

United Nations of Youth Sierra Leone  
Network  
and  
UNOY African Network of Young  
Peacebuilders

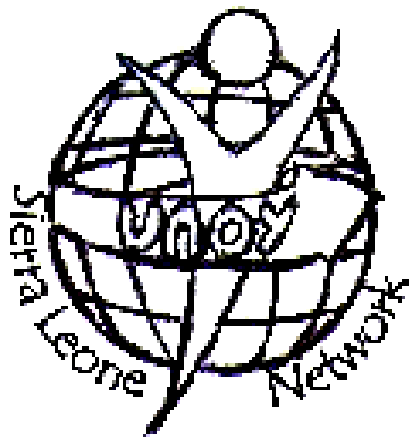
1<sup>st</sup> National Youth Conference on a Culture of Peace,  
Networking & Youth NGO/Project Management

December 14-21, 2002 - Freetown, Sierra Leone

REPORT

"Empowering youth to become  
generators of positive change in  
the world"

"Believe in what you do & Do what  
you believe in".





**A view of participants at UNOY-SL Network 1<sup>st</sup> National Training Conference.**



**Certification ceremony of participants**

**Prepared by:**  
*Conference organizing team*

## BACKGROUND

**The United Nations of Youth Sierra Leone Network:** Is an independent, voluntary non-governmental organization established in 1992 with 106 affiliate youth groups/community based organizations (CBO's) across Sierra Leone; UNOY Sierra Leone Network is geared towards developing the potential skill of young men and women through community development programmes and institutional capacity building, non-violent conflict transformation, reconciliation and building a culture of peace in rural communities in the sub-region of West Africa-Sierra Leone.

The United Nations of Youth Sierra Leone Network is a Founding member of the Network for Young Peace-Builders in Africa (ANYP)-initiated by young men and women in Franschoek, Cape Town, South Africa July 2001. With dedicated persons including young professionals-Students, Journalists, Development Practitioners, Community Actors and Individual Peace Builders from across the Continent of Africa and Abroad.

The UNOY Foundation in The Netherlands had done tremendously well to coordinate the effort of individual peace-builders and non-governmental youth organizations within Africa and Abroad including the UNOY – SL Network base on the initiative of individual youth leaders in Sierra Leone. UNOY – SL Network has developed strategies to mobilize, complement and consolidate the initiatives of non-governmental youth organizations and individual youth who want to see the smiling face of Africa. Based on sustainable development, eradicate poverty, HIV/AIDS and corruption, create access to information in rural communities and provide emergency assistance to marginalized and vulnerable groups especially women and children in armed conflict.

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We express the hope that this training conference will serve as a source of inspiration to build peace in your rural communities. We count on your commitment, and active participation and contribution to fulfill our follow-up plans and projects from Franschoek, Cape Town, South Africa 2001.

## INTRODUCTION

United Nations of Youth Sierra Leone Network (UNOY-SL Network) 1<sup>st</sup> National Training conference brought together 70 youth leaders aged 17-35, (Community Actors, Students, Young Journalist and Peace Builders) drawn from the provinces, across Sierra Leone. To search for an alternative ways to address national and global problems that emphasizes respect for human rights, peaceful settlement of disputes and the establishment of a National Peace Building Network in Post Conflict Sierra Leone.

The training conference was conducted in the perspective of Reconciliation, Leadership and NGO/Project Management; dedicated to the International Decade for a Culture of Peace and Non-Violence for the Children of the World (2001-2010).

### **Conference Objective:**

- A. To create an opportunity for youth leaders and community based organization to know one another, share experiences and discuss major issues on: the root causes of the war in Sierra Leone; identify trends and needs; share best practices on the role of youth in peace building.
- B. Develop a national and regional action plan to build upon the potential skills of young people as agent of positive change.

- C. Create a national network of young peace builders in Sierra Leone that will be part of the UNOY African Youth for a Culture of Peace Network.
- D. Establish a resource and information centre to facilitate effective communication and cross-cultural interaction between self-help groups in local communities.
- E. Promote gender equality, community development, peace building and reconciliation programmes for returnee's host communities.

The conference started Saturday afternoon on **14<sup>th</sup> December 2002**; at the National Stadium Hotels in Freetown, Sierra Leone. The opening ceremony was graced with prayers from Rev. Fr. Henry Aruna and Imam Shek for the consolidation of peace and reconciliation in Sierra Leone. A representative from the UNOY Foundation Merlijn van Waas gave an address on behalf of the UNOY Foundation in The Netherlands, he gave a brief history on the global activities of UNOY Foundation and lamented of the positive initiatives to mobilize young people to contribute towards building sustainable peace in world. He commended the UNOY Foundation for making it possible for young people to develop positive initiatives to address issues related to conflict in Africa and abroad. He further mentioned that in 1999; he had the opportunity to participate in 2<sup>nd</sup> Global Youth Peace Conference at Vught-The Hague; and encourages all participants to commit themselves in creating a culture of peace in their rural communities.

Emmanuel J. Roberts, Programme Coordinator, UNOY-SL Network briefly gave an overview of the training conference with emphasized on the challenges to create a safe an enabling environment for young people in rural communities to foster reconciliation and culture of peace. Furthermore, he mentioned that the initiative to organize the 1<sup>st</sup> National Youth Training Conference on a Culture of Peace, Networking & Youth NGO/Project Management started in Franschoek, Cape Town, South Africa, as a follow-up action plan from African Network for Young Peace-Builders (ANYP) July 2001, with support from the UNOY Foundation and potential donors. He further stressed that it is a challenge for young people to initiate positive interventions that will address issues of human rights violation, HIV/AIDS, poverty and access to information and education in local communities and public institutions.

Mrs. Martina Koroma, Honorable Deputy Minister of Social Welfare, Gender and Children Affairs emphasized on the role of women and children in peace-building. In her statement, Mrs. Martina Koroma recalled the suffering of women and children during a decade civil war in the country, she mentioned women and children have been sexually abused and exploited by warring factions, and that many children as well were recruited into fighting forces resulting to loss of childhood and breakdown in family structures. The Deputy Minister commended the initiatives of UNOY-SL Network to collaborate with the Department for Peace Studies at the University of Sierra Leone; referring to it as a step in the right direction for the consolidation of peace and the reconciliation process in Sierra Leone. The conference was officially open by the Mrs. Martina Koroma, Honorable Deputy Minister of Social Welfare, Gender and Children Affairs.

**Day Two: 15<sup>th</sup> December 2002**

***Morning Session: Perception of a Peace-Builder.***

**Objectives:**

- *To enable participants acquire skills in planning a Peace Education Programmes in their rural communities.*

During this session participants had the opportunity to brainstorm and share experience on their perception of peace builder in rural community. This session was summarized by the participants together with the facilitator Mr. Emmanuel J. Roberts and a presentation was made to a large group.

- All men and women are created equal in a political sense.
- The moral rules for coexistence: harm no one, cooperate, help each other, respect the laws of your country and be a role model.
- The majority has the rights to make the rules as long as the rules are not harmful to the majority.
- That the basic social and mental needs of all people are: being treated with respect, privacy, social communication, education, and understanding of life.
- A peace-builder should ensure that the physical needs of all people are essentially the same and should not be tempered with at all: continuous source of air, water, food, shelter, space, heat and light.
- That a peace-builder should desire to help every one in the world, believing that everyone should seek to be a “citizen” of the world.
- He/she should ensure that children are not enticed into crime by peers.
- A peace-builder should learn how to control anger as part of a peace-building principle; acquire moral values that enabled citizens to survive; teach people to live without injuring others.
- A peace-builder should be a powerful influence...helps shape the society by their action...by their passivity or participation in the system they can affirm the perpetrator.

The morning session end and participant were divided into four groups before going out for lunch at 12:00 noon.

***Afternoon Session: Introduction to the Concept of Peace Education and Non-Violence Conflict Transformation; Approaches to Peace-Building.***

This session was taken over by Mr. Musa Sam, Assistant Coordinator, Community Services; GTZ-International Service. Mr. Musa Sam who had worked with the Catholic Mission of Refugees and the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ-IS) in the Rep. of Guinea as a Peace Education facilitator and Micro Project Evaluation; adopted this training to his present peace-building programmes with returnees from Liberia and Sierra Leone. Participants were as to work in small interactive group's in order to share best practices on the approaches to peace-building.

While introducing the concept of peace-building; he gave a brief introduction to programmes initiated by young men and women in the sub-region of West Africa, with emphases on the need to strengthen our actions and undertake positive initiatives that bring about lasting peace in our rural communities. Participants were asked to develop a definition of a conflict in a rural community; leading to a general definition of conflict and its sources considering the following questions:

1. What is conflict?
2. What are the sources of conflicts?
3. How do we transform conflict without being violence at all as young people?

Participants went into groups to answer the questions in 30 minutes during the first part of the session. Participants had the opportunity to explore further the definition of conflict with analysis on the sources of conflict in their rural communities looking at it

from the economic, social, political, psychological needs. After 30 minutes participants were able to define:

**Conflict as:**

- Clash of interest amongst individuals, groups, organization and inter-states
- Disagreement or misunderstanding between two or more forces with each trying to assert their position.
- Social interaction where individuals/parties perceived threats to its own values, rights, individuality, cultures and needs etc.
- Situation that brings about change to individuals, groups, organizations and states.

**Causes of conflict in our societies:**

Answers to this question were presented by individual groups:

**Group One: Political/ideological sources:**

- Colonialism
- Bad governance as in the case of Ivory Coast.
- Power struggle
- Political instigation/marginalization of vulnerable groups
- Greed of power and selfishness of political leaders

**Group Two: Economic sources:**

- Poverty, ignorance and mass unemployment.
- Land disputes in rural and urban communities
- Educational injustice
- Lack of vocational institutions
- Access to and control of natural and economic resources
- Limited/scarc resources in our communities.

**Group Three: Social sources:**

- Lack education opportunity
- Lack of medical facilities
- Tribal conflict
- Mass Illiteracy
- Gender and racial discrimination
- Nepotism
- Prejudice
- Dependency
- Fear and a culture of silence

**Group Four: Psychosocial needs:**

- Emotional disturbance, choices, demands, pressure, job environment, marriage and domestic issues.
- Frustration
- Social and cultural needs
- Traditional practices (harmful)
- Insecurity, fear and mistrust
- Communication breakdown amongst individuals, groups, organizations and government institutions or states

- Lack of social support from loved one, family members or groups
- Misunderstanding amongst people or organizations.

Mr. Musa Sam gave a short story on the experience to people during outbreak of the civil war in Sierra Leone, there were rumors that the rebels (RUF) had written a letters of promise to attack a nearby village just a 15 minute walk to boarder with Liberia. Upon hearing the news in the next village; people had to flee into Guinea living their children and the properties behind. This led to an emotional disturbance, fear and insecurity etc.

The discussion later developed into approaches to peace-building; participants were asked to brainstorm on the approaches to peace-building at community level. The facilitator then led the discussion on negotiation as powerful tool for non-violent conflict transformation; he gave an input for sustainable reconciliation in Sierra Leone with a model of actors and approaches to Peace-building.

<b>LEVELS IN PEACE-BUILDING</b>	<b>Types of actors in peace-building:</b>	<b>Approaches to building peace:</b>
<b>Level 1: Top leadership:</b>	Military/political/religious/leaders with high visibility	Focus on high-level negotiation, emphasizes cease-fire, led by high visible, single mediator.
<b>Level 2: Middle-Range Leadership:</b>	Leaders respected in sectors Ethnic/religious leaders, academics/intellectuals, humanitarian leaders (NGOs).	Problem-solving workshops, training in conflict resolution, peace commissions, insider-partial teams.
<b>Level 3: Grassroots Leadership.</b>	Local leaders, leaders of indigenous NGOs, community developers, local health officials and refugees camp leaders.	Local peace commissions, grass roots training, prejudice reduction, psychosocial work in postwar trauma.

Source: Jean-Paul Lederach, Building Peace-Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies (Washington D.C, United States Institute of Peace, 1997).

The leadership at the grassroots levels functions on a day-to-day basis. It is characteristic of leaders within a grassroots organization to be involved in the local community and to be members of indigenous non-governmental organizations. The leaders often have an expert knowledge of local political and have witnessed firsthand the animosity of the adversaries on the daily basis. This approach allows for a perspective that recognizes that a peace process is not merely the shorter term challenge of getting the parties to the table but also include the task of broader transformation, reconciliation and social reconstruction.

Mrs. Memunatu Pratt, Head of the Department for Peace Studies at the University of Sierra Leone; also, divided the participants into 4 mixed groups to analyze reasons, identify problems, and seek a forward to a culture of peace with the role of young people a agent of positive change in the (MRU) that was established in 1973 by the government of Sierra Leone, Liberia and the Rep. of Guinea-Conakry. After 25 minutes of deliberations in mixed groups; participant were asked to report in a large group the reasons for the establishment the Mano River Union (MRU).

