POST-WAR RECOVERY AND DEVELOPMENT IN LIBERIA SINCE 2003

By

MBULLE-NZIEGE LEONARD

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DECLARATION

I, MBULLE-NZIEGE LEONARD (212468197), hereby declare that the treatise/dissertation/thesis for Master of Development Studies to be awarded is my own work and that it has not previously been submitted for assessment or completion of any postgraduate qualification to another University or for another qualification.

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Declaration

I Mbulle-Nziege Leonard, student number 212468197, declare that, thesis, Post-War Recovery and Development in Liberia since 2003”, for an M.A in Development Studies to be awarded is my own work and that it has not previously been submitted for assessment or completion of any postgraduate qualification to another University or for another qualification.

Mbulle-Nziege Leonard
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List of Abbreviations

African Development Bank-AFDB
Agenda for Transformation-AFT
AGENDA-Actions on Genuine Democratic Alternatives
BBC-British Broadcasting Corporation
BTI-Bertelsmann Stiftung
CPA-Comprehensive Peace Agreement
DDRR-Disarmament, Demobilisation, Rehabilitation, Reintegration
GEMAP-Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program
GOL-Government of Liberia
IFEX-International Freedom of Expression Exchange
ILO-International Labour Organization
IMF-International Monetary Fund
IPRS-Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper
LRDC-Liberian Reconstruction and Development Committee
OECD-Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
UNDP-United Nations Development Program
UNICEF-United Nations Children's Emergency Fund
USIP-United States Institute for Peace
WHO-World Health Organization
Glossary

Accountability: Responsibility to someone, a group of people or for some activity.

Commodities: A raw material or product that is bought and sold commercially in large quantities.

Concession: A contract granting the right to operate a subsidiary business or of some land to be used for a specified purpose.

Neopatrimonialism: A system of social hierarchy where patrons use state resources in order to secure the loyalty of clients in the general population.

Peacebuilding: An intervention designed to prevent the start or resumption of violent conflict by creating sustainable peace.

Peacekeeping: Of or relating to the preservation of peace between hostile groups by international military forces.

Post War Reconstruction: Physical rebuilding and or reform of socio-economic, political and security institutions and capacities after the cessation of hostilities.

Prebendalism: State offices are regarded as prebends that can be appropriated by officeholders, who use them to generate material benefits for themselves, their constituents and kin groups.

Procurement: The act of getting possession of something.

Remittance: A payment of money sent to a person in another place.

Warlordism: Supreme military leader in a region especially one accountable to nobody when the central government is weak.
Chapter One: Introduction and Context

1. Introduction and Context

The Republic of Liberia is a West African nation, which has experienced just over a decade of relative peace, calm and stability, since the end of the country’s civil war, which lasted from 1989-2003. The armed conflict was preceded by close to a decade of socio-economic and political turmoil, which culminated in the war, which led to thousands of casualties, and enormous destruction. However, the causes of this conflict can be traced right back to the foundation of this nation as a settlement for liberated black slaves from America in 1822.

Despite the anarchy which reigned, Liberia has achieved a great amount of reconstruction and development since 2003, particularly under the guidance of President Dr. Ellen Sirleaf Johnson, who became the first elected female African head of state in 2005. The scenario of a female African head of state leading a nation in an immediate post-war scenario, prompted me to undertake the study of “Post-War Recovery and Development in Liberia since 2003”.

I was further encouraged to analyse this topic because, most post-conflict societies relapse into armed struggle within the first decade following cessation of hostilities (Collier 2007), the most recent case in point being the present crisis in South Sudan.

In relation to the research problem, the topic, as I earlier noted is “Post-War Recovery and Development in Liberia since 2003”. Post-war recovery entails many facets including amongst others; disarmament, demobilisation, rehabilitation, reintegration (DDRR), reconciliation, and peace building, governance, democracy, human rights, the rule of law, as well as economic reconstruction/development, and regional/international cooperation.
Due to the length of this report, emphasis shall be laid on the study of issues related to governance and economic development in post-war Liberia.

With regards the research question, I will firstly provide a brief background into the foundation of the Liberian nation, followed by an outline of the various factors which triggered the commencement of the civil war. Subsequently, I will highlight the different solutions which have been proposed by Liberian authorities as well as various societal stakeholders to ensure reconstruction and development take place nationwide. In addition to the aforementioned steps, mention will be made of the challenges faced by Liberian authorities and their partners in their drive to coordinate post-war recovery development in the country.

