Accused in dispute	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	3%	3%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Other	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%

Problems and Disputes Among the Population

Local disputes are a normal and common occurrence in Liberia. However, such disputes have the potential to evolve into violent conflicts. We raised a series of questions to examine the most common sources of disputes and their implications. Nationally, about a third of respondents had experienced some kind of dispute either during or after the war, and about one in four (23%) reported specifically having experienced a land dispute over that period. Disputes since the end of the war were most frequent in Greater Monrovia (32%) and Grand Gedeh (32%). Land issues were a major source of dispute among the population. Since the end of the war, 16% of the population experienced some sort of land dispute, and other non-land related disputes over the same period were reported by 10% of the population.

Land Disputes

Land disputes were the leading cause of disputes reported by the population. As mentioned above, 23% of respondents mentioned a land dispute during or after the conflict. A series of questions were asked to assess land access and the potential for conflict over land. Over two-thirds of respondents reported having access to land (69%), and 93% of those said the land had clear boundaries. Half were owners of their land (49 %), but other tenure systems were common, including borrowing the land from family or neighbors (15%), accessing land granted by the town chief (14%), and rental (9%). Some respondents simply indicated they had inherited the land (9%). One-third of those with access to land indicated that they had only a verbal agreement or nothing as means to prove their rights to the land they use. Two-thirds had some written record, including a land deed (41%), tribal certificate (16%) or lease agreement (8%). A lack of documentation (verbal agreement or no proof) was most frequent in the southeastern counties of Rivercess (76%) and Sinoe (68%). Having a tangible proof of ownership did not seem to guarantee fewer disputes. In fact, 29% of those

who had a document to prove ownership or access to land experienced land disputes during or after the war, compared to 21% of those who had no or only oral proofs of ownership/access.

Figure 12: Experience of Disputes
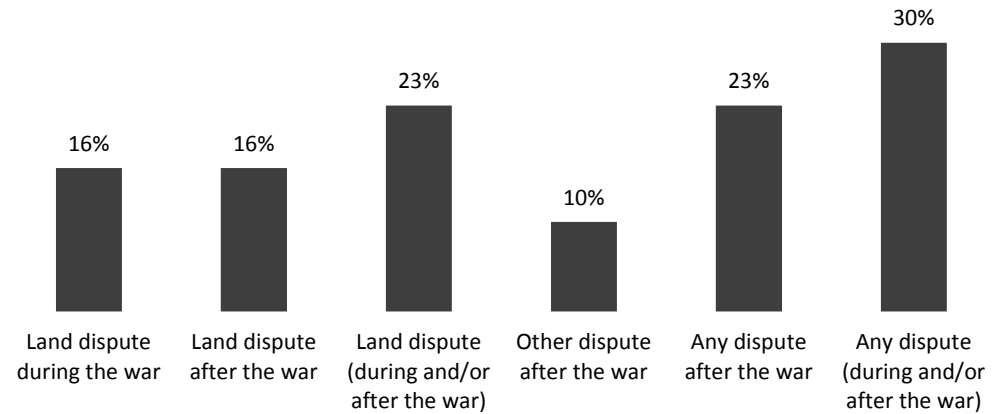
The study explored various types of land disputes. The most commonly reported conflicts were over land being taken over by someone else (land-grabbing), and, most frequently, the grabbing of a house plot. A total of 14% of the population reported the land of their house plot was grabbed during the war, and 9% reported a similar experience after the war. In comparison, farm land-grabbing was less frequent both during the war (4%) and after (3%). For a majority of respondents, land disputes (land *palavas)* were much more frequent after the war compared to before the war: 69% said there were more land *palavas* compared to 16% who said fewer.

Table 16: Non-Land Disputes and Domestic Violence

	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Non-land palavas since the end of the war	12%	6%	8%	6%	13%	8%	7%	8%	7%	9%	15%	10%	7%	11%	15%	5%	10%
Non-land disputes																	
Divorce	3%	0%	1%	0%	4%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	0%	1%
Inheritance dispute	0%	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	2%	0%	1%	2%	0%	0%	2%	0%	1%
Domestic violence	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%	2%	1%	2%	3%	1%	5%	3%	1%	4%	4%	1%	3%
Loan /money issues	3%	1%	1%	1%	3%	2%	0%	1%	2%	1%	4%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%
Noise, disturbances	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	2%	2%	0%	4%	3%	1%	2%	3%	3%	2%	2%
Child neglect	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Breach of contract	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Other	3%	1%	3%	1%	3%	3%	2%	4%	1%	3%	5%	5%	3%	2%	5%	2%	3%
Threat of violence	2%	4%	3%	4%	3%	4%	3%	4%	4%	6%	7%	5%	4%	5%	8%	2%	5%
Violence	1%	3%	4%	3%	4%	4%	2%	3%	2%	4%	4%	4%	3%	3%	7%	2%	4%
Domestic Violence																	
Beaten by spouse/partner	26%	30%	19%	26%	23%	25%	21%	22%	22%	27%	25%	25%	32%	29%	33%	25%	26%
Beaten by spouse/partner in the last year	18%	20%	12%	19%	15%	17%	14%	14%	12%	19%	18%	15%	21%	21%	21%	16%	17%
Reasons for beating																	
Cheating (infidelity)	38%	37%	30%	31%	41%	25%	29%	23%	32%	18%	32%	34%	32%	47%	33%	33%	32%
Coming home late	16%	21%	19%	32%	10%	16%	25%	19%	21%	14%	27%	24%	9%	2%	28%	21%	22%
Money	9%	7%	23%	13%	10%	8%	6%	8%	18%	14%	12%	14%	13%	11%	7%	5%	11%
Disrespect, insult	3%	11%	7%	3%	14%	21%	6%	9%	13%	6%	6%	8%	12%	19%	12%	16%	9%
Dinner not ready	7%	10%	7%	10%	2%	2%	8%	19%	5%	14%	1%	5%	11%	9%	7%	7%	6%
House not clean	0%	2%	2%	0%	2%	0%	2%	2%	2%	5%	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%	2%	1%
Alcohol	5%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	6%	2%	0%	2%	3%	2%	0%	2%	2%	2%
Jealousy	2%	0%	0%	0%	2%	2%	4%	0%	0%	5%	2%	0%	1%	0%	2%	3%	1%
Other	21%	11%	9%	11%	18%	25%	18%	14%	7%	24%	16%	12%	17%	13%	9%	12%	14%

	Women	Men
Beaten by spouse/partner	36%	15%
Beaten by spouse/partner in the last year	24%	9%

Figure 13: Current Frequency of Land Disputes Compared to Before the War
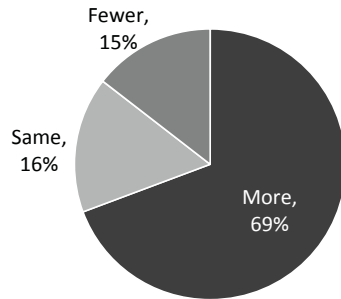
Since the end of the war, 7% of the population reported having a dispute over their land boundaries, while 5% reported other land-related disputes, including disputes over inheritance (2%) and rental fees (1%). Land disputes after the wars were most frequent in Grand Gedeh (33%) and Rural Montserrado (30%).

Of the 16% that experienced a land dispute since the end of the war, the dispute was most frequently with someone from another tribe (6%), from the same tribe (5%), or with other family members (3%). Violence was sometimes present. Five percent of the respondents reported disputes that included threats of violence, and 3% reported actual violence. In other words, nearly one in five respondents who experienced a post-war land dispute suffered violence as a result of the dispute.

Other disputes

Among the 10% of the population who reported experiencing another kind of dispute since the end of the war, the most common kinds of disputes were domestic violence (3%), conflicts over loan repayments (2%), and noise and disturbances (2%), among others. Nearly half of these disputes (47%) involved a threat of violence, and 34% were violent. Non-land

disputes were most frequent in Greater Monrovia (15%) and Rural Montserrado (15%), as well as Grand Cape Mount (13%).

Domestic Violence

Interviewers asked additional questions about domestic violence, one of the most common forms of non-land-related disputes. Although just 3% reported domestic violence among the disputes they experienced, a much larger proportion reported experiencing domestic violence when asked directly about the issue. This may be because most did not consider domestic violence a dispute.

Overall, 26% of the surveyed adult Liberians reported having experienced a severe beating by their spouse or partner, with an incidence of 17% over the one-year period prior to the survey. When considering women only, severe beatings by a spouse or partner were reported by 36% of the women, including 24% who reported that the event took place in the year prior to the survey. Among men, as many as 16% reported violent beatings, and 10% reported the event occurred in the last year. The most common reasons for the beating were cheating (32%) and coming home late (22%).