## **Groups Presentations:**

### ***Reason for a Mono River Union:***

- Unity among the three nations
- Networking
- Socio-cultural and economic activities
- Political cooperation in the Mano River Union.
- Education opportunities for young people in the sub-region.
- Love and inter-marriages.
- Break the Boundaries of discrimination.

### ***Problems within the Mano River Union (MRU):***

- Language barriers within the (MRU).
- Instability in the (MRU).
- Smuggling of diamond and natural resources in (MRU).
- Broken relationships due to civil conflict.
- Illegal sales of arms and ammunitions.
- Refugees across the borders of the (MRU).

### ***Role of Youth in the Mano River Union:***

#### **Positive**

- Mediators to stop civil and political wars in (MRU).
- Peace-making in rural communities within the (MRU).
- Organize cross-cultural sports and tradition programmes.
- Organize trade fairs to promote economic empowerment.

#### **Negative**

- Manipulated to destroy communities within the (MRU)
- Destroyed lives and properties in rural and urban communities.
- Smuggled arms across the borders for civil and political wars fairs.
- Engaged in drug trafficking arms deal.
- Amputated limbs of peace citizens across (MRU) borders.

### ***What Are the Challenges to Build Peace in (MRU).***

- Organize peace education seminars, workshops or programmes at home, in communities and family gatherings and schools.
- Organize youth-to-youth/Peer group counseling.
- Refurbished positive cultural programmes and traditional societies.
- Organize community sensitization programmes on a culture of peace and non-violence in rural community and across the (MRU) borders.
- Mobilize community actor, religious groups, youth organizations and NGOs to create a network of young peace-builders in the (MRU).
- Identify traditional methods in transforming civil and political conflicts.

After this working session, Mrs. Memunatu Pratt summarizes the major issues discussed during the workshop.

- That social change needs requires a highly committed citizens guided by ideals. We need a vision of long-term change and specific small ways in which people can contribute to a culture of peace in the Mano River Union (MRU).

### **Day Three: 16<sup>th</sup> December 2002:**

#### **Morning session: A look at some social and Cultural Realities of Sierra Leone:**

##### **Introduction:**

The overall objective of this session is to create awareness and to encourage critical reflection on some social and cultural realities of Sierra Leone with a view to directing the process of change.

The process of simple analysis is geared towards equipping the participants with simple skills which will enable them to understand the root causes of their problems better. Mr. Musa Sam who facilitated the session further mentioned that People's perception of their own situation is different from the "expert's" perception of the situation.

##### **Objective:**

To help participants to highlights some cultural and social realities.

##### **Activities:**

- a) The session started with a reflection and discussion amongst individual youth leaders on the social and cultural values. (Using the questions below as a guide).

##### **Question guide: Analyzing the Problem.**

- What are some of the major problems in our rural communities?
- When did the problem begin?
- Why did it begin?
- When did became aware that it was a serious problem?
- What brought it to our attention?
- Who pays for this problem?
- Are individuals or groups in your communities helping to maintain or support this problem because they are benefiting from it?
- Who are the worst affected by the problem?
- Do our culture values and traditions help to maintain and support this problem?
- Does this problems help to create, maintain and support social divisions (classes) in the society?
- What attitude do we have that helps to create, maintain and support some of these problems?

After 30 minutes of reflection and critical analysis, participant shared their experiences and highlighted some of the social and cultural values that have contribute to civil war in Sierra Leone; resulting to a breakdown and social and cultural norms.

- b) Participants were divided into 5 groups to define and critical analyze the following:

- *Fear*
- *Complacency*
- *Dependency*
- *Prejudice.*

##### **Group One:**

Define "**Fear**" as painful emotion caused by impending danger.

- Fear of being excluded from the community

- Fear of punishment/sanctions.
- Fear of breaking taboos, superstitions and threats, to regulate behaviors and maintain values.
- The root of many of our problems can be traced back to fear e.g. Culture of Silence (lead to a build up of anger and frustration), secrecy, conformism etc.

Our communities had value, good values. It was the use of fear to maintain these values that is questionable. Taboos, superstitions, folklores, threats, and punishment play an important role in ensuring adherence to values.

**Taboos were solution to advance:**

- There were taboos in the world of food,
- Taboos which defined interaction with elders and put stress on respect for the elders in the society.
- In general, they were supposed to regulate people's behavior and maintain or protect values, e. g. sweeping at night, plating at night brings bad luck.

**Superstition covers those beliefs in omens:**

- They tended to exhibit great relevance to things to come, both the immediate and quiet distant.
- The crucial point about superstitious beliefs is that a current behavior, occurrence, situation, sudden appearance of certain things would be use to explain the unseen, the future events.  
e. g. breaking the glass brings bad luck; spilling salt brings 7 years bad luck.

**Folklore also played an important role:**

- Stories of what happened to disobedient children told just before going to bed ensured obedience on the part of the children.
- The dread of punishment gave rise to conformity which in all respects meant obedience.

**Threats were also an important means of instilling fear:**

- E.g. "your mother will die if..." "Your stomach will swell up if you reveal such and such a secret".

Fear killed initiatives especially in the young who were expected to conform. It encourages a culture of silence and secrecy, and laid us open to manipulation. E.g. blackmailing creates an atmosphere of suspicion where trust will become difficult.

**Group Two:**

Defines "**Dependency**" as relying on the good will of others for which the individual at the receiving end does not necessarily have to reciprocate. There are stages in our live when we are dependent on people-childhood, old age, serious illness, disasters like wars, floods, fires, earthquake etc.

**Types of dependency:**

- Dependency in a relationship; It can be positive or negative.
- Positive type of dependency is a necessity wherein the recipient at the point in time needs help. Such as a teacher: student, employer: employee, parent: child, benefactor: beneficiary.

- Negative type of dependency is parents hosting their grown up children rather than prepare them for independent life; raise funds overseas to implement projects for the poor and needy etc.

***Causes of dependency:***

- Dependency is an ingrained culture in our Sierra Leone Society – having it origin from the colonial era and the advent of the missionaries. This culture has further been perpetuated by our inborn culture of hospitality and complacency.

***Effects of Dependency:***

- Dependency does not motivate individual or group to peak performance
- Dependency encourages laziness and other vices may develop in the process e.g. a grown up son/daughter may take to drug abuse and prostitution.
- Dependency is burden to the donor/philanthropist.
- Relief distribution to refugees and displace persons or development packages may led to dependency syndrome.

***A way forward:***

- The community should be concretized on the effect of dependency and the image the donors have of beneficiaries.
- Capacity building in terms of skills training – group/work organization, production, and accountability – can serve as a tool for emancipating people form the bondage of dependency.
- Parents should provide an enabling environment which prepares their children for independent life.
- People who demand handout should be given a task before anything is given to them.

**Group Three:**

Define “**complacency**”:

- As being permissive or apathetic to situation/issues affecting one’s life or others. It is an attitude of hopelessness or powerlessness.

**Causes of Complacency:**

**1. Dominate class:**

- When the dominant class, to maintain the status quo closes the door to participation and taking into account the repercussions of being critical of situations, the masses may just decide to be quiet even on issues of oppression, e.g. policy makers may design policies that will benefit only the rich.

**2. Bad governance:**

- Leading to wide spread corrupt practices at all levels of the society. Business people fix prices at will and no one beings them to book, miscarriage of justice abounds in the legal system simply because the culprit can bribe the arbiters involved.

**3. Culture of hospitality:**

- We have deep root culture of hospitality; we are so gracious to strangers that we tend to be indifferent to whatever vices they may be disseminating in our society.

**Effect of complacency:**

- Complacency can develop out of oppressive experience (abject poverty). Repressed anger accumulated over a period of time can erupt beyond manageable levels thus affecting people who may not have been responsible for the experience.
- In a community where the rule of law is not upheld and no penalty is meted out, crime and corrupt practices are perpetuated, e. g. poor salary scale in relation to the standard of living.
- A complacent person Lack the spirit of determination and power of analysis with inability to change.

#### **A Way Forward:**

- A well established legal system where people's basic rights are protected and supported can restore self esteem and integrity.
- Continuous education-on positive critical consciousness will help people to analyze situation that may breed oppression.
- Organize pressure groups in order to advocate for the basic rights of peaceful to citizens.

#### **Group Five:**

**Prejudice:** Prejudice is a feeling, favorable or unfavorable, toward a person or thing, prior to, but not based on, actual experience. At the very center of prejudice is a pre-judgement. Prejudice interferes with how we approach and understand others and the world around us. *Prejudice* – the jumping to conclusion with wanting to consider the facts – has two dimension: the meaning and feeling aspects.

#### **Types of Prejudice:**

- *Cultural or ethnic prejudice:* People of every culture or nation tend to think that their way of doing things is right; other ways of acting are stupid, crude, uncivilized, unreasonable, evil or superstitious.
- *Gender prejudice:* Sexism as a prejudice is the assumption that a person inferior in some way or other as a human being because he or she belongs to a certain biological category.
- *Religious prejudice:* once a religious group believes it has the monopoly of truth concerning salvation, that is, that it has nothing to learn from any religions; then there is prejudice, e.g. religious conflict in Northern Nigeria.
- *Social class prejudice:* social class is any portion of people that is marked off from the rest by a distinction of social status; in a system of social classes, there is hierarchy in the listening of the classes i.e. some are thought to be superior or inferior to others within the system.

#### **Causes of prejudice:**

- *Cultural learning:* We learn prejudice first and foremost through absorbing, so often unconsciously the prejudice of our own nation about other people or things.
- *Particular personality needs:* deeply insecure people achieve for themselves a sense of self-esteem simply by down grading the abilities of other people.
- *Ethnic identity:* Our culture also influences the way behave to friends or strangers

#### **Response to prejudice:**

- Self – knowledge
- Avoid ethnic jokes
- Avoid offensive words
- Stop stereotyping

- Reflect on prejudice only in small groups
- Provide motivation

### **Afternoon session: Human Rights Principles.**

#### **Objective:**

*To help participants understand that all people are entitled to their Human Rights.*

#### **Introduction:**

The first half of the afternoon session was spent on discussing the basic human rights principles with Mr. Tamba Sandi a lecturer on International Relations and Humanitarian Law at the University of Sierra Leone.

Participants performed a short role play which clearly indicated three important human rights abuses, participants were given the opportunity to discuss the role play highlighting a list of other human rights they value.

Looking back through history, we see that people acquired rights through membership of a particular group: a family, a tribe, a religion, or a nation. Members of a particular group (“us”) found security and protection within it. Mr. Tamba Sandi stressed that the idea that all human beings have human, or natural, rights simply because they are human did not become widely accepted until the middle of this century. After World War II, the world was horrified to discover that Nazi Germany had systematically murdered more than 6 million Jews. People wanted to ensure that nothing like this would be allowed to happen again. Representatives of the newly formed United Nations drew up a list of rights that all people are entitled to regardless of their sex, race, colour, language, national origin, age, or religious or political beliefs. In 1948 they produced the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It was to serve as “a common standard of achievement for all people and all nations.

#### **Activity:**

Participants were divided into three large groups to define the categories of Human Rights that are international recognized for a period of 30 minutes. The later did a presentation on the follow categories of rights.

#### **Group one:**

**Civil and political rights:** the rights are sometime referred to as “first generation” rights. They were the first generation of rights to be formulated more than 200 years ago at the time of the American and French revolution. These are rights that protect individuals against the abuse of state power. They protect the life and dignity of individuals, and guarantee various freedoms involving their thoughts, actions, choices and participation in the political life of their society.

#### **Group Two:**

#### **Social and economic rights:**

These rights are sometimes referred to as “second generation” rights. They were formulated in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by the socialist movement, in reaction to capitalist exploitation of the working classes and colonial peoples. Unlike civil and political rights which protect individuals from the state, these rights depend on the intervention of the state to provide people with social and economic security, and they are concerned with living standards, employment, health and education.

### **Group Three:**

#### **Cultural, Environmental and Development Rights:**

These rights sometimes referred to as “third generation” rights, are of very recent origin. The importance of cultural and development rights began to emerge at the time when people were being freed from colonial domination. Concern for environmental issues has emerged in the last two decades.

#### **Poverty as an Element in the UN Declaration 1974**

Mr. Tamba Sandi went further to discuss together with participants the root causes of poverty as an element in the UN Declaration 1974’ that “every man, woman and child has the rights to be free from hunger and malnutrition in order to develop fully.

#### **Practices session: Charity:**

Participants were asked to reflect on the word “**Charity**” and to write on one page the topic “**Charity in my Community**”; followed by the questions below:

- How is charity practiced?
- Who organizes it?
- Who receives charity?
- Does the practice help recipients become dependent or independent?