Finally, the aims and objectives of this study are notably, to provide an overall understanding of the history of Liberia, from the country’s foundation, through the civil war, up to the present day post-conflict scenario. I also intend to identify the strategies and schemes put in place by Liberian officials and other stakeholders, while outlining the importance of attaining the goals attached to these various plans. The difficulties of achieving these post-conflict development goals will also be noted, and finally, I will analyse whether the concepts used in Liberia might also be implemented in post-conflict societies not only in Africa, but all over the world.
Chapter Two: Literature Review

In this chapter, I will produce the literature review of my study topic, “Post-War Recovery and Development in Liberia since 2003”. The literature review aims to outline the theoretical framework of this study by providing a background of various African countries’ involvement in global affairs during the Cold War, and how this situation greatly changed during the post-Cold War transition period. The second part, shall highlight how the notion and approach to post-war reconstruction has evolved since the end of the Cold War. This is to provide a link on how the end of the Cold War, led to the demise of nations across the continent including Liberia.

2.1 The Cold War, African Governance and Conflicts

The Cold War, was the intense rivalry between two ideological camps backed by the world’s greatest military alliance systems which existed then notably, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the Warsaw Pact Treaty Organization (WPTO) (Ujeke 2009:35). These alliances, were led by the U.S. and Soviet Union respectively. From 1945-91, both sides struggled to gain and maintain spheres of influence across the world. During the Cold War, Africa was never regarded in terms of critical importance (Clapham 1997:100). However, from the mid-1960’s, African nations and leaders in particular were increasingly being drawn into the thick of this bipolar international security regime, with countries such as; Angola, Ethiopia, Liberia and Zaire amongst others, considered as major strategic “trophies” or areas of vital interest in the polarized ideological and regional balance of power politics (Orogun 2004).

The Cold War provided access to, much needed financial, technical and military assistance from whichever power, a nation or leader was aligned to. Aware of this, African leaders regularly played off the superpowers against each other, reinforcing the notion that, the Cold War served more as a means for access to resources which could ensure their stay in power, rather than a statement of adherence to a particular political or socio-economic ideology (Clapham 1997:101). This belief is backed by the fact that notoriously corrupt and ineffective leaders such as Mengistu (Ethiopia),
Mobutu (Zaire), Amin (Uganda) and Samuel Doe of Liberia, were able to head predatory regimes which lacked legitimate domestic political support, but used externally provided Cold War assistance, as a substitute for such (Clapham 1997:102). For autocratic African regimes, this was because non-provision of support to a Cold War client, would entail losing them to the opposing superpower, which would engender high geostrategic costs (Dunning 2004).

A major fall out of this was the “legacy of indifference” to democracy which ensued in these nations as military regimes, one party states, and personalised regimes with authoritarian characteristics, emerged and were consolidated during this period (Dunning 2004) (Ndulu & O’Connel 1999). Liberia has experienced the manifestations of all the aforementioned methods of governance before the war, from True Whig Party rule, (which was the first single state party in SSA), the personalised regimes of Tubman and Doe and the military regime of the People’s Revolutionary Council, in the aftermath of the 1980 coup.

From the 1980’s onwards, such practices were no longer acceptable, as the political and economic performance of monopoly states which had erstwhile applied such methods, were in rapid decline, as SSA experienced a 1.2% decline in GDP, from 1980-91 (Clapham 1998:99). Citizens of these countries, Liberia included, became increasingly critical about the poor governance and authoritarianism which reigned. For autocratic leaders the Cold War served as a way of protecting themselves and shoring up power, but eventually led to their fall and demise (Clapham 1997:102). The basis of political support for the Doe regime, was derived from his ethnic Krahn tribe and U.S. assistance, but this greatly diminished with the end of the Cold War, withdrawal of U.S. aid, and the accumulation of grievances, emanating from different components of the nation (Crocker 2005:14). Unfortunately, the end of the Cold War, and increasing levels of insurgency amongst African citizens, would bring an end to such a mode of governance, and ushered in the era of the African Crisis State.