Table 17: Building Peace

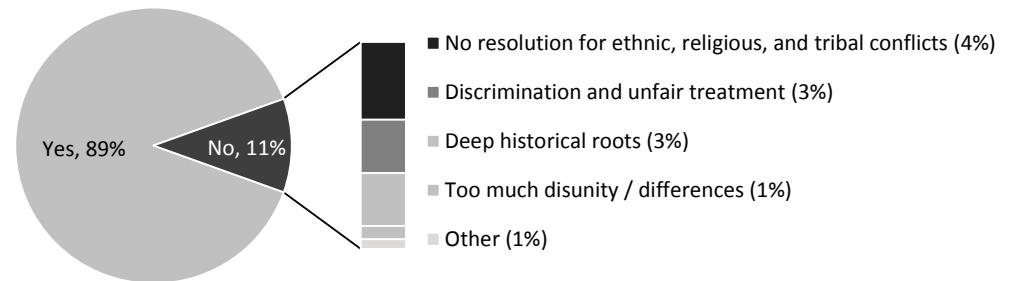|	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Possible to live in peace (% yes)	96%	90%	95%	88%	90%	92%	88%	87%	85%	85%	90%	91%	88%	85%	92%	88%	89%
If not, why not?																	
Ethnic, religious, and tribal conflicts cannot be resolved	1%	3%	3%	5%	6%	3%	2%	3%	6%	3%	5%	2%	4%	4%	5%	3%	4%
Discrimination and unfair treatment	2%	2%	3%	3%	2%	1%	3%	2%	2%	8%	3%	3%	3%	5%	1%	5%	3%
Deep historical roots	1%	5%	0%	3%	1%	2%	2%	8%	5%	2%	2%	4%	2%	1%	1%	3%	3%
Too much disunity/differences	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	3%	0%	1%	3%	1%	0%	2%	5%	1%	1%	1%
Other	1%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
Current peace is																	
Permanent	89%	72%	79%	73%	85%	80%	77%	75%	70%	72%	78%	75%	77%	76%	78%	78%	76%
Temporary	8%	17%	14%	21%	12%	12%	14%	16%	20%	18%	15%	18%	15%	13%	13%	12%	16%
Do not know	3%	11%	6%	6%	3%	8%	10%	10%	10%	11%	7%	7%	9%	11%	9%	10%	8%
What should be done to have a lasting peace?																	
Unite the tribes	77%	78%	71%	71%	76%	62%	62%	84%	80%	60%	74%	79%	62%	56%	69%	61%	74%
Educate the youth	42%	61%	58%	64%	45%	40%	35%	62%	70%	38%	60%	66%	37%	43%	54%	41%	57%
Reduce poverty	44%	49%	56%	58%	39%	28%	39%	47%	58%	37%	45%	46%	35%	44%	46%	41%	46%
Provide social services	36%	48%	39%	49%	35%	28%	27%	43%	52%	30%	38%	45%	27%	25%	36%	26%	40%
Unite religious groups	20%	30%	23%	30%	20%	20%	21%	33%	32%	23%	25%	28%	19%	20%	27%	19%	26%
Address land disputes	17%	39%	31%	38%	19%	11%	13%	36%	37%	11%	18%	34%	13%	8%	15%	12%	25%
Unity (in general)	5%	0%	5%	5%	4%	5%	8%	2%	1%	6%	3%	3%	5%	10%	2%	9%	3%
Good leadership	2%	1%	2%	1%	3%	7%	4%	1%	1%	3%	1%	2%	7%	12%	2%	8%	2%
Pray	3%	0%	0%	1%	3%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%	2%	2%	1%	6%	3%	3%	2%
Jobs	3%	4%	0%	4%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	2%	2%	1%	1%	2%	2%
Other	10%	4%	5%	5%	8%	11%	10%	5%	6%	9%	9%	5%	9%	10%	9%	14%	7%
Don't know	0%	3%	1%	0%	2%	2%	4%	1%	1%	3%	1%	2%	3%	4%	1%	2%	2%

As the survey results on exposure to violence suggest, the war has caused widespread loss and trauma for Liberians. Addressing this legacy of violence is a critical element toward rebuilding a more peaceful and secure environment. The survey asked a series of open-ended questions to explore both what Liberians believe is necessary to build a lasting peace, and what should be done for survivors of the civil wars. A second series of questions sought to develop a better understanding of how post-war disputes are being resolved.

Building Peace

Most Liberians were optimistic about the possibility of a peaceful future for their country. When asked to explain their understanding of "peace," a majority defined it as the absence of violence (61%), and many others mentioned wider concepts such as a sense of cohesion and reconciliation among the people of Liberia (34%), general freedom (35%), and overall development (18%). A large majority (89%) believed peace is possible, and three out of four respondents believed the current peace is permanent.[51] The others either believed peace was only temporary (16%), or were unsure (8%). In other words, nine out of ten Liberians think lasting peace is possible in their country, but one in six Liberians believe the current peace will not hold. Those who did not believe peace was possible generally cited the deep ethnic, religious or tribal conflicts (4%), longstanding

discrimination and unfair treatment (3%), and the deep historical roots of the conflicts (3%). There was little or no difference between counties in terms of overall perception of peace.[52]

Figure 14: Is Peace Possible? If Not, Why Not?

- No resolution for ethnic, religious, and tribal conflicts (4%)
- Discrimination and unfair treatment (3%)
- Deep historical roots (3%)
- Too much disunity / differences (1%)
- Other (1%)

Nationally, when asked to describe what measures would build lasting peace in an open-ended question, the surveyed adult Liberians most frequently stated it was necessary to unite the tribes of Liberia (74%), educate the youth (57%), reduce poverty (46%), provide social services (40%), unite religious groups (26%), and/or address land-ownership issues (25%). The pattern of responses somewhat reflects what Liberians saw as the root causes of conflict, with many blaming divisions along ethnic or religious lines (40%), poverty (30%), or inequalities (27%). None of the responses focused directly on addressing greed and corruption, although they were the most frequently cited root causes of the two civil wars among the population.

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[51] In comparison, and in a different context, only 44% of the adult population in northern Uganda believed peace to be permanent, according to a 2010 survey. The Lord's Resistance Army (LRA), a notoriously brutal rebel group, withdrew its forces from northern Uganda in 2005, but no peace agreement has been signed. See Pham PN, Vinck P, (2010). *Transitioning to Peace: A Population-Based Survey on Attitudes about Social Reconstruction and Justice in Northern Uganda*. Human Rights Center, University of California, Berkeley.

[52] One exception is Lofa, where 8% of adult Liberians stated that lasting peace was not possible due to deep historical roots. Especially considering the existing conflicts along ethnic divisions in that county (see "Inter-Ethnic Relations" above), this pessimism among this segment of the population underscores the potential for such conflicts to lead to another war.
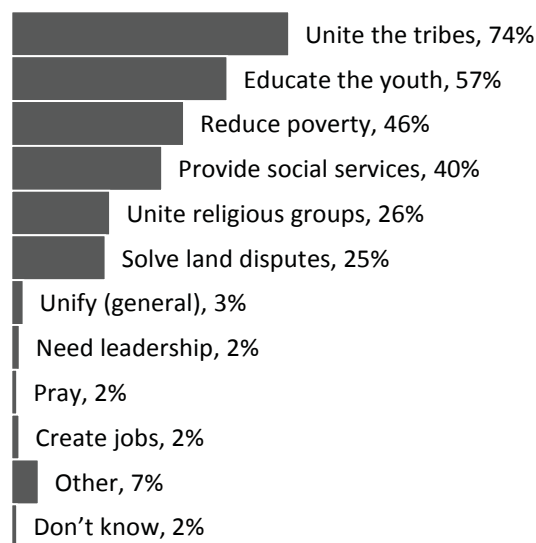
Table 18: Improving Security

	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Change in security – past one year																	
Improved	64%	55%	58%	58%	57%	54%	46%	65%	57%	43%	63%	63%	50%	44%	57%	52%	59%
Same	32%	43%	40%	36%	37%	44%	49%	35%	39%	54%	32%	35%	47%	50%	35%	46%	37%
Worsened	4%	3%	2%	7%	6%	2%	6%	1%	4%	4%	5%	2%	3%	6%	8%	2%	4%
Change in security - future																	
Will improve	90%	73%	79%	74%	80%	80%	68%	81%	74%	70%	81%	80%	66%	64%	81%	71%	78%
Will be the same	10%	25%	21%	24%	19%	18%	27%	19%	25%	27%	16%	18%	33%	32%	16%	27%	20%
Will worsen	0%	1%	0%	3%	2%	2%	6%	0%	1%	3%	3%	2%	1%	4%	4%	2%	2%
How to prevent future violence																	
Educate the youth	46%	61%	59%	65%	48%	42%	43%	58%	65%	41%	56%	65%	41%	36%	45%	42%	56%
Improve police capacity	66%	53%	61%	52%	59%	41%	44%	53%	51%	48%	56%	48%	53%	50%	44%	54%	52%
Reduce poverty	42%	54%	51%	52%	40%	31%	44%	47%	59%	34%	42%	46%	35%	41%	44%	41%	45%
Provide social services	37%	42%	43%	35%	36%	24%	26%	38%	45%	26%	33%	44%	24%	22%	36%	21%	36%
Unite people of Liberia	43%	38%	39%	34%	39%	25%	28%	47%	41%	28%	22%	40%	27%	25%	24%	26%	32%
Unite political leaders	13%	20%	20%	19%	12%	7%	15%	22%	25%	17%	9%	19%	11%	9%	10%	14%	15%
Improve army capacity	23%	19%	21%	18%	15%	9%	3%	14%	18%	9%	12%	14%	4%	6%	10%	5%	13%
Enforce accountability	9%	14%	12%	17%	7%	3%	5%	11%	14%	5%	6%	9%	3%	6%	5%	4%	9%
Find root of conflict	8%	10%	8%	10%	5%	4%	3%	12%	10%	2%	4%	9%	2%	2%	3%	3%	7%
Establish the truth	7%	8%	6%	9%	4%	2%	1%	9%	10%	3%	5%	9%	3%	1%	5%	1%	6%
Strengthen trad'l leaders	8%	10%	9%	9%	3%	6%	5%	11%	8%	6%	1%	9%	5%	3%	4%	4%	6%
Put rebel leaders on trial	5%	5%	3%	3%	4%	1%	0%	4%	1%	0%	3%	3%	1%	1%	1%	1%	3%
Compensate victims	2%	4%	4%	4%	5%	2%	1%	2%	3%	2%	2%	4%	0%	1%	1%	1%	3%
Provide Jobs	0%	2%	0%	0%	2%	4%	1%	2%	2%	1%	3%	1%	2%	1%	1%	3%	2%
Pardon rebel groups	2%	4%	2%	3%	2%	2%	1%	4%	3%	1%	1%	4%	1%	0%	0%	1%	2%
Other	6%	2%	3%	4%	6%	6%	5%	4%	2%	4%	5%	5%	8%	8%	7%	6%	4%

This may reflect the population's uncertainty about how to address the problem, the view that bringing unity and reducing poverty would also address corruption, or that corruption is currently viewed as less prevalent.