A reference on poverty from the constitution of Sierra Leone was discussed with the participants. Below are some of the references:

#### ***The constitution of Sierra Leone 1991 Chapter 2; Section 8***

1. The social order of the State shall be founded on the social objectives, ideals of Freedom, Equality and Justice.
2. In furtherance of the Social Order-
  - a. Every citizen shall have equality of rights, obligations, and opportunity before the law and the state shall ensure that every citizen has an equal right and access to all opportunity and benefits based on merit.
  - b. The state shall recognize, maintain and enhance the sanctity of the human person and human dignity.
  - c. The government shall secure and maintain the independence, impartiality and integrity of courts of law and unfettered access thereto, and to this end shall ensure that the operation of the legal system promotes justice on the basis of equal opportunity for securing justice are not denied any citizen by reason of economic or other disability.
3. The state shall direct its policy towards ensuring that:-
  - a. Every citizen, without discrimination on any grounds whatever, shall have the opportunity for securing adequate means of livelihood as well as adequate opportunity to secure suitable employment;
  - b. Conditions of service and work are fair, just and humane and that there are adequate means facilities for leisure and for social, religious and cultural life;
  - c. The health, safety and welfare of all persons in employment are safeguarded and not endangered or abuse, and in particular that special provisions be

made for working women with children, having due regard to the resources of the state.

- d. There are adequate medical and health facilities for all persons, having due regard to the resource of the state;
- e. There is equal pay for equal work without discrimination on account of sex, and that adequate and satisfactory remuneration is paid to all persons in employment;
- f. The care and welfare of the aged, young and disabled shall be actively promoted and safeguarded.

Another topic was introduced “**Work**” based on the concerns of the participants.

**Objective:**

To demonstrate the articles - 15 and 29 in African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights that state “Each person has the rights to work under good conditions, and to equal pay for equal work” and “each person has the duty to work to the best of his/her abilities”.

A role play which illustrates an unjust work situation was discussed in groups for 10 minutes, participants were asked to list other work situations where members of the group have experienced or are aware of a situation in which workers are treated unjustly in terms of pay or other conditions.

In Sierra Leone, employers often complain that workers are lazy, rude, and inefficient and lack motivation. Participants were asked to reflect on the following:

- What are the root causes of these problems?
- How effective are the unions in protecting the rights of workers?
- In our community is child labour exploited and how?
- Is a woman's work valued in our society?

**Practices session:**

Participants were asked to find out the following:

- Find out what unions exist in Sierra Leone?
- Which ones are effective?
- Which unions should be represented in your community?

Mr. Tamba Sandi, the facilitator gave an input on the “working conditions” that apart from wages, other social benefits should be available to the workers: medical assistance, the right to rest, the right to pension and to insurance benefits, and the rights to working conditions that are not harmful to health or to the workers' moral integrity.

The justice of a social and economic system is finally measured by the way in which a person's work is rewarded. A just wage for an adult responsible for a family is one that allows the establishment of a family, its proper maintenance, and provision for the security of its future.

After 15 minutes tea break, participants were in full gear to start the discussion on “**Unemployment**”.

**Objective:**

To help participants **understand** better the nature and extent of unemployment problems amongst youth in post war Sierra Leone.

Roles play demonstrating some problems that an employed person faces in life were discussed in buzz groups. Participants were asked to divide themselves into small groups for practice session;

**Practice session:**

- Working in small groups, plan a strategy for discovering how widespread the problem of unemployment is among young people (information gathering).
- Can local community create schemes to help unemployed young people in the community?

**Summary of group presentation:**

- When you are out of work you gave up looking to the future and just live from day-to-day.
- You lose pride in yourself
- You don't have any thing to say because you have not being doing any thing.
- Sometimes, people or a friend treats you like dirt.

**Communities should create:**

- Access to education or establish vocational education centres for school drop-out and vulnerable youth.
- Access to micro-credit or grants in order to improve the economic potentials of young people.
- Create job opportunities in rural communities through agricultural extension programmes.
- Establish a youth recreational and psychosocial centres.

Using a buzz group, participants were asked:

- To list the kind of corrupt practices they have encountered in daily life.
- Discuss whether the situation seems to be improving or, in fact, getting worse?
- Can any thing be done to ensure that political leaders remain accountable to the people they represent?

Participant were divided into groups to device role plays on some of the kind of corruption discussed during group discussions; showing practical solution (action) to combat the corrupt practices in Sierra Leone.

Mr. Tamba Sandi stressed that we have to be free from selfishness, greed and corruption ourselves before we can presume to reform our communities. This exercise led to the final session on Basic Human Rights Principles.

**The Role of Young Women in Peace Building:**

**Introduction:**

The status to young women is attracting a good deal of attention. It is important to look at women's issues without creating biases that can hinder the image of women. A look at the situation young women in arm conflict and community life can also help to improve their lives and ultimately the community in which we live. This was facilitated by Miss. Florence During; a working group Coordinator on Young Women in Peace Building - African Network of Young Peace Builder.

**Objective:**

To enable participants share their experiences on the impact of war on women and the role of young women building peace in Sierra Leone.

During this session participants were divided into six (6) groups to analyze the effect of war on women; develop strategies to mainstream young women into peace build programmes in Sierra Leone. Few questions were raised as a guide to enable participants focus on the theme of the session:

**Group one:****1. How does conflict affect women?**

- Limits access to education
- Decrease economic activities
- Young girls will engage in prostitution to earn an income
- Adoption and rape of young girls
- Unwanted pregnancies and girl mothers
- Increase in the number of HIV/AIDS and STI's
- Early marriages
- Fear of violence and emotional imbalance
- Loss of cultural and traditional values.

**Group Two:****2. Why is it necessary for women to contribute to peace building?**

- Because they are partners in development
- To protect their democratic and other human rights
- Because they are the most vulnerable group in the community
- Women are naturally peace-builders in any society
- They help boost the state economic
- They are stake holders in some conflict situation
- They are role model in families and the community

**Group Three:****3. What can women do to effectively contribute to peace building in Sierra Leone?**

- Be well educated-do more peace education awareness programmes
- Unity and solidarity amongst women
- Scale child bearing-family planning
- Women should be willing and brave to accept responsibilities
- Embarked on advocacy and lobbying
- They not involve in corruption
- Aspire to be leadership and decision making
- Mobilize resources both local and international
- Tolerance, creative and peaceful
- Develop good communication skills

**Group Four:****4. Who are women's allies in peace-building?**

- Community leaders – politicians, religious and traditional authorities
- Youth
- Business people
- Security personals

- Parliamentarians
- Advocacy groups
- Local and international org.
- family – husbands, children, and other family members

**Group Five:**

**5. *Who are their opponents/limitations?***

- Tradition, culture and religion
- Husbands
- Unemployment
- Unavailability of resources
- Poverty
- Illiteracy
- Rivalry amongst women's groups
- Too much work load
- Family and child bearing responsibilities

**Group Six:**

**6. *What are the opportunities for women?***

- Access to education
- Employment opportunities
- Empowerment of women's groups
- Gender equality
- Respect for human rights
- Peaceful atmosphere-environment
- More sensitization programmes – awareness raising
- Micro-financing schemes

**Day Four: 17<sup>th</sup> December 2002**

**Morning session: Understanding the root causes of conflict:**

**Introduction:**

The day started with some ice breaking activities; followed by an introduction of Mr. Musa Sam the facilitator of this session. A case study on root of conflict in a peaceful society was discussed in a large group, which created a common ground for participants to share their experiences with others.

**Objective:**

1. To understand the root causes of conflict, analyze the various levels as well as the many styles one uses to address conflict in life.
2. To learn through the activities how to work through conflict in our lives.

Participants were divided into groups to discuss:

**Group One: "Why conflicts occur in rural communities?"**

- Injustice
- Bad leadership
- Lack of communication
- Human rights abuse
- Mismanagement of resources

- Lack of transparency and accountability
- Corruption and tribalism
- Poverty
- Illiteracy
- Ethnic/Diverse religious beliefs

**Group Two: Why conflicts are so common in our communities?**

- Due to fear
- Lack of trust
- Indifferences in opinion
- Lack of effective communication/misinformation.
- Greed
- Power struggle
- Ignorance

**Group Three: Who are the actors in a conflict situation?**

- Individuals
- Families
- Youth
- Women and children
- Group of people
- Communities – neighbourhoods
- Organizations
- States – government institutions

**Group Four: What are the approaches to conflict prevention in rural communities?**

- Raise awareness for peace, human rights and good governance.
- Ethnic/Religious tolerance
- Seek justice
- Show concern for others in rural communities
- Train children to handle conflicts nonviolently
- Educate people with living example of peace builders
- Proper utilization of available resources
- Effective communication across the board
- Create access to education for all

Mr. Musa Sam summarizes the session by indicating the obstacles for prevention conflict in rural communities.

- Poor representation of youth in community gatherings
- Passive attitudes of the community towards conflicts
- Extreme poverty and high rate illiteracy in rural communities
- Exclusion and marginalization of women in community activities

**Afternoon session: Child Soldiers, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse**

**Introduction:**

The fact that large numbers of children and adolescents are fighting in today's conflicts are now well known. This recognition has itself tended to make the use of "Child soldiers" seem an inevitable part of these conflicts. The beginnings of a much needed focus on demobilizing and reintegrating child soldiers have been evident in the past few years. However, much less attention has been given to preventing their

recruitment in the first place. This session was perfectly handled by Mr. Saffea Sennesi a lecturer on International Humanitarian Law at the University of Sierra Leone.

**Objective:**

To increase the level of awareness amongst participants on sexual abuse and exploitation; HIV/AIDS, the recruitment and participation of under-age children in armed conflict constitutes an abuse of their rights.

**Activity:**

Participants brainstormed on the definition of the “**Child soldiers**”. The term “**child soldier**” has become widely adopted, and will, therefore, be used to cover any person less than 18 years of age who is part of any kind of regular or irregular armed force or armed group in any capacity other than purely as a family member. It does not, therefore, only refer to those carrying arms, but includes cooks, porters, messengers, and those accompanying such groups, including girls recruited as concubines or for forced marriage.

Participants were asked to divide into five groups' in order to analyze the following questions:

**Group One: Why are children recruited?**

- Easily used in battles
- Easily manipulated
- Adventurous
- Quick to learn fighting skills
- No competition for the leadership role
- Less costly
- Pose a moral challenge for enemies

**Group Two: How children are recruited, and by who?**

The manner in which children are recruited ranges from compulsory to voluntary recruitment, although in practice it is hard to ascertain the reality as they often merge into one another. The most distinct category is compulsory recruitment by conscription. This, by its nature, is a governmental prerogative. Many children, however, are conscripted under age. This may happen even where there is a legal minimum age of 18, because:

- People are simply unaware of their rights;
- The children lack documentation such as birth or identity records;
- They voluntarily enlist for compulsory conscription whilst under age (sometimes a convenient loop-hole to mask conscription of children);
- They are caught up in “quota” enlistment which may be carried out by government agents, village headmen, local militias and so on, who are concerned to make up required numbers and pay little heed to the ages of the conscripts;
- Lack of adequate safeguards and the absence of mechanisms of appeal not allowing people to enforce their rights;
- The conscription system is flawed or outright ignored by the military particularly where there is a perceived need for an enlarged force, or the military is targeting certain groups.

### **Group Three: Children who are vulnerable to recruitment?**

In any situation, however, due to economic, social, political or cultural circumstances, it is important to recognize that certain children will be more vulnerable to under-age recruitment whether voluntary or forced.

Overwhelming majority of child soldiers, in almost every conflict, are drawn from the poorest, least educated and most marginalized sections of society. Those separated from their families or with disrupted family backgrounds, particularly among refugees and the displaced, are especially at risk. They include:

- Children from particular ethnic, racial or religious groups;
- Children living in the conflict zones;
- Children from unstable or disrupted backgrounds;
- Children separated from their families and without the protection that the family can provide to prevent recruitment;
- Unaccompanied children who initially became associated with an armed group for protective reasons, but who may progress to active participation;
- Former child soldiers.

### **Group Four:**

**Are there are issues that are common to the experience of all children who have participated in conflict and which require consideration if they are to reintegrate with their families and communities?**

- Separation from the family;
- Family poverty and vulnerability;
- Education and vocational training;
- The participation of children;
- Health;
- Children in need of special care.

### **Group Five: What can be done to reintegrate children to normal life?**

- Assessing child care needs: determining the numbers of children who will be immediately reunified with their families; the numbers for whom interim care is required during tracing; and the numbers requiring longer-term alternative care;
- Establishing criteria to identify vulnerable families and to determine appropriate assistance to enable the reintegration of their children;
- Identifying networks of social support at the community level: churches;
- mosques; schools; women's organizations; youth and community structures and so on;
- Identifying children with special needs, and paying particular attention to the special situation of the girl soldiers.

### **Re-Establishing Social and Emotional Bonds:**

As they try to return to normal life, the impact of the children's experiences as soldiers may affect the re-establishment and development of social and emotional relationships. It would be helpful for individuals engaged in programmes to assist social reintegration to consider how the following issues may be addressed in a practical way within programme activities.

- The re-establishment of trust
- The re-establishment of self-esteem
- Self-control
- The re-establishment of identity
- The recognition of resources/strengths

- The re-establishment of attachment.

