

**From War Economies to Peace Economies: The Challenge of Post-Conflict  
Reconstruction in Sierra Leone**

**by**

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## ABSTRACT

The difficulty of transforming war economies into peace economies has become increasingly problematic in the search for long-term peace and stability in Africa. In many African countries such as Sierra Leone, Angola and the Democratic Republic of Congo, conflict actors have created distinct war economies in order to maintain the conflict in these countries. The enduring nature of the war economies presents a unique challenge to actors involved in ensuring that peace returns to a country by applying a peacebuilding strategy. The economic environment during a conflict has a vast influence on a post-conflict economy and a post-conflict reconstruction strategy. Although post-war rebuilding occurred during the reconstruction of Europe and Japan after the Second World War, the terms "post-conflict peacebuilding" and "post-conflict reconstruction" have only come to prominence during the mid-1990s.

Using the case study of Sierra Leone, this study explores the challenge of war economies and its impact on post-conflict reconstruction. Sierra Leone presents an appealing case study as the country experienced a very profitable war economy during the armed conflict in the country between 1991 and 2002, and continues to struggle to transform this war economy into a peace economy. The case study of Sierra Leone is well researched, however, most studies focus on the conflict period, and only briefly look at the post-conflict period. In addition, discussions of post-conflict reconstruction in Sierra Leone have failed to adequately address the challenges presented by the war economy. This study uses existing analyses about the war economy in Sierra Leone, and links these to the current post-conflict reconstruction strategy, focusing specifically on the economic dimension. Therefore, this study represents a departure from traditional approaches to exploring war economies because it considers the direct impact these economic systems have on the process of post-conflict reconstruction.



**Key Concepts:** African Union, Conflict, Combat economy, Coping economy, Corruption, DDR, Diamonds, Economic agendas, Formal markets, Informal markets, NEPAD, Peace, Peacebuilding, Peace economy, Post-conflict reconstruction, Shadow Economy, Shadow State, Sierra Leone, United Nations, War, War economy, Youth.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ABU	Agriculture Business Units
APC	All People's Congress
AFRC	Armed Forces Revolutionary Council
AU	African Union
CMRRD	Commission for the Management of Strategic Resources National Reconstruction and Development
CDF	Civil Defence Force
CSIS	Center for Strategic and International Studies
DDR	Disarmament, Demobilisation and Reintegration
DFID	Department for International Development
ECOMOG	Economic Community of West African States Ceasefire Monitoring Group
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EO	Economic Outcomes
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IDP	Internally Displaced Person
IMF	International Monetary Fund
KPCS	Kimberley Process Certification Scheme
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
NCDDR	National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilisation, and Reintegration
NCP	National Commission for Privatization
NEPAD	New Economic Partnership for Africa's Development
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NMJD	Network Movement for Justice and Development
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
NPRC	National Provisional Ruling Council

NRA	National Revenue Authority
OAU	Organisation of African Unity
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PAC	Partnership Africa Canada
PCR	Post-conflict Reconstruction
PCRD	Post-conflict Reconstruction and Development
PMC	Private Military Companies
PRS	Poverty Reduction Strategy
PRSP	Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
RUF	Revolutionary United Front
RUF/SL	Revolutionary United Front of Sierra Leone
SAIS	School of Advanced International Studies
SAP	Structural Adjustment Programme
SLAF	Sierra Leone Armed Forces
SLEDIC	Sierra Leone Export Development and Investment Corporation
SLPP	Sierra Leone People's Party
SLST	Sierra Leone Selection Trust
SSR	Security Sector Reform
TRC	Truth and Reconciliation Commission
ULIMO	United Liberation Movement
UNAMSIL	United Nations Mission to Sierra Leone
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIOSIL	United Nations Integrated Office in Sierra Leone
UNOCHA	United Nations Office for the Co-ordination of Humanitarian Affairs
UNOMSIL	United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra Leone
YES	Youth Employment Scheme

## CHRONOLOGY OF KEY EVENTS IN SIERRA LEONE

<b>1961</b>	Sierra Leone becomes independent.
<b>1967</b>	Military coup deposes Premier Siaka Stevens' government.
<b>1968</b>	Siaka Stevens returns to power at the head of a civilian government following another military coup.
<b>1971</b>	Sierra Leone declared a republic, Stevens becomes executive president.
<b>1978</b>	New constitution proclaims Sierra Leone a one-party state with the All People's Congress as the sole legal party.
<b>1985</b>	Major-General Joseph Saidu Momoh becomes president following Stevens' retirement.
<b>1987</b>	Momoh declares state of economic emergency.
<b>1991</b>	Start of civil war. Former army corporal Foday Sankoh and his Revolutionary United Front (RUF) begin campaign against President Momoh, capturing towns on border with Liberia.
	September: New constitution providing for a multiparty system adopted.
<b>1992</b>	President Joseph Momoh ousted in military coup led by Captain Valentine Strasser, apparently frustrated by failure to deal with rebels. Under international pressure, Strasser announces plans for the first multi-party elections since 1967.