The responses also highlight the importance of ethnic divisions on perceptions of peace. Although most respondents viewed their relations with other ethnic groups positively (89% said it was good or very good) and few reported ongoing tensions or disputes based on ethnicity (8%), uniting the tribes of Liberia was the most frequent answer as the measure necessary to ensure peace. The proportion of respondents who identified the need to unite tribes and religious groups was highest in Lofa, Margibi, and Nimba (84%, 80% and 79%, respectively). Lofa and Nimba are among the counties where tensions between ethnic groups were the most often reported.

Figure 15: Measures for a Lasting Peace

Improving Security

While the security situation in Liberia has been described as calm and stable but fragile,[53] the most pressing security concerns identified by respondents were witchcraft and crimes in their communities, including robberies, beatings and other criminal acts. Encouragingly, most respondents saw security improving, or at least not worsening. Half the respondents (59%) reported an improvement in overall security over the one-year period prior to the survey and another 37% said the safety situation had stayed the same. Just 4% reported that the situation had worsened. Almost all respondents believed that safety would continue to improve in the foreseeable future (78%) or stay the same (20%). The respondents were most pessimistic about both past and future improvement in the southeastern part of the country, including Grand Kru, Maryland, River Gee, and Rivercess.

Figure 16: Security
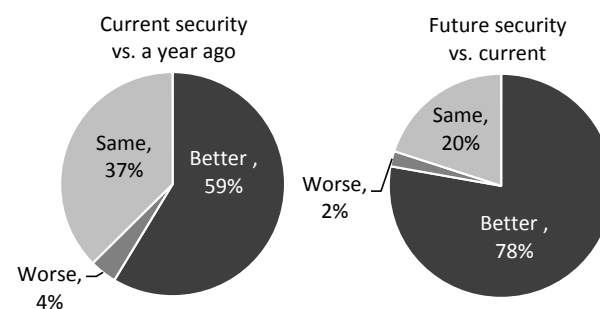
The survey further explored what could be done to improve security and prevent future violence. The responses show a wide range of opinions about both prevention and intervention. The most frequent answers were education and educating the youth (56%), as well as improving the capacity of the police (52%), reducing poverty (45%), providing social services to the community (36%), and uniting the people of Liberia (32%).

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[53] http://www.unmultimedia.org/radio/english/detail/92184.html, accessed 10 June 2011.

Table 19: Security Sector

Who provides Security?	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Nobody	24%	47%	44%	40%	31%	42%	54%	32%	32%	49%	30%	19%	49%	62%	30%	46%	34%
Police	31%	18%	19%	33%	30%	17%	22%	38%	37%	27%	40%	39%	20%	15%	23%	30%	33%
Community watch team	10%	21%	16%	13%	15%	23%	11%	21%	20%	14%	35%	42%	14%	11%	31%	13%	26%
God	24%	26%	21%	22%	14%	12%	16%	22%	20%	11%	15%	14%	9%	13%	17%	12%	17%
Ourselves	14%	16%	18%	14%	13%	19%	17%	14%	12%	14%	14%	13%	15%	16%	18%	16%	15%
Local defense	12%	11%	9%	9%	10%	11%	5%	14%	14%	5%	5%	11%	9%	1%	5%	5%	9%
Traditional leaders	6%	13%	11%	5%	4%	6%	7%	12%	5%	6%	1%	10%	9%	7%	5%	4%	6%
UNMIL/UNPOL	2%	3%	0%	7%	0%	4%	0%	7%	3%	5%	5%	5%	0%	4%	2%	2%	4%
Rubber/private company	8%	0%	0%	3%	7%	1%	0%	0%	10%	0%	0%	4%	0%	0%	9%	1%	2%
Community police/chief	3%	0%	2%	0%	0%	5%	5%	1%	0%	3%	0%	6%	9%	2%	3%	6%	2%
NGOs	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	0%	0%	2%	2%	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Military	1%	0%	1%	1%	2%	0%	0%	1%	2%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%
Other	2%	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%	2%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	3%	1%	1%

Thirteen percent of the respondents suggested that an improved national army would contribute to improved security, though this opinion was more common in the central and western counties than in the southeastern ones. Uniting the people of Liberia was a frequent answer in Lofa County, where tribal violence was identified as undermining safety more frequently than elsewhere.
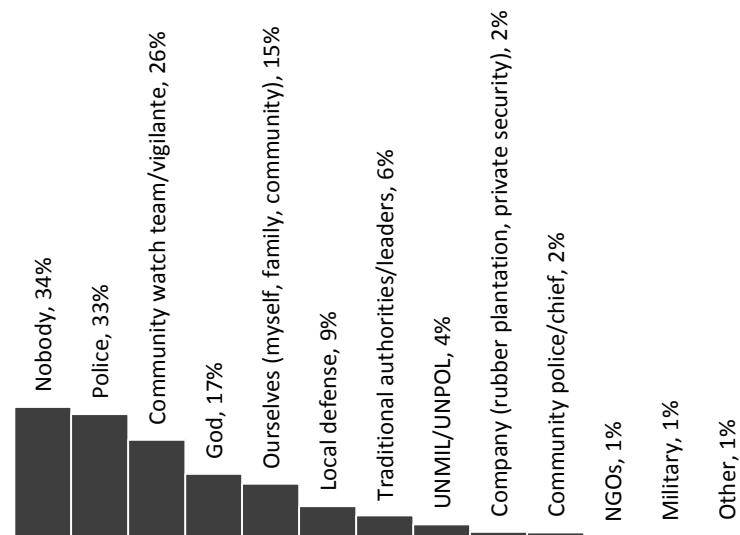
The link between war-related violence and local crimes is uncertain and has not been explored directly in this survey. It is possible that the availability of weapons, broken social ties, Post-Conflict trauma, ongoing divisions, and impunity or lack of accountability for crimes committed during the conflict may create conditions for a high crime rate. On the other hand, crimes may be caused by lack of economic opportunity, or other such factors promoting crime. Further analysis does give some insight into Liberians' perceptions of these links, however. Answers on improving security are consistent with the mechanisms respondents proposed to build a lasting peace, such as educating the youth, reducing poverty, and uniting the people of Liberia, making a link between day-to-day security and overall peace. Just 32% of the respondents mentioned unity as a means to increase security, but 74% mentioned uniting the tribes as a means to build a lasting peace. This suggests that for Liberians, most crimes may not be rooted in ethnic divisions, but rather result from socio-economic factors; indeed respondents emphasized the need for education and reducing poverty to increase security.

The Security Sector

Improving the capacity of the police was the second most frequently cited means to increase security (see above). To understand this recommendation, the survey further explored perceptions of and contact with the police and the security sector in general. Perceptions of the police appeared to be mixed and varied across counties. One in three respondents (34%) stated that nobody provides security in their locality, indicating that they did not feel protected by the police. This response was most frequent in the

southeastern counties, especially in Grand Kru (54%) and Rivercess (62%). However, another third (33%) did mention police protection, and overall police were the most frequently cited source of security. Other formal actors in the security sector were seldom mentioned, including UNMIL or UN Police (4%) and the military (1%). On the other hand, informal actors such as community watch teams (26%), individuals themselves (myself, my family 15%), or local defense groups (9%) were frequently mentioned. Notably, community watch teams were cited as the foremost security provider in Nimba (42%), while the county also had the lowest share of people stating that nobody provides security in their locality. In Bomi, Margibi, and Rural Montserrado, about one respondent in ten mentioned rubber companies as providing security. God was mentioned by 17% of respondents, though in Bong and Gbarpolu Counties God was the most frequently mentioned source of security (21% and 16%, respectively).[54]

Figure 17: Sources of Security

Nobody, 34%
Police, 33%
Community watch team/vigilante, 26%
God, 17%
Ourselves (myself, family, community), 15%
Local defense, 9%
Traditional authorities/leaders, 6%
UNMIL/UNPOL, 4%
Company (rubber plantation, private security), 2%
Community police/chief, 2%
NGOs, 1%
Military, 1%
Other, 1%

[54] In Bong County, only 18% of adult Liberians listed the police as a security provider, after God (26%) and community watch groups (21%).

	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Know how to contact the police (% yes)	78%	56%	62%	77%	74%	67%	66%	68%	75%	67%	85%	75%	63%	58%	78%	65%	74%
Know where the nearest police station is? (% yes)	90%	64%	69%	82%	85%	77%	78%	78%	83%	82%	97%	84%	76%	72%	91%	78%	84%
How far is the nearest police station																	
less than 1h	43%	23%	23%	52%	25%	27%	38%	47%	50%	52%	86%	49%	21%	19%	50%	32%	53%
1 to less than 2 hours	21%	10%	19%	15%	19%	13%	16%	13%	21%	9%	9%	10%	17%	13%	20%	17%	13%
2 to less than 3 hours	14%	9%	10%	8%	21%	17%	12%	7%	6%	10%	1%	7%	18%	15%	13%	9%	8%
3 to less than 5 hours	11%	8%	7%	5%	16%	11%	6%	7%	5%	8%	1%	11%	13%	18%	8%	7%	7%
5h or more	2%	14%	10%	2%	5%	9%	6%	5%	1%	3%	0%	6%	7%	8%	1%	13%	5%
Don't know	10%	36%	31%	18%	15%	23%	22%	22%	17%	18%	4%	16%	25%	28%	9%	22%	16%
Ever asked the police to help you? (% yes)	17%	16%	8%	21%	18%	25%	16%	18%	25%	22%	43%	28%	18%	17%	31%	16%	27%
If yes, ever paid anything to the police? (% yes)	49%	62%	56%	55%	22%	38%	40%	62%	56%	40%	63%	40%	51%	58%	57%	66%	56%
Reasons for paying among those who sought help from the police																	
To file a complaint	19%	29%	28%	16%	7%	22%	18%	21%	16%	21%	40%	18%	20%	26%	32%	32%	29%
For police to investigate	24%	27%	28%	36%	7%	11%	18%	37%	32%	19%	33%	21%	16%	26%	38%	32%	29%
A fine that I had to pay	0%	2%	0%	3%	0%	3%	5%	4%	5%	4%	2%	4%	4%	3%	8%	5%	3%
Transportation fee	5%	13%	0%	5%	7%	8%	5%	6%	10%	6%	5%	7%	16%	8%	6%	11%	6%
Other	5%	2%	0%	2%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	4%	2%	5%	2%	5%	3%

Access to and Contact with the Police

Overall, police were the most frequently cited source of local protection across Liberia, although they were mentioned by just 33% of the population. A majority of the population (74%) reported knowing how to contact the police if needed, and 84% said they would be able to locate the nearest police station, suggesting a wide police presence. In most cases (53%) the police station was located within an hour of walking. Access to the police was worst in the counties of Bong and Rivercess, both in terms of knowing how to access the police and distance to the nearest police station. In addition, over one in ten respondents indicated living at least a five hours' walk away from the nearest police station in Bong (14%), Gbarpolu (10%), and Sinoe (13%). In Bong and Gbarpolu, over 30% of the respondents were unable to estimate the time needed to go to the nearest station, which reflects their lack of contact with the police and the low perception of the police as a security provider in these counties (see above).