### **Sexual Exploitation and Abuse:**

After 15 minutes tea break participants were prepared to deliberate on issues of Sexual exploitation and abuse. Participants were asked to discuss in buzz groups in order to come up with a definition of sexual exploitation and abuse. Below is a summary definition by participants for sexual abuse:

The term child abuse is generally used to describe an act of commission that is outside of accepted cultural norms. It can include:

- **Physical abuse**, the deliberate use of force on a child's body which may result in injury, e.g. hitting, burning, shaking, choking;
- **Sexual abuse**, should be understood not only as violent sexual assault but also other sexual activities, including inappropriate touching, where the child does not fully comprehend, is unable to give informed consent, or for which the child is not developmentally prepared.
- **Emotional abuse**, persistent attacks on a child's sense of self, e.g. constant belittling, taunting or humiliation, isolation and intimidation.
- **Child neglect** is rather an act of omission, the failure to provide for the child's basic needs. Again this can include:
  - **Physical neglect**, the failure to adequately meet the child's needs for, for example, nutrition, clothing, health care, and protection from harm; and/or
  - **Emotional neglect**, the failure to satisfy the developmental needs of a child by denying the child an appropriate level of affection, care, education and security.

Although different forms of abuse and neglect are recognized, it is important to remember that a child experiencing one form may also be experiencing other forms as well.

- **Exploitation** is the abuse of a child where some form of remuneration is involved or whereby the perpetrators benefit in some manner – monetarily, socially, politically, etc. Exploitation constitutes a form of coercion and violence, detrimental to the child's physical and mental health, development, and education.

### **Activity:**

Participant were divided into groups after summary definition of sexual violence as all forms of sexual threat, assault, interference and exploitation, including "statutory rape" and molestation without physical harm or penetration. Sexual exploitation can also involve the use or threat of force on a child with the objective of forcing the child to take part in sexual acts performed by third persons.

### **Group One: Analyze common factors that influence sexual exploitation**

- Poverty and social inequality;
- Consumerism/Materialism;
- Situations of armed conflict and subsequent displacement;
- Gender;
- Situation of separation;
- Mentally and physically disabled children;
- Children belonging to marginalized ethnic groups;
- Cultural beliefs.

#### **Group Two: Perpetrators**

- Some elements in armed forces
- Local and foreign “consumers” and organisers of the sex industry
- Staff and caregivers in institutions, and school-teachers
- Neighbours, acquaintances and others
- Other Children

#### **Group Three: The impact of sexual exploitation**

**Individual impact:** the effects of sexual exploitation on the individual child can be profound, and can be experienced on several levels:

- **Physical injury:** Genital injury, sexually transmitted diseases and the contraction of HIV/AIDS, Unwanted pregnancy, stigmatization and unsafe abortions.
- **Emotional consequences:** trauma of violent exploitation, a sense of shame at having been violated, and especially if pregnancy results, can have severe consequences for the child;
- **Social consequences:** can include ostracism by the family or community. In some cultures, sexual exploitation will have a negative impact on the child's chances of marrying;
- **Secondary trauma:** include aggressive interviewing of the child (e.g. by the police), insensitive medical examination, or those in authority disbelieving the child or even blaming him/her for the incident.

#### **Group Four:**

**Legal protection: sexual violence, abuse and exploitation:**

- National laws (criminal and/or family laws) of the States are particularly important and should always be referred to. These laws provide intervention procedures for the authorities in cases of abuse and exploitation.
- The African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights, the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child.
- The **CRC** offers general protection measures to all children, without discrimination. **Article 19** requires States to protect children from all forms of physical or mental violence and specifically mentions exploitation and sexual abuse.
- Sexual exploitation and abuse are dealt with in more detail in **article 34 of the CRC**. Under this article, States parties undertake to protect the child from all forms of sexual exploitation and sexual abuse, including the exploitative use of children in prostitution and in pornographic performances and materials.
- **Article 27 of the Fourth Geneva Convention of 1949 relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War** states that protected persons in time of war “shall at all times be humanely treated, and shall be protected especially against all acts of violence....
- With regard to internal armed conflicts, **Article 3 common to the four Geneva Conventions of 1949** prohibits “outrages upon personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment”, against all persons taking no active part in hostilities. Similarly, **article 4 (2) (e) of the 1977 Protocol II relating to the Protection of Victims of Non-International Armed Conflicts** forbids the violation of personal dignity, in particular humiliating and degrading treatment, rape, enforced prostitution and any form of indecent assault.
- The Convention for the Suppression of the Traffic in Persons and of the Exploitation of the Prostitution of Others (1949).

- The Declaration and Agenda of the World Congress against Commercial Sexual Exploitation of Children (Stockholm in 1996).
- Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the Sale of Children, Child Prostitution and Child Pornography was adopted in 2000.

After this group presentation, participants met in their home groups to share experiences on the lessons learnt during the session on Child soldiers, Sexual exploitation and abuse. Which led to a recommendation to further discuss issues on HIV/AIDS, develop strategies to fight this deadly diseases that is threaten the lives of young people in the sub-region of Africa.

### **HIV & AIDS: What you need to know**

Mr. Seffea Sennesi informed the participants that in Sierra Leone, 5% of the population is know to be infected with HIV but only 8% of adolescents have knowledge about HIV and AIDS.

#### **Activity:**

Participants were asked to discuss amongst each other in 30 minutes on the definition of **HIV & AIDS** and how an individual can get infected with the AIDS?

**HIV** was defined as: Human Immuno Deficiency Virus.

**AIDS** was defined as: Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome.

Participants hastily concluded that Sex is the most common way people can get infected with HIV/AIDS; other way of getting infected with the HIV virus includes:

- Using needles for injection or drugs use that are infected with HIV virus.
- Exchange of HIV infected skin piercing, tattoooing or cutting instruments such as needles; razor blades, knives that are infected with HIV.
- Receiving a blood transfusion with infected blood
- Giving birth by an HIV infected mother, who can pass the virus to her child before or during birth, or through breastfeeding.

In five groups, participants were asked to deliberate further on the topic using guidelines:

#### **Group One:**

##### ***How can I know if someone has the AIDS virus or HIV?***

- You can never be sure whether a person has the AIDS virus (HIV) without laboratory test.
- But they can unknowingly pass HIV to others through unprotected sexual intercourse or sharing of razor blades or injection needles

#### **Group Two:**

##### **What do I do if I feel that I am infected with HIV or I am at risk of being infected?**

- If you or your friends feel that you are at risk, it will be good to get tested.
- Knowing if you have or do not have HIV virus will help you protect yourself and the others.

#### **Group Three:**

##### **Where do I get further information about HIV and AIDS, voluntary counseling and testing and condoms?**

- We can get information about HIV and AIDS, Voluntary counseling and Testing and condoms from the HIV and AIDS Unit, Connaught Hospital, Freetown.

- From HIV and AIDS Prevention & Control Organizations in our communities; e.g. Plan Parent Association of Sierra Leone (PPASL), Ministry of Health and Sanitation (MOHS) and many others.

#### **Group Four:**

##### **How can I protect myself from getting the AIDS virus (HIV)?**

- Abstain from sex
- Be faithful to an uninfected partner who is faithful to you
- Use a condom properly every time you have sex.
- Do not share other people's instruments that are used to pierce your skin such as needles, and syringes for injections.
- Always use sterilized and clean instruments for skin piercing
- Do not accept blood for transfusion that has not been tested for HIV and get immediate and proper treatment for any sexually transmitted diseases such as gonorrhoea, syphilis and others, tell your partner to do the same.

This session ended with a psychosocial programme (cultural activities, story telling and dramatization in the evening after participants have got dinner. Sensitization materials on HIV and AIDS including paper folders supplied by Unicef as support to the conference were distributed to all participants in the evening.

#### **Day Five: Wednesday 18<sup>th</sup> Dec 2002:**

##### **Morning session:**

##### **Root causes of the rebel war in Sierra Leone; and youth participation.**

This session was introduced by Mr. Musa Sam; Assistant Coordinator, Community Services, GTZ-International Service. During the session, participants were asked to brainstorm the root causes of the rebel war in Sierra Leone, indicating the role of youth in a decade civil war as a case study.

##### **Activity:**

Participants were divided into four groups in order to analyze the causes of the rebel war in Sierra Leone from the Social, Economic, Political and Cultural perspectives.

##### **Group One: Social Causes**

- Display of war films at home, the community video clubs;
- Centralization of social amenities, (national stadium and youth recreational centres);
- Imitation of west cultures;
- Discrimination against women and social groups;
- High rate of crime committed in schools;
- Lack of educational opportunities;

##### **Group Two: Economic Causes;**

- Uneven distribution of wealth e.g. (natural resources-diamond);
- Mismanagement and embezzlement of public funds, e.g. (voucher gate);
- Poor conditions of service and late payment of civil servants-especially teachers;
- Bribery and Corruption in public and government institutions;
- Unemployment
- Low living standard/high cost of living;

##### **Group Three: Political Causes;**

- Bad governance;

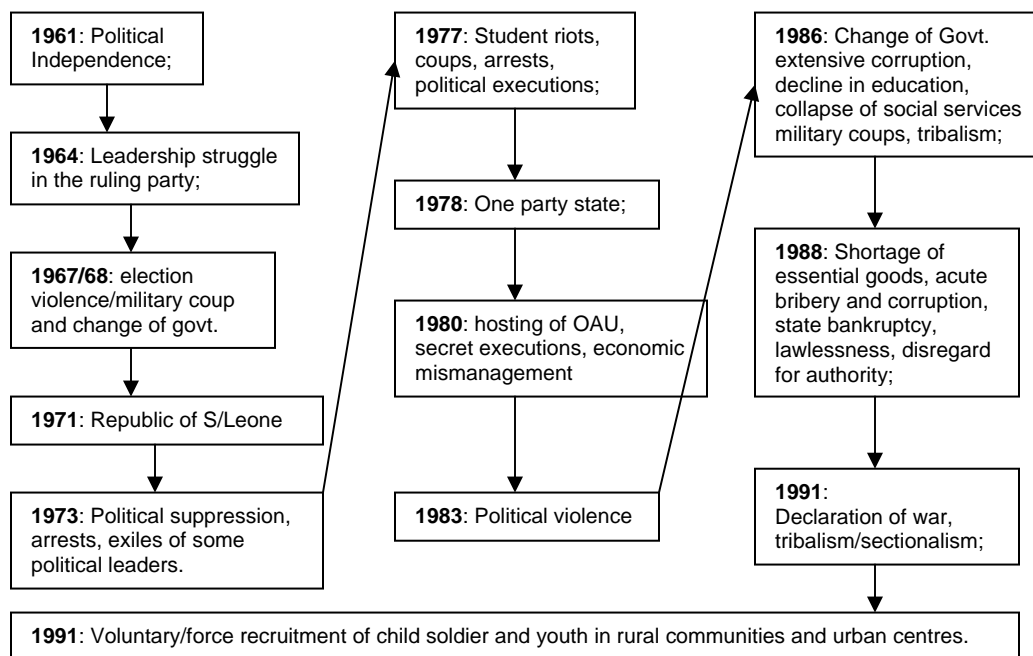
- Marginalization of vulnerable groups;
- Injustice in judicial system;
- One party system of politics;
- Selfishness of political leaders;
- Greed and nepotism;
- Misuse of power by authorities;
- Insecurity in rural communities;

**Group Four: Cultural Causes;**

- Culture of silence/fear;
- Prejudice;
- Complacency;
- Tribalism;
- Dependency syndrome;
- Unfaithfulness;

After the group presentation; the facilitator Mr. Musa Sam gave a brief synopsis on:

***The Road to War in Sierra Leone since 1961***



**The role of the international community, the peace process and the way forward;**  
 After the morning session, participants had a short break followed by introduction of the above topic with Mrs. Memunatu Pratt, Head of Department for Peace Studies at the University of Sierra Leone.

**Activity:**

*Participants were asked to brainstorm on the role of international community and youth in resolving the a decade civil war in Sierra Leone; and the peace process;*

**We took a look at the events:**

- Disarmament of combatants and faction leaders;
- Signing of the Lomé Peace Accord;

- Military intervention;
- Repatriation of refugees and IDP's;
- Intervention of religious leaders;
- Intervention of the UN (UNAMSIL)
- Demobilization of ex-combatants;
- Reintegration of ex-combatants and host communities;
- Rehabilitation of feeder roads and social infrastructures;
- Reestablishment of local governance and civil societie;
- Democratic elections;
- Int. NGO's involvement in human rights advocacy;
- Establishment of Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) and Special Court;
- Security sector reform;
- Educational reform/access to educational materials;

#### **Stake holders/partners:**

- Inter-religious council;
- Youth and civil society groups;
- Women's organizations;
- ECOWAS;
- United Nations Organisations;
- Common Wealth;
- Mano River Union (MRU);
- UN Secretary General (Kofi Annan);
- Francis Okelo
- RUF, AFRC, Govt. of S/Leone, CDF and the Govt. of Togo;
- Liberian President;
- ECOMOG
- National Student Union;
- Traditional leaders;
- British Govt.
- Diplomatic community (Embassies);
- European Union (EU);
- Int. NGO's (Red Cross, Catholic Relief Services) etc.