<b>1996</b>	January: Strasser ousted in military coup led by his defence minister, Brigadier Julius Maada Bio.
	February: Ahmad Tejan Kabbah elected president
	November: Kabbah signs peace accord with Sankoh's rebels
<b>1997</b>	May: Peace deal unravels. President Kabbah deposed by army. Major Johnny Paul Koroma, in prison awaiting the outcome of a treason trial, leads the military junta - the Armed Forces Revolutionary Council (AFRC). Koroma suspends the constitution, bans demonstrations and abolishes political parties. Kabbah flees to Guinea to mobilise international support.
	July: The Commonwealth suspends Sierra Leone.
	October: The UN Security Council imposes sanctions against Sierra Leone, barring the supply of arms and petroleum products. A British company, Sandline, nonetheless supplies "logistical support", including rifles, to Kabbah allies.
<b>1998</b>	February: Nigerian-led West African intervention force ECOMOG storms Freetown and drives rebels out.
	March: Kabbah makes a triumphant return to Freetown amid scenes of public rejoicing.
<b>1999</b>	January: Rebels backing Revolutionary United Front leader Foday Sankoh seize parts of Freetown from ECOMOG. After weeks of bitter fighting, they are driven out, leaving behind 5,000 dead and a devastated city.

	May: A ceasefire is greeted with cautious optimism in Freetown amid hopes that eight years of civil war may soon be over.
	July: Six weeks of talks in the Togolese capital, Lomé, result in a peace agreement, under which the rebels receive posts in government and assurances they will not be prosecuted for war crimes.
	November/December: UN troops arrive to police the peace agreement - but one rebel leader, Sam Bokari, says they are not welcome. Meanwhile, ECOMOG troops are attacked outside Freetown.
<b>2000</b>	April/May: UN forces come under attack in the east of the country, but far worse is in store when first 50, then several hundred UN troops are abducted.
	May: Rebels close in on Freetown; 800 British paratroopers sent to Freetown to evacuate British citizens and to help secure the airport for UN peacekeepers; rebel leader Foday Sankoh captured.
	August: Eleven British soldiers taken hostage by a renegade militia group called the West Side Boys.
	September: British forces mount operation to rescue remaining UK hostages.
<b>2001</b>	January: Government postpones presidential and parliamentary elections - set for February and March - because of continuing insecurity.
	March: UN troops for the first time begin to deploy peacefully in rebel-held



	territory.
	May: Disarmament of rebels begins, and British-trained Sierra Leone army starts deploying in rebel-held areas.
<b>2002</b>	January: War declared over. UN mission says disarmament of 45,000 fighters is complete. Government and UN agree to set up war crimes court.
	May: Kabbah wins a landslide victory in elections. His Sierra Leone People's Party secures a majority in parliament.
	July: British troops leave Sierra Leone after their two-year mission to help end the civil war.
<b>2003</b>	July: Rebel leader Foday Sankoh dies of natural causes while waiting to be tried for war crimes.
	August: President Kabbah tells truth and reconciliation commission that he had no say over operations of pro-government militias during war.
<b>2004</b>	February: Disarmament and rehabilitation of more than 70,000 civil war combatants officially completed.
	March: UN-backed war crimes tribunal opens courthouse to try senior militia leaders from both sides of civil war.
	May: First local elections in more than three decades.
	June: War crimes trials begin.



	September: UN hands control of security in capital over to local forces.
<b>2005</b>	August: UN Security Council authorises opening of a UN assistance mission in Sierra Leone from 2006, to follow departure of peacekeepers in December.
	December: The last UN peacekeeping troops leave Sierra Leone, marking the end of a five-year mission to restore order.
<b>2006</b>	March: Liberian ex-president Charles Taylor is arrested in Nigeria and handed over to the war crimes court in Sierra Leone, which indicted him.
	August: Date for elections set for July 2007.
	December: President Kabbah says 90% of the country's \$1.6bn (£815m) debt has been written off after negotiations with international creditors.
<b>2007</b>	June: Start of former Liberian president Charles Taylor's war crimes trial in The Hague, where he stands accused of instigating atrocities in Sierra Leone. Sierra Leone's special war crimes court in Freetown delivers its first verdicts, finding three militia leaders guilty.
	August: Presidential and parliamentary polls. Ernest Bai Koroma wins the presidency and his All People's Congress, formerly in opposition, wins a majority in parliament.
<b>2008</b>	January: Former Liberian president Charles Taylor's war crimes trial in The Hague resumes after a six-month delay.
	August: Local elections are marred by violence between the supporters of



	the two main parties.
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(BBC News 2009)