According to the survey results, over one in four respondents had asked assistance from the police at some point during their lives. The type of assistance was not assessed. The proportion was highest in Greater Monrovia (43%) and Rural Montserrado (31%), where access to the police was identified generally as easier. Among those who had contact with the police, over half (56%) reported having had to pay something, most frequently for the police to investigate their case (29%) or simply to file their complaint (29%). Payments to police for all or part of their services were most frequent in Sinoe (66%), Greater Monrovia (63%), Bong (62%), and Lofa (62%).

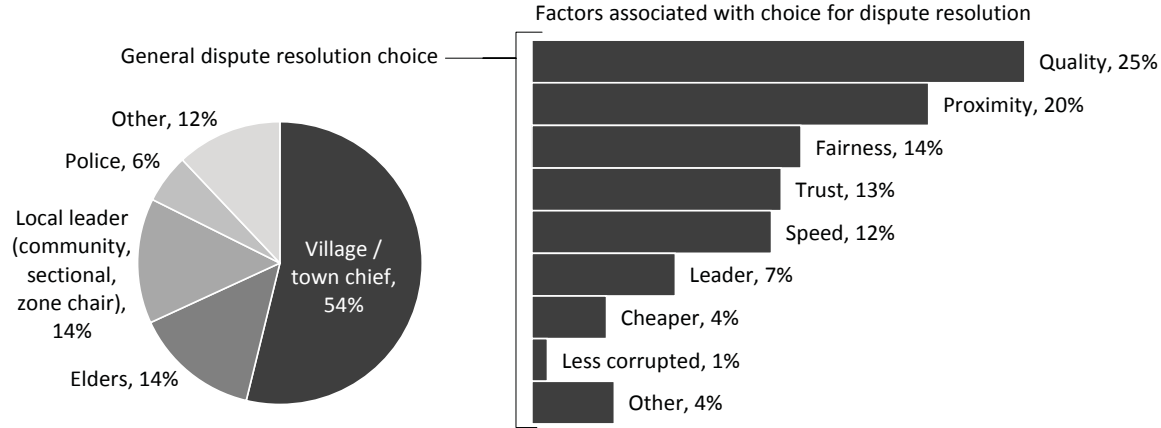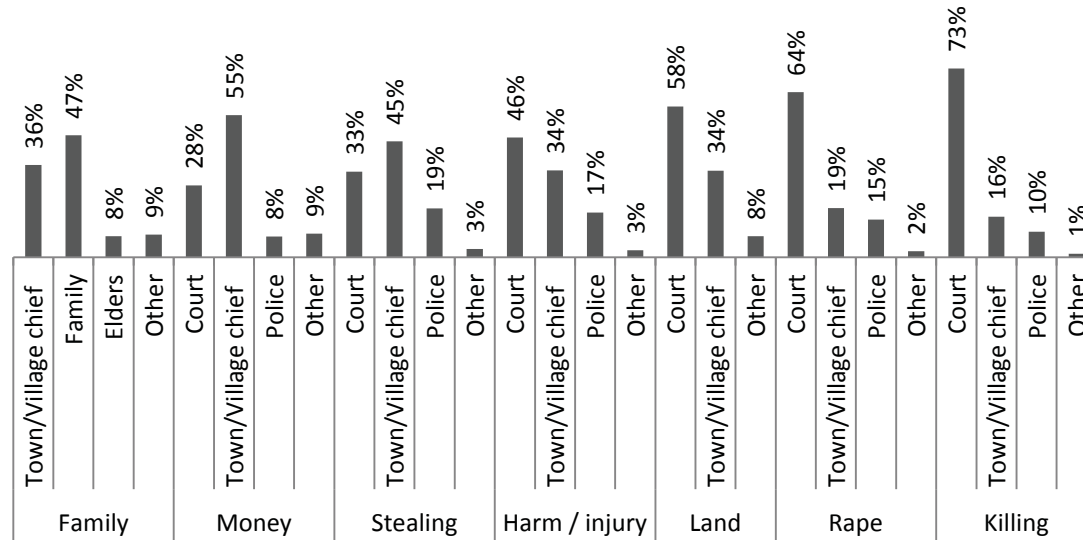*Figure 18: General Dispute Resolution Mechanism*

Factors associated with choice for dispute resolution

General dispute resolution choice

Other, 12%

Police, 6%

Local leader (community, sectional, zone chair), 14%

Elders, 14%

Village / town chief, 54%

Quality, 25%

Proximity, 20%

Fairness, 14%

Trust, 13%

Speed, 12%

Leader, 7%

Cheaper, 4%

Less corrupted, 1%

Other, 4%

Figure 19: Where to Go to Resolve disputes and Crimes

Family	Money	Stealing	Harm / injury	Land	Rape	Killing

Dispute Resolution

General Dispute Resolution Avenues

Given that 23% of people had been in a local dispute since the end of the war and 26% had experienced domestic violence (see "current Safety Threats and Disputes" above), a series of questions sought to determine how people in Liberia typically resolve their disputes. Respondents were first asked to identify whom they would first contact if they had a dispute (known as a *palava* in their community), without reference to the type of dispute. The results suggest that most disputes are resolved locally at the community level. Just over half mentioned they would contact a village or town chief (54%), with some mentioning elders (14%), other local leaders (14%) such as community leaders, and sectional or zone chairs in larger towns. Six percent mentioned the police. Respondents were asked to explain their selection, and the most frequent responses were the quality of the expected outcome (25%) and physical proximity (24%). Other factors informing the decision were identified as fairness (14%), trust (13%), and speed of intervention (12%). Very few respondents (less than 1%) named traditional authorities or spiritual leaders (including Zoes, who sometimes have important roles in village life–especially in Poro communities). As key informant interviews in many villages and towns showed, the choice of the first mediator is usually dependent on the level of dispute (disputing neighbors in a mid-sized town would not immediately turn to a regional district commissioner). The very local choices named for this question thus imply that the vast majority of conflicts are of a very local character. [55]

A more specific series of questions sought to identify dispute resolution methods for particular kinds of disputes. The results show that respondents have markedly different preferences, depending on the dispute. At one end, for domestic disputes, about half said they would resolve the problem within the family (47%), although 36% said they would go to the town or village chief. The town or village chief was the preferred avenue to resolve disputes over money (55%) and theft (45%), and the second preference for land disputes (34%) and harm/injuries (34%). Interestingly, the courts were seen to have an active role in dispute resolution. For money and theft disputes, courts were the second most preferred option (respectively 28% and 33%), and were described as the most appropriate venue to resolve disputes over murder (73%), rape (64%), land (58%), and harm/injuries (46%). The town or village chiefs were rarely seen as appropriate to deal with murder or rape. Although a majority of respondents in almost all counties considered courts as the best place for resolving murder or rape, Greater Monrovia was the administrative area where a majority also stated this for all other dispute categories queried (except family disputes). This suggests that courts have a more significant role in Monrovia compared to the rest of the country, and are at least considered by most respondents there as the ideal way to resolve a potential conflict.

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[55] Further interviews with town chiefs, elders, and other local authorities indicated that dispute resolution is a large part of their responsibility on a daily level, while few issues are being referred onwards outside their town. The exact choice of whom first to approach (chief, elder, community leader, etc.) was said to depend on their personal relationship with the disputant, but also on the gravity of the matter. Although practice often deviates from the rule, the usual chain of events would suggest that the disputant first approaches the lowest authority available to him or her, e.g., an elder from the village, in order to resolve the dispute. He or she would then talk to the chief elder, who in case of an unsuccessful mediation, then approaches the community chairman, who then turns to the town chief, who, if the matter still remains unresolved, would be able to promote the issue with higher governmental authorities or courts. The first level of mediation is also dependent on the location of the two disputing parties: If both are from the same town or village, the matter is usually resolved internally. If the matter is between families of different villages or clans, the authorities involved are immediately of the next higher level, such as the clan chief, paramount chief, or even district commissioner. Courts were said to be considered only when the matter is more of a regional character.