#### **Activities of the Int. Community:**

- Road network;
- Emergency supplies (medicines and food supply);
- Shelter programmes in devastated communities;
- Agricultural intervention/supply of seeds to farmers in rural communities;
- Rehabilitation of schools and social infrastructures;
- Access to micro credits for farmers and women's groups;
- Child protection/advocacy programmes;

#### **Govt. Reform:**

- Anti-corruption act;
- National Commission for Social Action (NaCSA);
- National Commission for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration (NCDDR);
- Human Rights Commission/ombudsman;
- Establishment of the Ministry of Youth and Sport;

- Establishment of the Ministry of Social Welfare, Gender and Children's Affairs;
- Establishment of the National Commission for War Affected Children;

### **Concerns of the Int. Community**

- To renew the UN commitment to peace and stability;
- Human rights violations;
- Democratic principles;
- National security/protection of civil rights;
- Availability of human resource
- Provide relief to vulnerable/marginalized groups;

At the end of brainstorming session participants were divided into three groups to discuss the following:

### **Group One: What is Peace Education?**

- Creating opportunity for people to learn through sensitization, drama, prints and electric media, and how to know the value of life in a peaceful society;
- Art of acquiring knowledge and enlightenment;
- Exposing individuals the positive norms and values of life;
- Create the opportunity for people to understand human nature, so that we can live together in peace, cooperation, common understanding, love and sharing;
- Finally, peace education is "*DO UNTO OTHERS WHAT YOU WOULD LIKE OTHERS TO DO UNTO YOU*";

### **Group Two: Why Peace Education is important?**

- It create awareness;
- Foster unity;
- Create room for development;
- Create effective collaboration and networking;
- Brings about good governance;
- Brings about equal education;
- Establish justice and equal rights;
- Established accountability and transparency;

### **Group Three: What should be in a Peace Education Programmes?**

- Peace education materials;
- Proper focus of target groups;
- Commitment and tolerance
- Effective and efficient communication;
- Regional human rights instruments;
- Traditional and cultural values;
- Religious tolerance and respect for others view;

### **The way forward and the role of youth in peace building**

- Collective responsibility;
- Disseminate information on peace building and community development through formal and non-formal education, dramatization on some of the root causes of war in a peaceful society;
- Volunteerism; and youth networking;
- Youth exchange programmes;
- Establish youth skills training centres;

- Youth participation in policy making, and implementation of programmes related to youth, peace building and reconciliation programmes;
- Food production and eradication of poverty; and provision basic needs;
- Advocacy for women's empowerment, children's rights, employment, human rights and HIV/AIDS;
- Organize conferences and peace education seminars;
- Care and concern in the three member countries-Mano River Union (MRU);
- Continuous follow up meeting in the neighbouring countries;
- Cross cultural exchange programmes;
- Respect for state policies;
- Facilitate fair play in trade fairs;
- Practice good examples in the Mano River Union (MRU);
- Steadfast in decision making;
- Decentralization of the national programmes;

#### **Group Four: Role of the International Community**

- Provide support for positive youth initiatives;
- Support advocacy programmes against HIV/AIDS, poverty, corruption, and arms deal across national borders.
- Provide technical support/training opportunities for potential youth leaders in rural communities and urban centres;
- Mobilize resources-materials and human resources to maintain peace;

#### **Afternoon session:**

##### **Conflict Transformation Mechanism; Non-violent Conflict Resolution**

During the afternoon session, the facilitator Miss. Regina Saffa, an administrator at U.S. Embassy and a lecturer at the University of Sierra Leone, Department of Peace Studies brainstormed together with the participants on the types of conflict they have experienced and heard about since childhood:

**Activity:** Participants were asked to list the types of conflict after brainstorming session.

#### **The types of conflicts;**

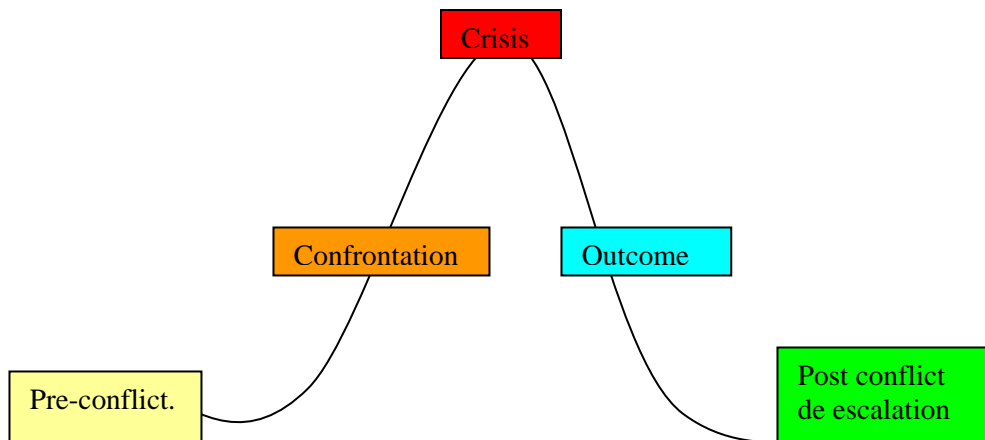
- Conflict of interest;
- Ethnic conflict;
- Religious conflict;
- Boarder conflict/conventional wars;
- Political conflict;
- Social conflict;
- Personality conflict;
- Riots/domestic conflict;
- Economic conflict;

Case studies on the types of conflict were distributed to all the participants to analyze the stages in conflict:

1. **Pre-conflict stage:**
  - Incompatible goals;
  - Hidden objective from general views;
  - Tension in relationships;
2. **Confrontation:**

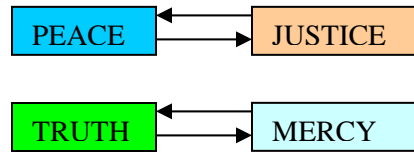
- Issues identified publicly;
  - Each side gathers resources and allies;
  - Polarization;
3. **Crisis:**
- Peak of conflict tension;
  - Public statement/accusation of parties in conflict;
  - Intense violence in conflict zone;
4. **Outcome:**
- Victory;
  - Defeat;
  - Ceasefire;
  - Imposition of settlement;
  - Agreement reached with help of mediators;
5. **Post conflict:**
- End of violence confrontation;
  - More normal relations
  - If issues and problems not address return to violence is likely;

### The Conflict Pyramid



After this analysis, participants were asked to define the term; “**Negotiation**” through a care constructed role play organized by the participants themselves. The role depicts a family in conflict with the neighbourhood, a group of negotiators were invited by the members of the community in consultation with the parties in the conflict. The issues were amicably resolved through negotiation and dialogue with the parties involved in the conflict. Such a direct approach helped the participants to better understand some other traditional approaches to non-conflict transformation in rural communities.

Miss. Regina Saffa further stressed that traditional ways of address the conflict is one of the most effective means of reconciliation in rural communities; and the participants should make us of some traditional approaches that are harmful and does not exploit people rural communities; Involving local leaders and indigineous NGO’s based in the communities of intervention. Ensuring that myths of reconciliation:



### **Diplomatic Negotiations**

During this session, participants were asked to define the term “**Diplomatic Negotiations**” by the facilitator Mr. Tamba Sandi, a lecturer at the University of Sierra Leone.

“**Diplomacy**” as defined by the participants deals with the relationships that exist between states and non-state actors. Aims at creating order and peace in international relations;

“**Negotiation**” was defined as a process which people/groups with at least partly opposing views are made to reach an agreement.

Participants in small groups discussed the approaches to “diplomatic negotiation” highlighting the following:

- Scientific uncertainty e.g. Global warming;
- Cost benefit analysis;
- Notion of sovereignty;
- Biased notion of the enemy;
- Restricted communication;
- Truthfulness;
- Good temper;
- Exercise patient;
- Modesty-moral;
- Loyalty;

Participants were asked to watch film show on Best Peace Building Strategies-WAJIR Story. Participants had the opportunity to share their experiences and the lessons learnt from the film show; followed by a social evening in order for participants to interact with others from different communities.

### **Day six: Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2002**

#### **Morning session: Leadership**

This session was facilitated Emmanuel J. Roberts, Programme Coordinator UNOY-SL Network; with a focus on proper institutional building and internal democracy among youth leaders and individual youth organizations.

**Objective:** To create awareness on the concept of good leadership and its impact in our communities.

**Activity:** participants were asked to discuss in buzz groups the definition of “Leadership” at they perceived it in their communities.

**Definition:** A leader is someone who takes initiatives, show concern for the members of the group, develop action plan together, gives consideration to other’s view, punctual in

all activities and try to understand his people. Share, guide and enforce the rules and regulation of the group through critical analysis of the situation.

**Different types of leaders:**

1. THE DICTATOR
2. THE POLITICIAN
3. THE BOSS
4. THE COORDINATOR

**In a large group participants were asked to analyze the characteristics of a good leader in their communities/groups or organizations?**

- Leader takes initiatives.
- Show concern for the members of the group.
- Plan together with the members.
- Gives consideration to the views of others.
- Punctual in all activities.
- Involved in the activities of the group.
- Tries to understand the problems of the community.
- Shares responsibilities with others.
- Guide the group.
- Encourages the member of the group/community.
- Enforces the rules/regulations of the group/community.
- Analyses situations critically.
- Encourages and facilitates dialogue.

**ANIMATION AS A PROCESS**

**At end of the presentation, participants were asked to discuss the topic animation**

**Objective:** To let participants know what animation involves and how it is carried out, to build self-confidence and creativity with the people in solving their problems.

**Participants were asked to discuss the elements of animation as a process in building peace in rural communities**

- Creating of awareness
- Alternative value system
- Autonomous organizations
- Strengthening the economic base of the poor
- Building alliances and networking
- Leveling of relationship

**Characteristic of an Animator**

- Command respect
- Friendly and accommodating
- Honest
- Knows what (s) he is doing
- Know and practice the culture of the people
- Committed
- Flexible
- Have good moral standard
- Good mixer
- Approachable

- Humble and relate with the people well
- Share experience of the people

### **Roles of the Animator**

- Demonstrates
- Guide
- Stimulates
- Live with the people
- Observes the potentials and weaknesses in the community listen carefully and challenges the people
- Facilitate the distribution of input

### **Tools for Animation**

This refers to the techniques used in **Animation**, these are:

- Group formation
- Visitation
- Speaking and listening
- Meeting
- Observation
- Questioning
- Review
- Record keeping
- Sharing information
- Community theatre
- Case study planning
- Code and decoding
- Analyzing data
- Monitoring and evaluate activities

### **Listening survey:**

This is a process of gathering information from community people, while expressing their feelings in a relaxing atmosphere. We listen to what people say when they are anger, worried, fearful, happy, and glad etc.

### **How a listening survey is done?**

- Formation and training of listening team
- Team comprises of people most likely to come by information
- Team listen in public places such as market places, tailoring shops, black smithry shed and pubs.
- Team prioritizes information gathered and arrives at a generative theme

### **Codes;**

- The generative theme is made into a **code**. A code is a presentation of problems in the community in the form of a play, song, pictures or mime.

### ***Afternoon session: NGO Structure, policy making and institutional building.***

Handouts were shared among participants on Youth Institutional Building in order to discuss in small groups on policy making and the establishment of an NGO Structures.

### **Handout**

Most youth organizations recognise the need to address a particular issue or set of issues initiated. This core group of founders will determine the purpose of the potential organization, the target population to serve and what kind of activities it will undertake to achieve its intended objectives. Once agreement is reached on these issues in the core group, it often will bring more people into the organization drawing on their ideas about how to redefine skills and contacts. Some new organizational questions may be who, what, why, where and when.

A meeting will create the first impression of the group's seriousness, merit and potentials for success, it is important for initial planning meeting to be well structured in order to redefine and carefully plan its content. The following guidelines outline how to carefully plan the initial meeting.