The latter part of the Cold War was a particularly violent period characterised by protracted proxy wars fought by protagonists in Southern Africa, West Africa, and the Horn of Africa (Cilliers & Schunemann 2013). In the minds of many, the end of the Cold War was supposed to halt the torrent of conflict which characterized Africa during this era, and although a host of conflicts namely in; Namibia, South Africa and
Mozambique were resolved in the late 1980’s and early 1990’s, many others emerged and proved resistant to resolution (Crocker 2005). Several African nations such as Ghana, Senegal, post-Apartheid South Africa, and Tanzania amongst others, made the transfer to democratic pluralism in the aftermath of the Cold War (Orogun 2004). After the collapse of the Berlin Wall in 1989, some previously frozen conflicts reignited, notably in; Rwanda, Zaire, Sierra Leone and Liberia (Cilliers & Schunemann 2013).

The Cold War coincided with outright fragmentation and collapse of these states (Orogun 2004). The impact of this ideological rivalry, can be sited as a major factor for the emergence of this situation, namely through arms provision, lack of institutional support (governance, democracy, human rights) in favour of geostrategic interests, but all the blame cannot be based on this assertion. In the aftermath of such conflicts, new strategies were implemented to prevent future reoccurrences.

2.2 Contemporary Post-War Reconstruction

Post-War Reconstruction (PWR), is a term which has existed since the end of World War II, yet, has been at the forefront of global affairs since the 1990’s. PWR can be referred to as, the physical rebuilding and or reform of socio-economic, political and security institutions and capacities after the cessation of hostilities (Olawale 2008). The end of the Cold War left a band of failed and weak states. In SSA, the implosion of states and eruption of violent conflict in; Somalia, Liberia, Zaire, Burundi, Sierra Leone, and Rwanda came to define the phenomenon of state collapse, which arises when, “Governments or regimes are unable to perform or discharge its’ legal functions, while institutional capacity to carry out functions has eroded” (Olawale 2008)

This marked drastic qualitative and quantitative changes in international security dynamics, and prompted by the need to save lives, measures were implemented to mitigate and prevent such instances from repeating themselves. The United Nations realized simply deploying peacekeeping forces to prevent belligerent parties from fighting would not be sufficient, and thus incorporated, “The Agenda for Peace” in 1992 (Gariba 2011). In this document, three elements constituted peace building, namely; preventive diplomacy, peacemaking and peacekeeping, which were further divided
into; disarmament, destruction of weapons, strengthening and reform of government institutions, and protection of human rights (United Nations 1992). According to Boutros-Ghali, peace building was intended as “An action to identify and support structures which will tend to strengthen and solidify peace in order to avoid relapse into conflict” (United Nations 1992).

Later, it was realized that, such initiatives had significant shortcomings, as diplomatic and military action would not be enough to address long term issues. This was evident in SSA, where new manifestations of conflict proved difficult to end or prevent from relapsing into conflict. Thus, in 1995, “The Supplement to An Agenda for Peace” was presented, and this framework suggested new and comprehensive concepts to guide peacebuilding activities, as well as the modifications of old ones (United Nations 1995).

Additions included a greater emphasis on development. Concerning PWR, rebuilding physical infrastructure, re-launching the economy, and re-constituting the state (promoting good governance and political dialogue) demonstrate the incorporation of transformative socio-economic goals in PWR (United Nations 1995).

A related report by Annan (1998), also highlights the importance of emphasizing on political reconstruction (democracy building/good governance), and economic reconstruction (promoting private sector involvement, restructuring public finance management, and embracing of market reforms), in addition to the traditional humanitarian approaches.

Considering the above assertions, socio-economic and political developments in post-war Liberia, are the issues which I shall focus on throughout this research paper because, these aspects address the long term issues which post-conflict nations are faced with when hostilities cease. This does not mean that, humanitarian considerations such as resettling refugees and returning displaced persons, disarmament, demobilisation and reintegration are not important, but the aforementioned approaches are broad based, and better address the root causes of conflict in Liberia. Lastly, we'll examine the challenges faced in addressing a way forward, and hopefully bring out solutions which can be used in future, to address similar situations.
Chapter Three: Research Methodology

In this chapter, I will discuss the research methodology to be used for my topic “Post-War Recovery and Development in Liberia Since 2003”.