Table 21: Dispute Resolution Mechanisms

		Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
General disputes	Village/town chief	55%	78%	87%	71%	66%	56%	63%	74%	71%	46%	23%	59%	53%	82%	56%	57%	54%
	Sectional chief	0%	2%	0%	3%	1%	1%	8%	8%	4%	12%	5%	3%	2%	0%	5%	3%	4%
	Police	0%	1%	3%	4%	0%	2%	1%	3%	6%	6%	11%	6%	1%	1%	3%	0%	6%
	Elders	18%	11%	7%	3%	14%	20%	8%	6%	10%	6%	23%	17%	17%	7%	13%	6%	14%
	Quarter/zone chair	10%	1%	0%	11%	8%	0%	2%	3%	1%	3%	0%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%
	Community leader	4%	0%	0%	5%	2%	7%	1%	1%	4%	11%	19%	4%	4%	1%	7%	13%	8%
	Other responses	12%	6%	3%	4%	9%	15%	17%	6%	4%	15%	20%	10%	22%	10%	13%	19%	12%
Family	Town/village chief	23%	45%	43%	39%	31%	39%	42%	45%	38%	35%	23%	45%	32%	46%	50%	29%	36%
	Family	52%	43%	40%	43%	44%	42%	46%	41%	46%	53%	56%	41%	56%	44%	39%	55%	47%
	Elders	19%	10%	14%	9%	18%	13%	3%	8%	12%	2%	6%	9%	7%	6%	5%	4%	8%
	Other responses	6%	3%	4%	9%	7%	6%	9%	6%	4%	11%	16%	5%	5%	5%	5%	12%	9%
Money	Court	10%	5%	13%	22%	16%	23%	24%	12%	18%	30%	53%	20%	28%	17%	32%	29%	28%
	Town/village chief	67%	84%	78%	65%	68%	59%	58%	77%	66%	53%	22%	67%	57%	74%	52%	55%	55%
	Police	5%	5%	2%	7%	3%	7%	8%	5%	7%	9%	14%	8%	3%	4%	5%	3%	8%
	Other responses	18%	6%	7%	7%	14%	11%	10%	6%	9%	8%	12%	5%	13%	5%	11%	13%	9%
Theft	Court	21%	10%	19%	31%	26%	22%	24%	17%	30%	33%	55%	27%	32%	25%	40%	33%	33%
	Town/village chief	56%	79%	73%	53%	57%	54%	54%	67%	51%	44%	12%	51%	48%	64%	42%	50%	45%
	Police	17%	10%	7%	12%	10%	20%	19%	14%	14%	19%	31%	19%	15%	8%	14%	14%	19%
	Other responses	5%	2%	1%	4%	7%	5%	3%	2%	5%	4%	2%	2%	6%	3%	4%	3%	3%
Harm/injury	Court	48%	29%	34%	44%	43%	28%	35%	31%	44%	47%	65%	42%	37%	42%	53%	38%	46%
	Town/village chief	30%	60%	54%	40%	36%	45%	42%	55%	38%	33%	9%	39%	44%	45%	27%	39%	34%
	Police	17%	10%	11%	12%	17%	21%	19%	13%	16%	16%	24%	18%	13%	7%	19%	20%	17%
	Other responses	5%	1%	1%	4%	5%	6%	4%	1%	2%	4%	3%	1%	5%	6%	2%	3%	3%
Land	Court	63%	31%	36%	56%	57%	47%	48%	37%	56%	57%	84%	48%	46%	52%	64%	63%	58%
	Town/village chief	27%	59%	58%	35%	35%	43%	39%	56%	38%	34%	11%	40%	42%	40%	28%	30%	34%
	Other responses	9%	10%	6%	9%	8%	10%	13%	8%	6%	8%	6%	12%	11%	8%	8%	8%	8%
Rape	Court	78%	44%	54%	61%	76%	53%	61%	45%	55%	63%	81%	54%	56%	69%	76%	69%	64%
	Town/village chief	8%	38%	38%	26%	10%	26%	21%	32%	26%	20%	4%	24%	23%	13%	12%	12%	19%
	Police	13%	15%	6%	12%	12%	17%	12%	19%	17%	13%	14%	19%	15%	14%	10%	14%	15%
	Other responses	1%	3%	1%	1%	2%	4%	6%	3%	2%	4%	1%	4%	7%	5%	1%	5%	2%
Murder	Court	80%	56%	59%	69%	80%	67%	73%	57%	65%	73%	89%	65%	67%	75%	82%	79%	73%
	Town/village chief	6%	31%	34%	23%	6%	19%	16%	27%	24%	16%	3%	22%	19%	11%	10%	9%	16%
	Police	13%	10%	5%	8%	14%	12%	8%	13%	10%	10%	8%	12%	9%	10%	8%	9%	10%
	Other responses	0%	4%	2%	0%	0%	2%	3%	3%	0%	1%	0%	1%	4%	5%	1%	3%	1%

Experience of Dispute Resolution

Questions about dispute resolution described above were hypothetical. However, respondents were also asked to share their own experience of disputes during and after the war, and the resolution methods they had chosen. For each of the disputes, respondents were asked whom, if anyone, or what institution they had consulted, and what the outcome had been.

The results confirm the prominent role of village and town chiefs in resolving land-related disputes: 39% of those who had experienced land-grabbing since the war had consulted village or town chiefs to resolve the dispute. Among those who experienced disputes over land boundaries or land inheritance dispute, the proportions were 24% and 32%, respectively. Although respondents had answered to the hypothetical question that courts should resolve disputes over land, their own experiences suggested that courts were seldom used, with just 14% of those who experienced disputes over land boundaries having used the magistrate or circuit court. Inversely, elders, who were seldom mentioned as a resolution mechanism in hypothetical cases, were more frequently mentioned in practice (22% turned

to elders among those who experienced land-grabbing since the end of the war).

Personal experiences also suggest very different approaches to dispute resolution for non-land disputes than were given in the hypothetical responses. The respondents reported that they most frequently brought their case to the other party and negotiated directly (38%) or to traditional leaders (16%) and sectional chiefs (14%) for mediation. A number of respondents mentioned other individuals or institutions (34%), including their family.

The results on outcome of disputes experienced show also that land disputes are on average more difficult to resolve. While over four out of five non-land disputes experienced since the war had been resolved (83%), just half the farm land-grabbing cases had been solved (53%), and about two-thirds of land disputes over boundaries or inheritance had been resolved (respectively 64% and 66% of the disputes). In addition, the resolution of land disputes more frequently required some sort of payment compared to non-land issues. However, once resolved, land disputes tended to have a more satifying outcome than non-land disputes.

Table 22: Dispute Resolution Used by Respondents

Post-war dispute and resolution mechanism used	Nobody	Village/town chief	Elders	Paramount chief	Sectional chief	Magistrate court	Circuit court	Other party	Traditional authorities	Land commissioner	Police	Other	Had to pay (%)	Resolved (%)	If resolved, satisfied with resolution (%)
Farm land-grabbing	23%	39%	22%	17%	9%	9%	4%	7%	6%	3%	2%	17%	32%	53%	93%
Land boundary	9%	24%	16%	7%	5%	11%	14%	8%	3%	9%	6%	29%	47%	64%	91%
Land inheritance	9%	32%	19%	9%	5%	9%	10%	6%	6%	5%	5%	28%	41%	66%	94%
Non-land dispute	8%	1%	0%	3%	14%	2%	1%	38%	16%	0%	6%	34%	28%	84%	83%

Table 23: Knowledge and Access to Courts

|	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Knowledge of formal court system																	
None	55%	55%	53%	43%	57%	62%	70%	56%	38%	60%	40%	52%	68%	65%	46%	61%	50%
Little	41%	38%	40%	42%	39%	32%	25%	37%	47%	33%	46%	41%	28%	31%	43%	34%	41%
Average	3%	6%	7%	11%	3%	2%	3%	5%	12%	2%	7%	4%	2%	1%	6%	3%	6%
Good	2%	1%	0%	4%	1%	4%	1%	2%	3%	5%	5%	2%	2%	3%	4%	2%	3%
Very good	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	2%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Access to formal court system																	
Very easy	29%	20%	31%	34%	30%	22%	30%	24%	26%	35%	29%	28%	25%	25%	35%	30%	28%
Easy	3%	4%	5%	6%	1%	4%	4%	2%	2%	4%	3%	5%	3%	4%	4%	3%	4%
Average	9%	5%	5%	9%	6%	7%	9%	4%	9%	6%	10%	4%	3%	11%	4%	8%	7%
Not easy	49%	47%	47%	35%	51%	51%	42%	44%	46%	40%	47%	40%	49%	47%	44%	46%	45%
Not easy at all	10%	24%	14%	16%	12%	17%	15%	26%	16%	15%	11%	23%	20%	13%	13%	12%	16%
Know how to contact formal court (% yes)	52%	45%	57%	63%	50%	45%	48%	50%	62%	50%	54%	53%	47%	49%	57%	49%	53%
Know where the nearest formal court is (% yes)	70%	49%	64%	70%	63%	60%	64%	59%	69%	68%	66%	61%	63%	63%	69%	65%	63%
Access to town/village chief for dispute resolution																	
Very easy	90%	90%	92%	82%	88%	85%	85%	86%	82%	80%	60%	85%	85%	85%	87%	80%	78%
Easy	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	3%	0%	1%	3%	2%	1%	0%	1%	0%	3%	1%
Average	5%	1%	4%	7%	4%	4%	2%	4%	6%	2%	7%	2%	2%	8%	2%	5%	5%
Not easy	5%	8%	4%	8%	8%	6%	6%	9%	11%	6%	23%	12%	8%	3%	8%	6%	12%
Not easy at all	0%	0%	0%	2%	0%	3%	5%	1%	0%	9%	8%	1%	5%	2%	3%	6%	4%
Know how to contact village chief's court (% yes)	97%	93%	90%	88%	97%	87%	87%	91%	87%	78%	61%	87%	84%	88%	86%	86%	81%
Know where the nearest village chief's court is (% yes)	99%	93%	91%	88%	99%	89%	91%	92%	88%	81%	61%	87%	87%	93%	84%	90%	82%

The Court System

Access

The results on the resolution of hypothetical disputes suggest that the population of Liberia is familiar with the court system. A majority mentioned courts to address cases of murder, rape, land disputes, and injuries. However, in practice only a minority of respondents sought to resolve disputes in the courts. Of the land-grabbing cases since the end of the war, only 9% and 4% were taken to magistrate and circuit courts, respectively, compared to 39% brought to village chiefs, 22% to elders, and 23% to no one.

Several questions were designed to examine further community access to and perceptions of the formal court system. Most respondents recognized having no (50%) or little (41%) knowledge of the formal court system.