1. Set a time for the meeting that is convenient for those you wish to attend the meeting. Some considerations could include.
  - a. Holding the meeting during non-working hours if you wish to invite working people.
  - b. Avoiding a time likely to conflict with other important events or holidays.
  - c. Assessing whether it makes sense to try to hold the planning meeting around the meetings or events of established organization likely to attract the kind of people you want for your group.
  - d. Setting the time far enough in advance so that people can plan to attend, but not so far ahead that they forget about the meeting.
2. Choose a wise and convenient location for the meeting.
  - a. Is the location centrally located, easy to find, and if possible, accessible to public transportation?
  - b. Is it safe, quiet, comfortable and inexpensive?
  - c. Does it have a neutral or positive reputation? (Using a government building, for example, or a site which has excluded certain groups in the past, could alienate prospective recruits or even prevent them from attending).
  - d. Is it important to hold the meeting in a public place, rather than a private home? (In some societies, for example, it may compromise a women's reputation to meet with men in a private home).
3. Plan the meeting carefully.
  - a. Identify someone to facilitate or chair the meeting.
  - b. Identify a person from the original core group to present to initial thoughts on what the group should do, how the mandate should be undertaken, who should do it, and why it is necessary.
  - c. Decide how to structure the larger group discussion following the presentation
  - d. Identify someone to take notes, keep minutes and write questions.
4. In addition to the core group presentation and following discussion, consider including in the meeting agenda;
  - a. Initial introductions. Having each meeting participant introduces him or herself and speak briefly (one or two minute maximum) about what attracted him or her to the meeting helps people get to know each other. Core organiser should arrive early to personally greet newcomers and introduce them to others.
  - b. Identification (time permitting) of one or two initial concrete projects for the group to undertake;

- c. Individual commitments of services or resources, no matter how small should be encouraged from those who are really interested in becoming part of the group.
  - d. Refreshments. It is important to create a warm, friendly environment for the meeting. Refreshments and an open period to socialize will enable participants to meet each other and discuss the session. This also gives the organizer a chance to speak with people who did not articulate their views during the meeting;
5. Start and end the meeting on time, and respect explicit time limits for each agenda items;
  6. Follow-up. If participants have expressed a willingness to undertake specific assignments, core members should follow-up with them soon after meeting. Interest often diminishes as time elapses. Quick follow-up will also demonstrate that the group is serious about the work and expects commitments to be respected.

### **Determining a mandate**

Organizational mandates help answer questions about what the does? What are its primary goals and objectives? To determine a clear mandate, an organization has to ask itself: why is a group necessary? Who will it serve and who will its members be? What will it do, and where and when will it do it? A group's mandate, in turn, will determine and define its activities.

In order to address the first question why establishes the group? One must target the central problem.

The composition of your group will determine what is realistically possible for you to accomplish. For example are you a group to lawyers or farmers? Are you from the same ethnic or regional background? As a group do you speak a variety of local languages? Are all from the same economic class? Do you have influence with the government officials, religious leaders or the press? Do you have national and international contacts? How much experience, if any, does the group have to undertake the task? Do you have the access and contacts necessary to reach the targets population?

What the group intends to do is to the heart of mandate. The question speaks both to the larger group and to its specific, measurable objectives and methods. The goal of the group is usually to pursue a broad and sometimes wishful ultimate purpose. For example, to raise awareness of youth issues, to stop human right abuses, or to empower peasant farmers, increase the community awareness on the effects of revenge. The objectives, however, are much more specific; they address what particular outcomes the group hopes to achieve in **measurable** terms. Objectives usually start with phrases such as "to increase" or "to decrease" which lay the groundwork for measuring your degree of success later on.

In determine objectives and methods, it is important to be realistic. The development of a realistic mandate requires a careful assessment of the human, materials and communications resources at a group's disposal, as well as the environment in which it is to operate. Groups need to ask themselves questions such as: what are the organising tools at their disposal (mass meetings, demonstration, clandestine actions, etc.)? What are the means of transforming information (are phone lines and postal services in the country reliable)? Is the proposed mandate realistic given prevailing political and social conditions? Does it provide for the likelihood of at least some early successes (important for building the organization's credibility)? Does the mandate

provide room for flexibility in the case of an unanticipated change of political circumstances or need to address a new constituency?

The answers to the “where” and “when” a question flow naturally from those of the “why” and “what”; where speaks to geographic scope. Will the group address problems in one locality or a particular region? Will it work focus on national problems in one country or will it work internationally?

Many groups-especially those involved in the provision of direct services to particular communities-emphasize the importance of consulting members of those communities before mandates are conclusively determined and activities are undertaken. There are numerous examples of well-intended efforts, which failed because the needs of the target communities were assumed, rather than based on an actual assessment. If the target community does not perceive the problem that you have identified in the same way, or consider other problems to be of greater importance, your services or programs may not be effective.

Finally it is essential that the initiator of the group (and all subsequent members) agrees on the group’s goals, objectives and methods, and commits them to paper. Differences on these points and expectations among group members may not be immediately obvious, so it is often worthy spending the time to fully discuss these matters, even if conflicts emerge. The identification of conflicts is healthy and their resolution will usually strengthen the commitment of each member.

No matter how much thought is given to these issues at the beginning, however, groups should periodically review their mandates. Groups may find that a modification of mandate is necessary based on an evaluation of the existing capacity to carry on task it was intended to undertake.

### **Writing organisational by-laws**

By-laws are internal rules-usually written by a group’s founders-which govern the structure, organization and operation of a new group. By-laws specify internal practices and procedures, and define the roles and relationships between members (if relevant), board and staff. Serving as an organizational constitution, by-laws also set forth the power, right and duties of the constituent bodies of the group. If thoughtfully cast from the beginning, by-laws can help an organization avoid power struggle and disputes over procedures. Law, however, requires by-laws in many countries, and most groups regard them essential to the smooth functioning of their organizations.

If an organization intends to incorporate or otherwise legally register with its government, by-laws may be a prerequisite. Legal registration offers many advantages. A group that is not legally registered may have trouble opening bank accounts and receiving funding, especially from foreign sources. In addition, potential members, staff and volunteers may be hesitant to join an organization, which is not legally registered for fear of government. Legal registration can also make access to the press and international organizations easier.

### **When are by-laws written?**

Most organizations write by-laws immediately upon the making the formal decision to start a group, while others wait several months to see how their early operations might inform the content of the by-laws. A smaller number of organizations wait a year or more, feeling that it is premature to develop a structure and set of governing policies

without the benefit of at least a year's worth of experience. Determining when to write organizational by-laws can only be done on an individual basis, but several points are worth considering:

- a. Organization, which start with more than a few individuals, recruit a board of directors and membership, and/or anticipate growth, should consider the pitfalls of failing to specify the roles of the group's constituent bodies before conflicts over decision-making, rights and responsibilities.
- b. It is a good idea to build into the by-laws amendment procedures, which allow for their modification in case subsequent experience suggests the need for changes. Incorporating these flexibilities into the by-laws may make their early establishment more palatable.

### **What kind of information is usually included in by-laws?**

By-laws usually begin with the basic information: the organization's name and address, a declaration of its non-profit status, and the expected duration of its operations. By-laws also clearly specify the purpose of the organization, which may include a description of the services it will provide, or the activities it will undertake.

Generally, both membership and non-membership-government organizations have boards of directors. The specific role regarding the policies and decision-making power of the board of directors is also detailed in the by-laws. Will the board have a primary supervisory role or will it additionally make policy and/or even take on discrete task of its own? If an organization is governed by its membership, how will the board's role be distinguished from that of the membership? The by-laws would indicate come or all of the following:

1. How board members are chosen and by whom (elected by the membership? Appointed by the a special committee or the executive director?);
2. On what basis are they chosen (eligibility criteria);
3. Whether board members may also be members of the staff;
4. Whether board members may receive compensation for special service provided;
5. How long their terms of office are and how many times they may be elected;
6. Whether board terms to service will be staggered to ensure a mix of new blood and experience;
7. How often the board will meet and the number to board members required to a quorum;
8. How specific officers of the board, such as its chairperson, secretary, treasure, etc. will be chosen and how long they will hold their position;
9. How specific committees within the board of directors will be established and what authority they will exercise (this is especially important with regard to an executive committee which may meet more regularly or in times to crises to make emergency decisions);
10. Procedures for removing members of the board either for infractions, inaction or newly arisen conflicts of interest;
11. Procedures for replacing a board members who may become ill, leave the country for a period to time, etc.;
12. What fiscal responsibilities the board will exercise?

In addition to the board and membership, some organization has advisory, ethnics and other committee composed of subset of the membership. For each body, rights and responsibilities, rules governing elections and appointments, etc. should be enumerated in the by-laws.

## **Consolidating and sustaining youth organisational leadership**

In order to consolidate and sustained youth organisational leadership, three components should be sited:

- 1. Internal democracy and accountability**
- 2. Effective leadership**
- 3. Teamwork**

These interrelated components determine the quality of the working environment within the organization-the manner in which staff members communicate with each other, and how motivated and empowered they feel. It is important to fully separate the discussion of these three components, since effective leadership fosters internal democracy and teamwork, and internal democracy and teamwork tend to nurture and expand leadership.

### **1. Internal democracy and accountability**

Democratic governance, on the other hand, supports consultation and broad participation in policy and decision-making, even if the executive director and/or board have the final say. In the democratic model, staffs are accountable to each other as well as to the executive director, and the executive director is accountable to the staff, board and memberships. This is done by insisting on responsiveness and transparency from executive director and staff alike, and by establishing mechanisms for effective redress, by all accounts, building a truly democratic organization is a difficult (though extremely worthwhile) process, especially if its members have little personal or societal experience with democratic governance. The following questions posed by rights activities may help to determine the level of internal democracy within your organization.

1. Is there distribution of authority among as many people as possible? Are the responsibilities and powers of everyone in the organization clearly delimited? Are the people in authority accountable to those who selected them to do the work?
2. Is there rotation among those chairing meeting or heading projects or even, if possible, of those leading the organization? (Some groups made persuasive arguments for electing officers even within the staff itself to ensure accountability and encourage the rotation of posts, thus strengthen and broadening the group's base, several groups noted that responsibilities held too long by one person could come to be seen as that person's property and would not be easily relinquished in the future);
3. How are decision made, and is this process clear to everyone?
4. Who plays a part in choosing the group's leaderships?
5. How many leaders are there?
6. Are there mechanisms that allow people in the organization to question the leadership? To what extent can minority opinions be expressed? Are there provisions for appeals against unpopular decisions?
7. Have mechanisms been established for the staff and board to have direct access to each other (i.e. not through the executive director)? In some groups, a staff representative actually sits on the board. In other cases, some mechanism is created for the anonymous provision of concrete information to the board to prevent the executive director from painting an unrealistically rosary picture of the organization's affairs;

8. Is the lack of political and social equality in society mirrored in the organization? Are women and minority (vulnerable) members of the organization fully participating or are they marginalized? To what extent do leaders want to change inequalities?
9. Are tasks allocated to rational criteria?
10. Is there equal access to the materials resources needed by group, as well as to skill and knowledge? Is information made available and disseminated to everyone on a regular basis? (This applies to the flow of information within the staff, as well as between the staff and board. Circulating written reports on staff meetings to the board and vice-versa, and making sure the staff knows about all board and staff meetings will contribute to the transparency vital to democratic governance)
11. To what extent are those who use the services of the organization included on the staff?
12. When important visitors arrive at the organization's office, are they encouraged to talk to members of the staff other than the leadership?
13. Are regular opportunities provided for staff to gather and evaluate their efforts, as well as those of the leadership?

Other mechanism for accountability is found in membership organizations, which give their members voting privileges at annual general meeting. In such a scenario, members may serve as a check on staff and board authority by virtue of electing and removing officers whose performance they find unsatisfactory, by voting on policy directly, or some combination of the two. Some organizations assign each member equal voting rights. Still others allow all members to vote, but weight the ballots of certain, more active members. Group should be aware; however, that mechanism for ensuring internal democracy and accountability, such as membership voting, can be subverted to achieve undemocratic ends.

## **2. Effective leadership**

In most case, the leader of a group tends to be one of its founders who have assumed the position of executive director. This is most often the person with the vision, commitment and ability to inspire and mobilize people necessary to get the group off the ground. But s cannot ultimately rely on the talents and skills of one person alone. Leadership is ideally shared by a number of people within an, delineated according to people's specific talents and areas of responsibility. A good leader will be committed an institution that can outlast him or her. To do this, s/he must be willing to develop other leaders within the organization.

Effective leaders formulate and articulate a clear picture; a vision of how the is headed and of what is important. In achieving this mission, making the vision a reality, the leader builds trust and commitment and is the architect of coalitions of support for the vision. Through the exemplary deployment of youth talents, and the nurturing and development of the talents of others, this leader seeks to lead by vision inspiration and the empowerment of others.

Leadership doesn't always mean taking charge. One can lead by setting an example, by helping to settle differences or by introducing new ideas. Identify all the leadership tasks, and divide them. In larger youth s, there may be several layers of leadership. For example, some s have executive directors with ultimate authority for all staff and programs housed by the; a deputy director for programs who oversees the administrative and financial matters of the entire; project coordinators who are leaders in their particular project; and additional coordinators for functions such as public relations, fundraising, volunteer co-ordination, etc.

Some are able to create a leadership role for every member of their group including the receptionist and secretary. They do this by exploring the full range of leadership possibilities, and appreciating the talents of staff that are often overlooked because they do not relate directly to youth s know-how. For example, a receptionist or secretary could play a leadership role in developing an office procedures manual and in training new staff members and volunteers in administrative matters. A particularly committed volunteer might be asked to play a role in recruiting and coordinating other volunteers. Perhaps a staff member or volunteer has a special talent for making people feel welcome or comfortable – they could be given leadership responsibilities with new recruits, or assigned to take care of special visitors such as guest speakers or visiting donors, board members and others who may require special attention.

Leadership capabilities among staff members can also be cultivated by provision of skills and knowledge-building training opportunities. Many youth groups emphasized that the chance to attend training workshops and seminars should not be monopolized by a few people at the head of an organization. According to many right activists, training should be periodic, whether it is in basic administrative and computer skills or in techniques for paralegal work, youth education, data collection and investigative reporting, or advocacy and mass mobilization. Some groups advocated sending staff away for training so that they would not be distracted by day-to-day office crises. They felt that it was best to seek opportunities to share experience with like-minded s operating in countries with working environments more similar to their own. Still others emphasized the value of on site training – whether by local experts or foreigners – because it allows groups to acquire practical skills in their home environment; reduces the alienation that can be caused by witnessing the disparity of resources between the North and South; reduces the blind emulation of other groups' method of operating; and reduces the incidence of brain drain.

Developing open and varied channels of communication within the organization is essential both to being a good leader, and to fostering leadership in others. This lets the staff know that their expertise is recognized, and may lead those consulted to take more initiative in the future. By the same token, staff should feel that leaders-from project coordinators on up-are accessible and will deal honestly and directly with them. When there are problems, effective leaders are willing to confront them and look for enduring solutions rather than hasty solution.

As mentioned above and in other sections, devising a staff and volunteer reward system can pay off in the form of increased motivation, productivity and leadership tendencies. This is especially important in the highly pressured and sometimes dangerous youth s field that is notorious for its high burn out rate. Are you recognizing and celebrating the contributions of your staff, volunteers, and, if relevant, members? Have specific mechanisms for recognizing and celebration hard work and dedication been developed?

Few youth organizations with which we spoke does this, but those, which do swear by its importance. Recognition ranged from private or public praise to written letters of thanks for valuable service and stellar work performance evaluations, to employee-of-the-month awards and promotions. Other types of rewards included things like to access equipment during non-office hours, mandatory compensatory time to avoid burn out, training to develop specific youth organizational skills, and opportunities to travel. Those employing reward systems, however, emphasized the importance of keeping the level of praise appropriate to the achievement, and avoiding rewards that seem more designed to exclude those not receiving them than to recognize those who are.

Activities reported a number of additional attributes that the multiple leaders of youth s, and NGO's should strive to collectively possess:

- 1) Knowledge about their subject areas;
- 2) The ability to build consensus
- 3) The ability to encourage innovation and risk-taking
- 4) The ability to be organized
- 5) The willingness to solicit feedback on a regular basis
- 6) Sensitivity to the preoccupations of staff and membership
- 7) Flexibility
- 8) Diplomacy
- 9) Self control
- 10) The ability to deliver criticism constructively. (In youth groups where people are typically working under duress because of their workload and the environment, in which they operate, nerves may be frayed and frustration may be high. Too often, leaders who feel additionally burdened by their colleague's failure to complete a task or do it properly blurt out public expressions of exasperation directed at staff. Though understandable, such a reaction will almost always cause the accused to feel humiliated and demoralized. Criticism should be done in private and specific charges and concrete examples of poor performance should be offered. Those being criticized should then have an opportunity to give their side of the story and any possible extenuating circumstances before any further reprimand;
- 11) Good judgement about when and how to say no. (Most youth organizations are over committed given their resources and staff limitations. Your organization will suffer if the leadership is spread too thin, serving on numerous boards or coalitions, serving as consultants to international)

Few people possess all of these abilities and qualities, so s need to prioritise them according to the nature of their mandate and internal structure, and assemble a staff that collectively possesses as many of them as possible. This list should not

discourage or overwhelm; they are ideals that few of us reach, but striving for them makes your organization run more smoothly and efficiently.

### **3. Teamwork**

If internal democracy, accountability and effective leadership are in place, good teamwork is sure to follow. Teamwork thrives in an environment of collaboration rather than competition. All members of the organization, though they may be working in different areas, are willing to help out in other areas that are necessary because they recognize that they have a stake in the success of the organization.

Unfortunately, a competitive rather than collaborative spirit plagues many larger youth s with multiple projects. It is easy for those working on a project to feel that there are the most vital to the organization. Competition between project leaders within the same organization often develops for funding, greater recognition from leadership and peers, and/or greater control over decision-making. Unchecked competitive attitudes can lead to communication breakdowns, as information is hoarded to maximize control over private domains and people no longer feel that they can rely on each other. Solidarity may even break down to the extent that activists begin to give priority to, and stress to outsiders the importance of, their own particular program over the rights group itself. The integrity and future of the whole organization may be jeopardized as trust evaporates.

A youth organization can avoid such a situation by ensuring that all projects and the organization itself are designed to necessitate teamwork. Teamwork is facilitated by many of the same mechanisms cited earlier in connection with developing internal democracy and good leadership.

- 1) Enthusiasm and a sense of belonging are usually prerequisites to building team spirit. Persons exercising leadership within an organization can foster a positive group dynamic from the beginning by: taking an interest in staff workers as people and not just youth organizational activists; exercising tolerance and understanding and offering constructive criticism when staff make mistakes; treating staff with equal respect no matter what their position; and providing for equal access and opportunity for development among staff members.
- 2) Employee opinions and ideas should be regularly solicited and the maximum number of staff possible should be included in discussions and decision-making.
- 3) Compartmentalization should be avoided from the start. Everybody working within or associated with a youth organization should have a shared understand and unified position on the overall mission and work of the organization. For this to happen, it may be necessary to periodically review the goals and objectives of the group. It is easy to lose sight of your founding principles when you are caught up in the day-to-day work, so there needs to be a continuous process of verification that everyone shares the same values and agenda;
- 4) All staff and in some cases volunteers should be informed on a regular basis (for example through staff meeting) as to what various projects are doing, and informal networking within the organization should be stressed as strengthening everyone's work.

- 5) Care in the recruitment process should be taken to hire activists with complementary skills and talents so that they have a personal interest in collaborating
- 6) Youth s should maximum extent possible, reflect expertise, high level of responsibility, and commitment in the salary benefits given to staff so no one feels that his or her effort is unrecognised or under valued.
- 7) Conflicts that arise between staff members should be immediately and openly addresses, encouraging compromise and cooperation.

In sum, staff and volunteers may need to be reminded periodically that everyone has a shared stake in the success of both the entire organization and its individual components.

### **1. Credibility**

The credibility—trustworthiness and reliability – of a youth s will in large part determine its effectiveness. Youth organizations, which lack credibility, will not be taken seriously, and may find themselves more vulnerable to attack by hostile governments or other forces. A reputation for credibility is something that a youth organizations earn overtime as relevant actors develop confidence in its conduct. An organization may in fact feel that it is credible, but if those outside the organization do not perceive it that way; the groups' ability to obtain information, mobilize support, etc will be weakened. Unfortunately, some s only come to realize that they have failed to establish credibility on the outside world – or lost it – when they experience the consequence of a loss of faith; a fall off in funding; a lack of interest by international NGOs in its documentation; or a distinction; or a disclamation by other local NGOs to cooperate with it through networking and common participation in campaigns.

### **2. Accuracy of information**

Documentation is the foundation of all youth organizational activity whether the research/data is used to organize citizen pressure; persuade government or others to adopt a particular policy or cease an abusive practice; observe trials; provide a service such as legal aid, food or medicine or educate about human rights. When a youth organization documents and publicizes information, it is critical that it make certain of the groups which fails to confirm rumours or allegations before relaying them to the world, or embellishes the details or rights violations to make the case against a violator more vivid, is very high. This is true even when it is done in the service of ending violations that are very real. By contrast, disseminating accurate information bolsters a rights' group's credibility because the group develops a reputation in the human rights, international and media communities as a source of dependable information.

Sometimes, however, groups make mistakes. Generally, a youth organization, which publicly admits a mistake immediately upon discovering it, will not lose credibility, so long as mistakes are the exception rather than the rule.

### **3. Independence, Impartiality and Objectivity**

To be credible, a youth organization must strictly adhere to its youth organizational agenda, no matter whose political interests that agenda is likely to serve or harm. Since being regarded as independent, impartial and objective is essential to establishing credibility, avoiding the appearance (or reality) of serving the interests of either the state or opposition parties is of critical importance.

The questions of credibility are particularly sensitive when youth are founded, for example, by a group of government employees wishing to promote youth education, or by former rebel leaders whose movement is now in power. Can such groups be independent given their close ties to a current government? In the case of groups that are truly committed to being impartial, despite the past or present affiliations of their members, the answer is yes – in the long run. Such groups, however, will have a much harder time establishing credibility in certain quarters because of their strong association with officialdom. This kind of linkage poses the greatest problem for groups intending to monitor the behaviour of their old friends or current employees.

Maintaining impartiality is not the same as being apolitical. Youth activities do not have a political impact, both intentional and unintentional, and may involve participation in the broader political process. Demonstrations and other forms of active dissent against abusive government policies are sometimes necessary. Such actions do not compromise impartiality so long as their purpose is not to exploit the cause in question on behalf of the government's political opponents and their agenda. The challenge, then, is to prevent even politicised youth s from being transformed into partisan activity (the line between political and partisan might be crossed for example, if the president of a rights group decides to maintain his position while simultaneously standing for political office. Alternatively, a youth organization might be co-opted on behalf of those with partisan aims by the infiltration of political activists whose agenda is to make the group and appendage of their political movement

According to my experience working with non governmental s and refugee youths groups in the Rep. of Guinea; I discovered some disagreement among groups as to whether it is advisable to endorse or actively promote a particular candidate or political party that has a youth organization, or has actually included youth organizational principles or policies in its political platform. Some activists argue that in polarized societies where neutrality is virtually unknown, a group could lose credibility by not endorsing a particular party or candidate. And in cases where a political race consists of one candidate with a past record of dictatorial rule and youth abuses while the other candidate spent time in prison for her youth activism, a youth's reputation could be discredited by failing to shoe open support for one of its activists to avoid demonstrations demanding the over throe of a leader who has abused youth s when they ought to be in the forefront.

The majority of older, more experienced groups surveyed, however, argue that it is never appropriate for a youth group to align itself with a political party. Among other things, such alignments make it difficult to criticize the human practices of a group's affiliated party or leader. Rather, youth groups should express enthusiastic support for the particular program or policy advocated by that party. To be seen promoting or campaigning for a particular candidate – no matter how consistent his or her party platform is with the objectives of the youth organization and community – could compromise group's reputation for neutrality and raise doubts about the group's priorities. Is politics being used in the service of the human right or are youth organizations being used in the service of politics

Though groups must never be neutral when it comes to human rights, most felt that it was best to support or protest policies and practices, rather than individuals or parties. If, for example, a political group seeks a permit from the government to hold a peaceful demonstration, and that permit is denied, youth organization should protest the inhibition of freedom of associations and expression, while taking no position on merits of the

political group or its agenda. If, however, the political groups fail to request the required permit, youth s should stress that all groups are bound by the rule of law.

In addition to establishing a group's independence from political entities, it is equally important to avoid favoritism with specific ethnic, religious or linguistic groups (unless the mandate is to address discrimination against those groups in particular). It is also important for a group to establish independence from donors, making certain that those who make contributions understand that they have not purchased any rights to intervene in policy or decision-making. This is true in the case of foreign foundations and government's sponsors as well as wealthy local sponsors.

Just as youth groups must be willing to criticize violations no matter which the perpetrators are; they should also give credit where credit is due to any entity responsible for an improvement in youth s. To be credible, a youth group must be objective, applying the same standards of youth s (international, as well as domestic if they are high) to a new and promising government as it did to a previous abusive regime.

The perception that an organization is objective will be enhancing by the avoidance of rhetoric when publicly condemning a government's youth records. Some youth groups, seeking to ensure that the public understands the full extent of their objectives

#### **4. Accountability**

A youth organization is accountable when it is answerable to the communities it intends to serve, the national and international communities that may receive information from it and its donor agency. Is the organization doing what it would do? How efficient is the organization in carrying out its programs? Is it working as diligently as possible given local circumstances? Are its decisions prudent? How responsive is the organization to the concerns of its constituencies? s, which do less than they promised or undertake activities altogether different from their original representation, are likely to lose credibility as their word comes to be regarded as untrustworthy.

Accountability also requires NGOs to take responsibility for any unintended consequences of their work. Groups, which do not try to anticipate the range of consequences that may flow from their projects or campaigns, may cause unintended problems for their projects populations. Take, for example, a group, which spends considerable energy educating a community about a specific health problem and solution, but fails to first obtain the support of the traditional village healers. Simply filtering water through cheesecloth has for years prevented the people of the village diseases. They are furious at the village healer, whom they believe has withheld this valuable information from them all this time, and drives him out of town. The village healer however, has played a vital psychological and spiritual role in the community, and his fall from grace deprives the village of vital services on which it has traditionally depended. The NGO has therefore remedied one problem, but caused another.