Figure 20: Knowledge of court system
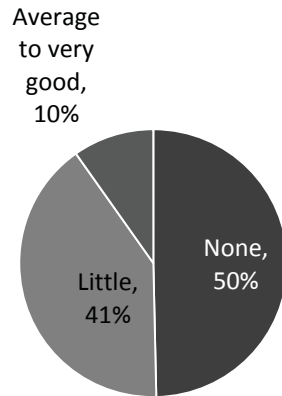
Just 28% described their access to the court system as easy, while 45% described it as not easy, and 16% said it was not easy at all. Consistent with these figures, just 63% of the population indicated knowing where to access

the courts, while 53% declared knowing how to do so. In contrast, a majority of the population knew how to access their village or town chief courts and dispute resolution mechanisms: over 80% knew where and how to access these systems, and 78% reported access as easy. Interestingly, perceptions of access did not differ greatly across counties. In particular, respondents in the urban setting of Greater Monrovia did not report significantly better knowledge of or access to the formal court system than other respondents, although a majority named courts as the best place to resolve almost all hypothetical kinds of conflict (see "General Dispute Resolution Avenues" above).

Figure 21: Access to formal court system and chiefs' court
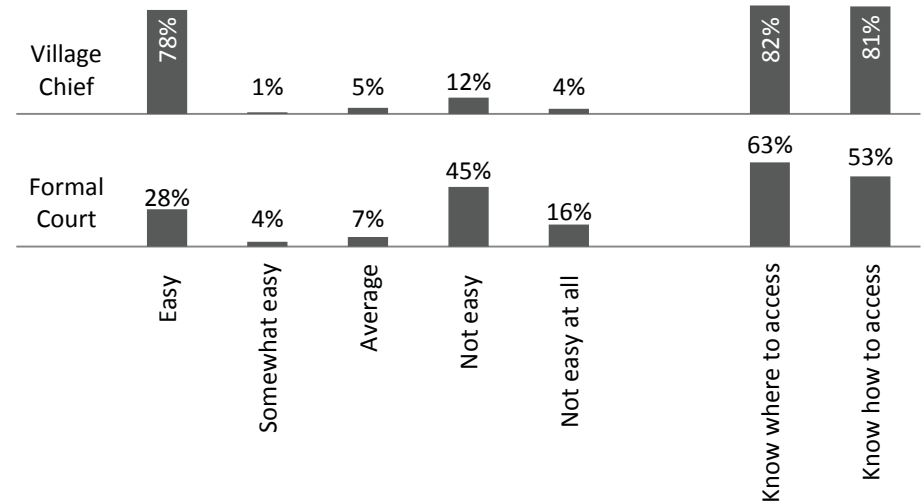
Table 24: Knowledge and Perception of the Court System

	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Knowledge (% yes)																	
Can a woman inherit property according to Liberian formal law?	84%	85%	86%	88%	78%	88%	85%	84%	92%	85%	89%	89%	83%	87%	91%	87%	87%
Does Liberian formal law say that it is okay to do trial by sassywood?	17%	11%	16%	12%	17%	22%	18%	10%	7%	18%	11%	21%	18%	16%	11%	16%	14%
According to Liberian formal law, do you need to pay a fee to report a case to the police?	15%	17%	19%	19%	17%	22%	26%	21%	18%	28%	17%	22%	26%	30%	21%	18%	20%
According to Liberian formal law, do you need to pay a fee to have a criminal case heard by a judge?	22%	26%	26%	27%	23%	22%	32%	26%	28%	26%	24%	28%	26%	35%	25%	17%	26%
According to Liberian formal law, does a man have to support his out-of-wedlock child?	86%	92%	87%	92%	87%	85%	87%	91%	90%	92%	86%	88%	84%	85%	86%	86%	88%
According to Liberian formal law, if a man forces his wife/woman to have sex is that rape?	87%	82%	71%	81%	85%	91%	84%	76%	79%	84%	90%	82%	87%	87%	83%	94%	84%
According to Liberian formal law, is beating one's wife/woman a crime?	86%	83%	76%	82%	76%	87%	84%	77%	79%	81%	88%	81%	80%	85%	83%	92%	83%
Perception (% agree)																	
Liberian judges treat everyone equally	49%	27%	45%	35%	41%	34%	30%	29%	27%	26%	23%	25%	31%	32%	28%	29%	28%
Judgments are the same for everyone	40%	21%	35%	27%	39%	29%	23%	24%	23%	18%	17%	22%	21%	25%	25%	21%	23%
Going to court is too expensive	83%	69%	70%	68%	83%	77%	73%	71%	76%	72%	78%	76%	79%	80%	81%	71%	75%
You trust the Liberian court system	58%	32%	50%	41%	67%	39%	35%	39%	38%	34%	32%	28%	39%	41%	34%	40%	36%
You trust the Liberian judges	58%	25%	48%	35%	63%	33%	32%	32%	32%	28%	27%	24%	33%	35%	33%	36%	31%
Going to court means you have to bribe the judges	40%	40%	37%	40%	34%	39%	47%	41%	48%	52%	48%	39%	40%	48%	54%	46%	44%
Liberian lawyers are able to do their work freely	52%	23%	45%	35%	51%	31%	28%	30%	28%	28%	29%	25%	31%	27%	31%	28%	30%

Despite limited knowledge of the formal court system among many Liberians, respondents showed a good knowledge of the law. The survey asked the selected adult Liberians a series of questions about Liberian law. Most respondents stated correctly that under Liberian law a woman has the right to become owner of her husband's or family member's properties after his death (87%), that a man must support his out of wedlock child (88%), that forcing one's wife to have sex is a form of rape (84%), and that domestic violence against one's wife is a crime (83%). Inversely, only a minority stated, incorrectly, that Liberian law supports trial through *sassywood* (14%),[56] or that a payment is needed to bring a case to the police (16%) or to the formal court (20%).[57]

A similar series of propositions was used to assess Liberians' perceptions of the formal court system. Overall, the results reveal that perceptions are quite negative. Most agreed with the claim that "going to court is too expensive" (75%), and just a minority agreed that "judgments are the same for everyone" (23%), or that "judges treat everyone equally" (28%). The results suggest an overall lack of trust in judges, and more broadly in the justice system. On average, knowledge and perception of the court system showed little difference across counties.

Figure 22 : Knowledge and Perception of Justice and Rule of Law

Knowledge (% yes)

Can a woman inherit property according to Liberian formal law?	87%
Does Liberian formal law say that it is okay to do trial by sassywood?	14%
According to Liberian formal law, do you need to pay a fee to report a case to the police?	20%
According to Liberian formal law, do you need to pay a fee to have a criminal case heard by a judge?	26%
According to Liberian formal law, does a man have to support his out-of-wedlock child?	88%
According to Liberian formal law, if a man forces his wife/woman to have sex is that rape?	84%
According to Liberian formal law, is beating one's wife/woman a crime?	83%

Perception (% agree)

Liberian judges treat everyone equally	28%
Judgments are the same for everyone	23%
Going to court is too expensive	75%
You trust the Liberian court system	36%
You trust the Liberian judges	31%
Going to court means you have to bribe the judges	44%
Liberian lawyers are able to do their work freely	30%

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[56] The term "sassywood" is used to describe a "trial by ordeal" process to settle cases of theft of property, death or witchcraft/sorcery. The methods include having the alleged perpetrator drink a mixture or brew made from indigenous plants, which, if regurgitated, shows innocence, or putting the alleged perpetrator in contact with red hot metal, with a burn or retraction indicating guilt. See Ezekiel Pajibo, *Traditional Justice Mechanisms: The Liberian Case, International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance,*- IIDEA(2008).

[57] Although most respondents know that paying to file a complaint to the police is not appropriate, over half of those who had such a case did pay. See "Access to and Contact with the Police."

Table 25: Measures for Victims

	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
What should be done for victims?																	
Financial compensation	78%	65%	61%	72%	72%	56%	63%	71%	67%	62%	63%	64%	58%	55%	56%	66%	65%
Provide housing	74%	46%	47%	47%	69%	48%	53%	40%	47%	52%	39%	39%	52%	65%	29%	68%	45%
Education for their children	50%	51%	47%	55%	48%	39%	38%	51%	57%	44%	37%	49%	39%	37%	37%	39%	45%
Apologies	9%	43%	35%	41%	6%	22%	21%	49%	45%	20%	25%	41%	23%	17%	21%	20%	31%
Reconciliation	19%	38%	32%	39%	16%	15%	10%	43%	47%	15%	28%	40%	16%	13%	26%	9%	31%
Counseling	38%	30%	29%	24%	30%	13%	15%	21%	26%	17%	37%	31%	16%	12%	36%	16%	29%
Food	33%	27%	26%	21%	32%	19%	27%	28%	30%	22%	17%	23%	26%	26%	23%	25%	23%
Punishment of the perpetrators	9%	6%	6%	8%	9%	10%	6%	5%	9%	11%	12%	9%	9%	6%	7%	3%	9%
Trial and sentencing	5%	12%	11%	14%	0%	6%	1%	16%	15%	3%	7%	8%	5%	4%	6%	2%	8%
Provide cattle, goats	8%	15%	9%	12%	7%	3%	6%	11%	13%	6%	3%	12%	5%	6%	2%	6%	8%
Provide jobs/employment	4%	0%	2%	0%	4%	4%	3%	0%	2%	3%	4%	1%	3%	3%	4%	9%	3%
Other responses	10%	3%	1%	1%	4%	7%	9%	3%	2%	5%	3%	3%	9%	9%	6%	3%	4%
Nothing	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%	2%	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Acceptable measures																	
Accept symbolic measures only (% yes)	76%	59%	77%	67%	71%	51%	56%	71%	72%	54%	62%	63%	58%	55%	71%	57%	64%
Accept community-level measures only (% yes)	88%	71%	87%	78%	83%	77%	77%	77%	78%	72%	71%	63%	77%	79%	70%	77%	73%
Accept no measures for victims (% yes)	6%	14%	14%	14%	8%	19%	20%	13%	12%	15%	25%	17%	21%	24%	29%	15%	18%
Measures for whom?																	
One-one (Individual)	9%	21%	11%	24%	12%	11%	8%	17%	19%	10%	22%	21%	9%	4%	21%	4%	18%
Community	17%	25%	25%	29%	17%	24%	28%	32%	30%	34%	27%	25%	26%	33%	30%	32%	27%
Both	74%	54%	64%	47%	71%	65%	64%	51%	51%	56%	51%	54%	66%	64%	49%	64%	55%

War to Peace Transition: Addressing the Needs of Survivors

While much of this report has examined perception of security in a broad sense, the following section presents perceptions specifically about the transition from war to peace. The Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) that marked the end of the civil war in 2003 called for the establishment of mechanisms that would contribute to peace and facilitate healing and reconciliation among Liberians. Several transition processes resulted from the CPA, including the 2005 elections, security sector reform, and the establishment of a Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) (see "Background"). At the same time, Liberian leader Charles Taylor, who resigned upon the signing of the CPA, is on trial at the Special Court for Sierra Leone, facing charges of war crimes committed in that country.

Measures for Victims

Measures for Victims

The assessment of Liberians' priorities provided information about their own personal priorities as well as which priorities they believed the government should address (see "Priorities and Service"). Additional questions were asked to assess their views on measures for victims of the civil wars. The responses reflected the population's overall priorities for better services and livelihood support. Most frequently they included financial compensation (65%), housing (45%), and education (45%). However, several responses also reflected the wider need for unity and reconciliation that respondents had also emphasized as means to build a lasting peace (see "Rebuilding a Peaceful and Secure Environment"). Both receiving apologies and reconciliation were mentioned as necessary for victims by a third (31%) of respondents. Only a small proportion believed victims saw a need for trials and punishment of perpetrators of the violence

as a means to help victims. The strong emphasis on extending improved social services and livelihood support to help victims – mirroring respondents' own priorities – may be a reflection of the fact that the vast majority of Liberians (78%) consider themselves victims as a result of the war. Although most measures mentioned were for individual compensation, a majority of respondents (73%) was also willing to accept community-level measures only, or even symbolic measures only (64%). Just 18% would accept that no measures be taken in favor of survivors. Given the choice, over half the respondents (55%) would favor measures that are directed at both individuals and the community, while 18% favored measures for individuals only, and 27% believed that only communities as a whole should be compensated.

Figure 23: Measures for Victims

Financial compensation, 65%
Provide housing, 45%
Education for their children, 45%
Apologies, 31%
Reconciliation, 31%
Counseling, 29%
Food, 23%
Punishment of the perpetrators, 9%
Trial and sentencing, 8%
Provide cattle, goats, 8%
Provide jobs/employment, 3%
Other, 4%
Nothing, 1%
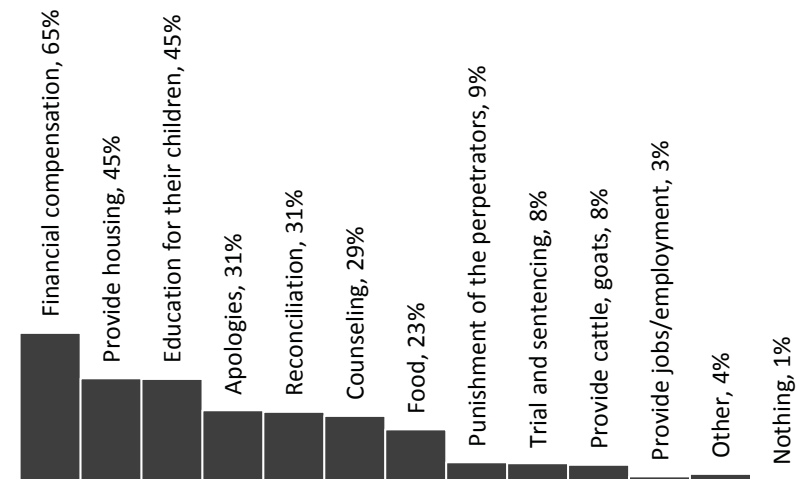
Table 26: Measures for Perpetrators

	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Measures for those responsible for the violence during the war																	
Forgive them	51%	63%	63%	55%	59%	47%	54%	60%	60%	54%	45%	64%	53%	47%	49%	57%	54%
Face trial	32%	21%	21%	29%	27%	29%	25%	28%	28%	26%	31%	20%	27%	31%	29%	30%	27%
Punish them	13%	11%	13%	10%	13%	13%	12%	10%	9%	11%	19%	12%	9%	12%	15%	7%	13%
Kill them	3%	3%	2%	3%	1%	4%	6%	2%	2%	5%	3%	2%	4%	8%	5%	3%	3%
Other responses	2%	3%	1%	3%	0%	7%	3%	0%	1%	4%	3%	3%	8%	3%	3%	3%	3%
Possible to have peace without trials? (% Yes)	45%	60%	61%	51%	47%	45%	43%	57%	56%	45%	50%	64%	46%	48%	43%	46%	53%

Table 27: Charles Taylor trial

	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Heard of Charles Taylor's trial? (% Yes)	91%	91%	90%	92%	90%	87%	81%	88%	92%	84%	97%	91%	90%	79%	94%	85%	92%
Where is the trial?																	
The Hague, Netherlands	79%	78%	81%	86%	72%	58%	53%	78%	91%	55%	88%	84%	51%	61%	88%	61%	80%
In Sierra Leone	8%	8%	6%	6%	7%	9%	9%	5%	4%	6%	3%	5%	8%	5%	4%	8%	5%
Other responses	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	8%	7%	1%	0%	7%	1%	1%	8%	7%	1%	4%	2%
Don't know	13%	13%	14%	7%	20%	25%	31%	16%	6%	32%	8%	11%	32%	28%	7%	28%	13%
Why is Taylor on trial?																	
For the violence he committed in Sierra Leone	42%	49%	51%	56%	45%	38%	23%	53%	64%	37%	70%	60%	28%	29%	64%	34%	56%
For the violence he committed in Liberia	39%	24%	30%	27%	35%	31%	39%	20%	14%	27%	16%	17%	41%	30%	19%	35%	22%
For the violence he committed in the Region	4%	4%	1%	2%	3%	3%	1%	4%	4%	1%	3%	3%	2%	2%	2%	1%	3%
For embezzlement and corruption	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%
For escaping prison in the United States	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%
Other responses	0%	1%	1%	0%	3%	8%	7%	1%	0%	3%	2%	2%	5%	3%	3%	5%	2%
Don't know	6%	12%	8%	7%	5%	8%	11%	9%	8%	16%	7%	10%	12%	15%	6%	11%	9%

Measures concerning Perpetrators

Holding trials to punish perpetrators of violence was proposed by less than 10% of the respondents as an acceptable measure to address the needs of victims. To examine the matter of accountability further, the survey asked respondents what, if anything, should be done with those responsible for the violence. The responses were nearly evenly divided between individuals who said they should be forgiven (54%) and individuals who proposed a punitive approach (47%), including trials (27%), punishment (13%), and execution (3%).

Figure 24: What should be done with those responsible for violence during the wars?
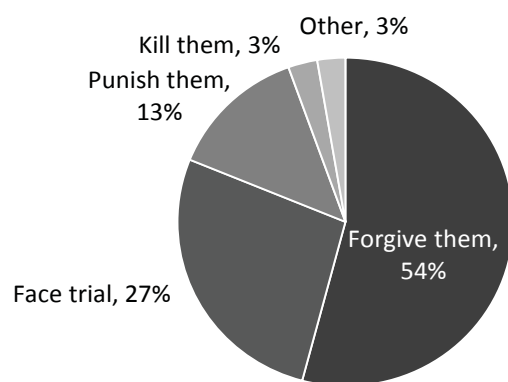
Support for amnesty was least frequent in Greater Monrovia, Rivercess, Grand Gedeh, and Rural Montserrado, where less than half the population mentioned forgiveness. Conversely, punitive approaches were mentioned by only one in three respondents in Nimba, Bong, and Gbarpolu. The former group of counties has seen some of the worst excesses in fighting at various stages during the two civil wars, possibly explaining a larger need of the population to expect prosecution. In Bomi, where some of the worst fighting occurred during the last years of the second civil war, 51% supported forgiveness, but it is also the county with the highest share of its population demanding trials (32%). Over half the respondents further said that, in their opinion, peace without trials was possible (53%).

Charles Taylor's Trial

To examine accountability in respect to specific perpetrators, the survey also asked about the trial of former President Charles Taylor. Taylor is in the process of being prosecuted for crimes committed in Sierra Leone (not for crimes he committed in Liberia, see "Background"). The results suggest that most people in Liberia were aware of Taylor's trial and knew something about it. Nine out of ten respondents (92%) had heard of the trial and most knew he was being tried in The Hague, Netherlands (80%), for crimes committed in Sierra Leone (56%). About one in five respondents (22%), however, believed he was charged with crimes committed in Liberia.

Truth and the TRC

As documented elsewhere, survivors of conflicts and mass violence often emphasize the need for truth and understanding what happened and why. The results of the survey suggest this is no different in Liberia. Overall, 76% of the population believed truth to be important, most frequently as a means to let history be known. Among the 24% who did not place particular emphasis on establishing the truth, most said it would bring bad memories (11%) or that it was better to forget (7%). Although most respondents value the truth, and despite the work of the TRC, just 44% believed that the truth about the civil wars is known.

The Truth and Reconciliation Commission has been the primary truth-seeking institution in Liberia since the conflicts. Nearly three out of four Liberians (73%) had heard of the TRC, a large number but considerably less than the proportion who had heard of Charles Taylor's trial (92%).