Likewise, if an NOG's agitation on behalf of an abused group is unable to garner the hoped-for protection from the international community, but causes these the authorities to further repress the group, the NGO may be held accountable for failing both to warn the group of the possible consequences of their involvement, and to prepare it sufficiently for the authorities reaction. Careful analysis prior to the implementation of a campaign or project will help prevent situations where the "cure" is worse than the disease.

Financial accountability requires an organization to utilize its funds efficiently and exclusively in the service of its institutional objectives, maintain detailed financial records, and submit timely and regular reports according to its donor's agreements. Organizations, which consistently send in late and/or incomplete reports, may harm future funding when their reputation for sloppy reporting spreads to other donors.

### **5. Commitment and perseverance**

Another measure of credibility is the level of commitment groups are perceived as having toward their various causes, and whether they're trusted to sustain dedication to the work over time. Youth groups that jump on the bandwagon when certain youth issues are in vogue but drop them the minute they fall from public consciousness will not be regarded as credible. By contrast, a group that seriously pursues its objective will earn some measure of credibility even if its objective are not fully achieved. A youth group's commitment to the work may also be measured by the extent to which it practices what it preaches. Does the leadership of the organization respect the staff? Do staff working at the grassroots level show respect to members of the community traditional denied?

The seriousness of the group's commitment may also be judged by its willingness to stand up for it. If, for example, the government seizes the publication of a particular rights organization, the group must be willing to risk the further wrath of authorities by taking action designed to affect the return of its materials. Groups, which fail to stand up to the government when their own rights are violated, will not be trusted to stand up for the rights of others.

### **5. Inclusiveness**

We have already discussed the importance for credibility of making certain that the community that is the object of a youth group's help participates meaningfully in the planning and implementation of the group's projects. Particularly when the group's activities are largely or wholly members of the elite, this will help close the cultural gap that can lead to misunderstandings, which undermine well-intended work. We have also noted the desirability of groups actually including members of the targeted community (ies) on their staff and board.

As mentioned in the context of objectivity above, credibility is also enhanced when group's work equitably on behalf of all group found within the region covered by their mandate. If, for example, an organization is following up human rights abuses in a particular region, it should show equal concern for abuses committed against all groups. Organizations providing health services or legal aid should not neglect certain ethnic or religious groups in favour of others. Even though the victims of rights violations may overwhelmingly belong to one particular social group, the very universality of youth 's suggests that human rights organizations should avoid confining their assistance to such groups unless they can demonstrate that no others rights are being similarly violated. The exception, as noted earlier, is when organization mandates specifically cater to certain vulnerable groups such as women, children or minorities, for whom past or current discrimination has been or is disproportionate as to justify singular attention.

### **6. Transparency**

Transparency, or the willingness to open one's organization to scrutiny, is another component of credibility. When an organization is willing to divulge its financial dealings, research or project methodologies, and internal procedures (including how it makes

decisions and why certain decisions were made), it sends a message to its potential critics that it is confident in its undertakings and has nothing to hide.

## 7. REALISM:

Youth groups that promised to end abuses raise the youth s' consciousness of all sectors of society or cure environmental ills are going to raise expectations that they cannot fulfil and lose credibility in the process. These are goals, not realistic objectives that can be achieved in the two to three year time frame during which observers may be willing to reserve judgement. Though it is appropriate for a statement of mandate to include these extremely long-term goals, s must emphasize to their constituencies the shorter-term objectives they believe they can actually accomplish and then they must accomplish them, or at least make significant progress towards doing so in order to maintain credibility.

### Friday 20<sup>th</sup> December 2002

#### Excursion to Regent: The animal Zoo and tour at Leicester peak botanical garden.

This excursion was guided by the Akim Conteh, the National Coordinator and Husham Sesay the National Secretary General; UNOY-SL Network. The tour was enriched by explanation on the positive initiatives undertaken by young people to create a safe and enabling environment for animals at the peak of the lion mountain-peninsula of Sierra Leone. Participants had the opportunity to visit the botanical garden at the University of Sierra Leone with a view of Freetown from above the highest mountain in the city. Despite constraints in climbing the mountains; participants however appreciated the tour as it was their first visit to such wonderful places that was maintained during a decade to civil war in the country.

### Saturday 21<sup>st</sup> December 2002

#### Morning session: Follow up action plans; and recommendations

#### 1. Adolescents and HIV/AIDS

<b>Appealing agency</b>	UNOY-SL in collaboration with UNOY Foundation
<b>Programme Title</b>	Adolescent and HIV/AIDS
<b>Programme code</b>	UNOY/1NTCP/02
<b>Sector</b>	Youth, Gender and HIV/AIDS
<b>Themes</b>	Children, adolescents, rights of the child, IDPs, gender, separated children.
<b>Objectives</b>	To increase the knowledge and personal skills of adolescents for behavioral change with regard to HIV/AIDS.
<b>Target beneficiaries</b>	7000 adolescent (including 3000 school children) with information, 2000 with life skills.
<b>Implementing agent</b>	UNOY-SL Network
<b>Project duration</b>	1 ½ years
<b>Fund requested</b>	392,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>392,000 + 10% administrative cost</b>

#### Background:

While the prevalence of HIV/AIDS has increased, knowledge about the disease has not increased. There has been a collapse in the health education and community

mobilization services as well as shrinkage in school enrolment and access to schools. Only 42 % of children of school going age are enrolled in school and 70% of the population is illiterate. There is very little information on HIV/AIDS and related topics and few structured opportunities to receive information messages and even fewer opportunities to debate and discuss the information amongst peers. The multi-indicator cluster survey (2000) showed that understanding of HIV/AIDS and related issues is very low; 46% of female between 15 and 49 had not heard of AIDS (22% in the urban and 56% in rural areas). The percentage of female who knew three ways of preventing HIV infection was 2% in the North, 20% in the South, 33% in the West and 43% in the East.

HIV/AIDS information education will be an integral part of UNOY-SL programmes. However, a separate programme is required to focus on adolescent and to raise the profile of the epidemic in the country and challenge the current widespread denial. This programme is in line with the new HIV/AIDS national policy.

Thus the programme will focus on the establishment of life skills in schools and IEC for (and by) adolescents. As counterparts in the programme design and implementation, adolescents will play a significant part in planning of the strategy and the development of all IEC materials. In addition, the project will collaborate very closely with the UNFPA projects.

**Main activities:**

- Formation of adolescent planning team: the programme will be jointly planned and managed by UNOY and a group of adolescent.
- Development of IEC materials: currently there are very few IEC materials and none are of sufficient quality. The programme will link with specialist agencies to build capacity for the development of IEC materials that are attractive, informative and facilitate behaviour change. The knowledge, Attitude and Practice survey (KAP) undertaken in 2001 will highlight issues that need to be addressed. KAP data from the sentinel surveys will be a continuous source of reliable information on which to design new materials. IEC materials will be developed for specific communication channels based on a preference survey that will be carried out.
- Distribution and use of IEC material: distribution will be nationwide through all possible channels across government and civil society.
- Life skills: the programme will draw on the successes from other African countries to establish Life Skills teaching and Life Skills Clubs in all secondary Schools and upper primary classes. This will require the development of reference materials for teachers and students, teachers training and follow up supervision.
- Peer Group Counseling: to support the effective use of the IEC material and the Life Skills initiative adolescents peer groups counselors will be trained in schools, through NGOs and religious groups that are working with adolescents.
- Monitoring and evaluation: the programme will work closely with the SHARP project to establish sentinel site monitoring system to monitor change in knowledge, attitude and practice. The district education officers will carry out additional monitoring of life skills education and an evaluation conducted at the end of the programme.

**Output:**

- System for the development of quality IEC materials established.
- Package of IEC materials distributed nationwide to all the principle organization and institutions that have direct contact with adolescent.

- Life Skills materials distributed to all Schools
- 150 teachers trained in life skills and facilitation of life skills education
- Life skills clubs established in 20 schools
- 150 peer group counselors trained and operational
- Sentinel surveillance system established

<b>Financial summary</b>	<b>US\$</b>
IEC communication strategy development and IEC materials design	40,000
IEC materials production and distribution	80,000
IEC material acceptance research	20,000
Life skills reference materials development	30,000
Life skills reference materials production and distribution	50,000
Training of 150 teachers	30,000
Training of 150 peer educators	30,000
Sentinel surveillance system	30,000
Field office programme support	20,000
Internet services/Café to create access to information (10) computers	25,000
Indirect programme support	62,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>417,000</b>

## 2. Peace-building and Reintegration of war affected youth

<b>Appealing Agencies</b>	United Nations of Youth Sierra Leone Network & UNOY Foundation, The Netherlands.
<b>Project title</b>	Peace Building
<b>Project code</b>	UNOY/SLN/PB001
<b>Themes</b>	Peace, Confidence Building and Reintegration programme will focus on the youth by intervening in communities and providing an enabling environment for confidence—building, economic and social recovery.
<b>Target beneficiaries</b>	Local community groups and their representatives, returning refugees, IDPs, ex-combatants, women and youth and victims of war as well as local government officials
<b>Implementing partners</b>	UNOY-SL Network.
<b>Project duration</b>	1 year ( April 2003-May 2004)
<b>Funds requested</b>	<b>123,000 + 10% administrative cost</b>

In 2003, the United Nation of Youth Sierra Leone Network will continue to focus on the principal objectives in 2002 with the aim of strengthen activities in the field of peace and confidence building and post conflict rehabilitation and development through reintegration assistance and reconciliation initiatives.

The programme is a joint UNOY-SL Network initiative to support and promote peace building and reintegration in the communities of Sierra Leone most devastated by the civil war through activities that combine peace building with reintegration. The activities will mobilize youth, women and children to rebuild communities by providing an enabling environment for peace building and socio-economic recovery.

- Strengthening community youth organizations activities in conflict prevention and peace building;

- Initiate and empower a nucleus of community confidence building; through training in conflict transformation, mediation and facilitation;
- Through social animation programmes facilitate the peace process at the grassroots;
- Facilitate opportunities for community reintegration, rehabilitation and recovery through special fund for project activities.

**Main activities**

This programme seeks to contribute to the establishment of peace and facilitate reintegration in Sierra Leone, based on stable political, economic and social conditions, by supporting the empowerment of communities in their struggle to improve local living standards and conditions, as well as by promoting the restoration of confidence in the peace process and enhancing community's capacity to recover.

- Support to UNOY-SL Network through the recruitment of volunteer specialist.
- Support to the reintegration of returnees, demobilized persons, IDPs and war-affected youth to their communities.
- Promotion of confidence and reconciliation activities among the youth at the community level through empowering youth groups.

**Major outputs:**

Strengthen the reintegration and community development outreach capacity in selected communities of S/Leone. Restore confidence in the peace process and increase the level of awareness among the communities of Sierra Leone to facilitate the reintegration process.

**Through the programme UNOY-SL Network will:**

Organize confidence-building measures with youth and youth groups to transform their attitude and behavior by encouraging a culture of peaceful co-existence.

Empower returnees and demobilized individuals and groups to explore opportunities in their communities for employment as well as participate in the social reconstruction process.

Organize peace and reconciliation/reintegration camps for children and youth to contribute to establishing a culture of peace.

Maintain confidence in the peace process and strengthen awareness among the communities of Sierra Leone through Civic Education and dissemination of information to youth groups across the country.

**Financial summary:**

No.	Budget	US\$
1.	Personnel – 10 National community facilitators	9,000
2.	Monitoring and evaluation	4,000
3.	Confidence building fund	20,000
4.	Advocacy on reconciliation/peace and dev. Issues	23,000
5.	Peace and dialogue camps for youth and children	15,000
6.	Cultural/sports for peace activities	17,000
7.	Training, workshop and conferences	27,000
8.	Programme support cost	8,000
9.	<b>Total</b>	<b>123,000</b>

## **Recommendations**

- UNOY-SL Network should establish an internet services/café where necessary to create access to information for vulnerable youth groups.
- That such conference should be held in the provinces to create awareness in peace-building and reconciliation programmes in rural communities.
- UNOY-SL should make available funds/resources to support youth initiatives in peace-building and campaign against HIV/AIDS in rural communities.
- That such conference should be an annual event for UNOY-SL to empower potential youth leaders.
- UNOY-SL should facilitate a peace education programmes in school and through the Internet.
- On going training in ICT for potential youth leaders to enhance effective communication.
- Encourage youth participation at all levels of peace building and peace missions.
- Develop a mechanism to secure the voices of youth pressure groups and encourage their participation in decision making.
- Encourage and promote youth advocacy programmes in rural and urban centres.
- UNOY-SL Network should facilitate a youth exchange programme within the Mano River Union (MRU).

## **Sponsors and donors of the conference:**

- Interchurch Organisation for development (ICCO), The Netherlands
- UNOY Foundation, The Netherlands
- Unicef Sierra Leone
- International Medical Corp (IMC) SL.
- Merlijn van Waas, Volunteer/Representative UNOY Foundation
- Ministry of Youth and Sport Sierra Leone.

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- Radio Democracy FM 98.1
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- University of S/Leone, Department for Peace Studies.