Table 28: Truth and the TRC

	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
Truth is important (% yes)	88%	74%	69%	73%	80%	71%	56%	76%	73%	56%	87%	69%	61%	65%	90%	63%	76%
Is truth about what happened in the war known now (% yes)	38%	40%	48%	43%	34%	47%	25%	42%	45%	31%	49%	46%	34%	39%	52%	36%	44%
Heard about the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Liberia (% yes)	73%	62%	66%	71%	69%	58%	51%	65%	79%	52%	90%	71%	50%	51%	82%	54%	73%
Knowledge about the TRC?																	
None	52%	51%	55%	47%	56%	64%	67%	54%	38%	63%	27%	49%	73%	69%	37%	65%	45%
Little	43%	44%	38%	43%	41%	31%	30%	40%	50%	32%	60%	44%	23%	26%	57%	31%	46%
Average or higher	5%	5%	7%	10%	3%	6%	4%	6%	12%	5%	14%	7%	4%	5%	6%	4%	8%
Heard about the TRC recommendations?	36%	40%	32%	42%	35%	21%	14%	33%	49%	21%	58%	37%	18%	19%	50%	19%	42%
What are the TRC recommendations?																	
No response	36%	40%	32%	42%	35%	21%	14%	33%	49%	21%	58%	37%	18%	19%	50%	19%	32%
Prosecutions	24%	30%	22%	31%	27%	13%	9%	25%	38%	16%	44%	29%	15%	16%	37%	12%	31%
Reparations for victims	2%	14%	9%	16%	2%	3%	2%	11%	12%	2%	13%	10%	3%	2%	4%	2%	10%
Lustration	17%	28%	24%	34%	21%	6%	7%	25%	35%	9%	34%	27%	8%	10%	28%	10%	26%
Memorialization	2%	7%	4%	6%	0%	1%	0%	6%	6%	0%	3%	3%	0%	1%	1%	1%	3%
Amnesty for some	4%	13%	8%	11%	3%	2%	2%	9%	16%	4%	13%	7%	1%	7%	11%	4%	10%
National *palava* discussion	8%	11%	7%	8%	7%	2%	3%	8%	12%	3%	9%	8%	2%	4%	8%	4%	8%
Other responses	5%	1%	1%	0%	2%	4%	1%	0%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	3%	2%
Should the TRC recommendations be implemented? (% yes)	70%	73%	61%	72%	67%	81%	77%	73%	62%	80%	58%	56%	75%	88%	56%	67%	62%
TRC helped peace (% yes)	56%	35%	41%	38%	49%	29%	21%	35%	39%	24%	48%	31%	24%	26%	53%	23%	39%
TRC helped unity (% yes)	54%	36%	40%	37%	50%	29%	21%	35%	39%	25%	45%	32%	25%	24%	50%	22%	38%

Radio was by far the most frequent source of information about the TRC (82%), followed by family, friends or neighbors (10%). The results suggest the TRC has had differing degrees of impact in different parts of the country, however. In the southeastern counties of Grand Kru, Maryland, River Gee, Rivercess, and Sinoe, only between 50% and 54% of the population had heard of the TRC. In Grand Kru and River Gee, radio was less frequently the main source of information compared to other counties, but within those counties it was still the most frequent source (52% in Grand Kru, and 55% in River Gee received information about the TRC from the radio).

Even though respondents reported relatively high awareness of the TRC's existence, almost all knew very little about it. Many reported no (45%) or little (46%) knowledge of the TRC. The results are comparable to the level of awareness about the formal court system. The data further showed few differences across counties.

Figure 25: Source of Information on the TRC
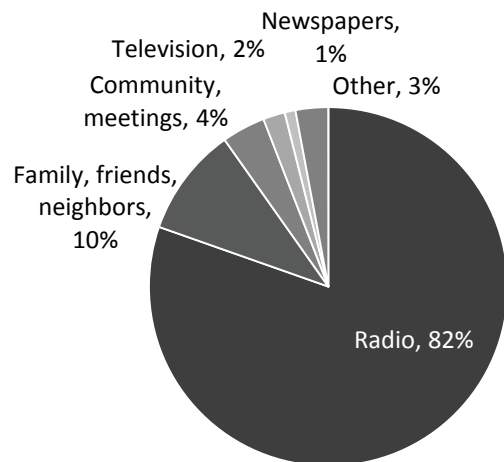
Figure 26: Knowledge of the TRC
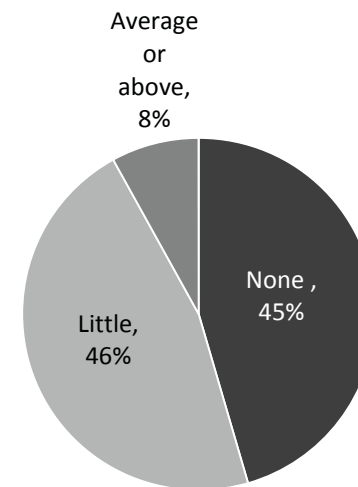
The level of information about the TRC is further reflected in respondents' awareness of the commission's recommendations. About one in three respondents (32%) were incapable of recalling any recommendation, while 31% said the commission recommended prosecution, and 26% mentioned a program to remove from office perpetrators of serious crimes. A smaller proportion of individuals could name reparations (10%), amnesty for certain individuals (10%), a national dispute resolution process (8%), and memorialization (3%) as other possible recommendations. All of the above were included in the TRC recommendations.

Although a majority of the respondents believed the recommendations should be implemented (62%), they were generally pessimistic that it would ever happen: 45% said this would not happen and 31% believed the recommendations would be only partially implemented. Finally, a third of respondents believed the TRC had contributed to peace (39%) and unity (38%).

Table 29: Elections

	Bomi	Bong	Gbarpolu	Grand Bassa	Grand Cape Mount	Grand Gedeh	Grand Kru	Lofa	Margibi	Maryland	Greater Monrovia	Nimba	River Gee	Rivercess	Rural Montserrado	Sinoe	TOTAL
2005 Voting Status																	
Did not vote	16%	18%	17%	16%	19%	23%	24%	26%	17%	25%	27%	15%	19%	19%	27%	15%	21%
Voted first round only	17%	12%	12%	6%	19%	11%	8%	4%	6%	6%	10%	8%	10%	9%	15%	11%	10%
Voted second round only	2%	1%	2%	0%	1%	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%	1%	4%	1%	2%	3%	2%	2%
Voted both rounds	65%	69%	69%	78%	61%	63%	67%	67%	75%	66%	61%	74%	69%	70%	56%	72%	67%
Plan to vote 2011 (% yes)	96%	97%	93%	97%	97%	96%	94%	98%	94%	92%	91%	98%	92%	94%	91%	95%	95%
Vote is important (%)	98%	97%	95%	98%	98%	97%	95%	99%	96%	95%	97%	99%	95%	94%	96%	94%	97%

Figure 27: 2011 Voting Intentions

Why not important?
- Other
- Vote will not be counted (4%)
- I do not get involved in politics (18%)
- Too much corruption (18%)
- Does not make a difference (23%)
- The election is unfair (32%)

Plan to participate in 2011 elections
Will not vote (5%)
Will vote (95%)

Your vote is…
Not important (3%)
Important (97%)

Why important?
- Other (2%)
- For peace (1%)
- To select leader (1%)
- Only way to contribute (17%)
- It is my duty (27%)
- Every vote counts (53%)

Elections

In 2005, the election of Ellen Johnson Sirleaf marked the end of a two-year political transition. New elections are scheduled in 2011. Voter turnout for the election was high. The survey shows that 77% of the respondents voted in the first round of the election, while a slightly lower, but still large, proportion voted in the second round (69%). These results are consistent with election monitoring reports suggesting participation rates of 75% and 60% for the first and second rounds, respectively.[58] Those who did not vote in either round generally mentioned being on travel or being too young/ineligible as the reason for not voting. The reported participation rates were lowest in Lofa, Greater Monrovia, and Rural Montserrado, where more than one in four respondents did not vote in the first round.

Similar high rates of participation are expected for the 2011 elections, with 95% of the respondents indicating that they plan to vote. Most of them believed their vote to be important. The main reasons for not planning to vote were a general lack of interest (41%) and the perception that it would not matter. Those who said their vote was not important generally perceived elections as unfair, corrupt, or not making any difference.[59]

The fact that most Liberians plan to participate in the elections is positive and confirms the trend observed in 2005. Nevertheless, perception of bias in the election process may affect participation. Looking at the 2005 election, less than half the population (47%) believed the elections were completely free of electoral fraud, while 32% believed there was some or a lot of

electoral fraud, and 20% were unsure. Negative perception of the 2005 election was most common in the southern counties of Grand Gedeh, River Gee, Maryland, and Sinoe. It is essential for the upcoming elections to be perceived as free and fair and to demonstrate the commitment of Liberian leaders to democratic principles.

Figure 28: Voting During the 2005 Presidential Election

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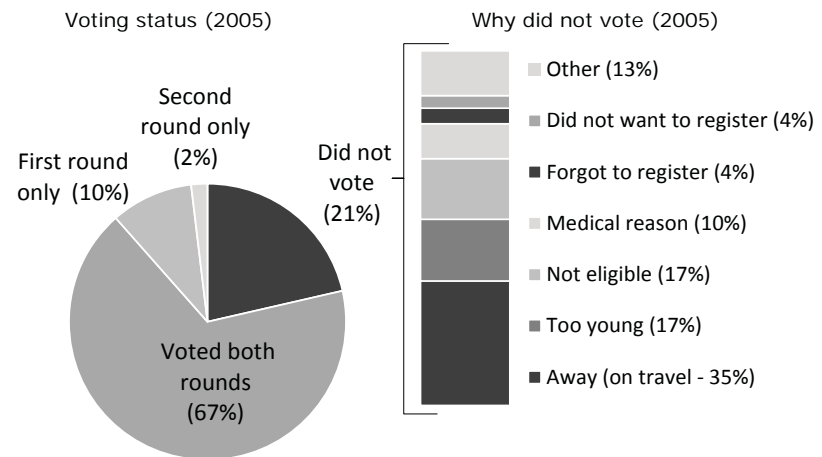
[58] National Democratic Institute and The Carter Center (2005): *Observing Presidential and Legislative Elections in Liberia*. The National Elections Commission of Liberia reported official figures of 74.9% turnout of registered voters (first round) and 61% (runoff): http://www.necliberia.org/results accessed June 10, 2011.

[59] Interviews with elders and town chiefs have also shown that participation in the upcoming election might also depend on the proximity of the nearest polling station, especially in less densely populated areas, and in particular across the southeast. In several instances it was reported that villagers had to take three days for each round of voting in order to walk to and return from the designated polling station, citing dissatisfaction that it had been made more difficult for them to vote compared to the 1985 and 1997 elections.

AUTHORS AND ACKNOWLEDGMENT

COVER ART BY AUSTIN MCKINLEY

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