3.1 Research Methods

Considering that I will use already written and published material as part of desktop research, qualitative research is the methodology which will be applied. Qualitative research is an interdisciplinary, trans-disciplinary and sometimes counter-disciplinary field, as it cuts across the social sciences (Denzin & Lincoln 2005:7). Qualitative research is characterized by the use of literature, while the epistemological and ontological positions are, interpretivist and constructionist for this topic (Bryman 2001:380). An inductive approach will be applied, as the information and data I collect, will enable me to develop a theory in relation to the study (Bryman 2001:380). Qualitative research is also inclined towards providing more descriptive detail when reporting research findings. This aims to provide an account of the context of the scenario in question and provide the audience with a better understanding of the study (Bryman 2001:380).

3.2 Data Collection Procedures

Data collection is a series of interrelated activities, aimed at gathering accurate information, to answer emerging research questions. A qualitative researcher engages in a series of activities in the process of collecting data (Creswell 2013:146). Data collection steps include, setting the boundaries for the study, and gathering the information through the use of whatever method will enable the researcher understand the problem and the research question (Creswell 2009). My scope of research is Liberia, and due to this study of a specific unit, I will utilise the qualitative case study method. A case study, is an intensive study of a single unit, which may be an individual,
organization, event, or as my research indicates, a nation-state and examines a phenomenon within the real–life context (David & Sutton 2004:111).

Case study will be the data collection procedure to be applied. Case studies are primarily designed to investigate specific cases in depth, and achieve explanation by intensive analysis of many variables within a case. Unlike surveys and experiments, research results seek to explain the outcome of an event or situation (David & Sutton 2004:112) (de Vaus 2001:252). Case studies are research based, inclusive, evidence led, and provide the researcher with a holistic understanding of the problems, issues or phenomenon within the social context of this research topic, and pays close attention to the influence of political dimensions of the study (Hesse-Biber & Leavy 2011). In addition, case studies attempt to arrive at a comprehensive understanding of an event under study, but develop more general theoretical statements about regularities, in the observed phenomena (Fidel 1984). Case study can be used to test, illustrate or generate theory, and identify the sources of problems or solutions to problems (Hesse-Biber & Leavy 2011).

Multiple cases will be used, since I am applying the inductive approach. This is because, economic development and governance will be the main themes examined and many sub-themes will emerge from these. This is advantageous because, a good case study builds a good account of the research, when information is gained from many levels (de Vaus 2001:220 & 227). Data collection is cyclical because as data are being collected, researchers can identify the point when to stop data collection and when no more information is identified (Hennik, Hutter, & Bailey 2011). This will help to better understand the problem and research question (Hesse—Biber & Leavy 2011).
3.3 Data Collection Tools

For my research, documents will be utilized for data collection because of their content value and historical value. This means, in-terms of where they come from and what they mean historically as a source of material (Henning 2004:98). When documents are the main source of data and the analytical procedures that are the main analytical tool in the research process, then the document study is regarded as a genre on its’ own (Henning 2004:99). Case study uses extensive forms of documents.

Newspapers and other forms of textual print media, magazines included and their digital counterparts fall into this category. The value of newspapers is often overlooked, and offers diverse forms of discourse on a wide range of issues. Reporters have access to parts of society that academics or commercial researchers do not have and may publish interviews with political leaders, and other high profile people unreachable to researchers (Gibson & Brown 2009). Documents provide a means of tracking change and development, as documents provide background information and historical insight which can help researchers understand the historical roots of specific issues.

Documents can also be used to verify findings or corroborate evidence from other sources (Bowen 2009). Documents are also more stable, reflective of meanings, social organization and meanings than other forms of data used by social scientists (Athleide, Coyle, DeVries & Schneider 2008). Creswell (2009) notes, documents allow researchers to obtain the language and words of participants, can be accessed at times convenient to the researcher, as it is an unobtrusive source of data. In addition, documents represent data which is written evidence and saves the researcher the time and expense of transcribing (Creswell 2009). Public documents for this research will be obtained from well-established and credible institutions such as; Government of Liberia, supranational and specialist organizations, like the United Nations agencies, World Bank, International Monetary Fund, African Development Bank, the United States Agency for International Development as well NGO’s and think tanks such as The Mo Ibrahim Foundation, Center for Global Development, International Security Network, Transparency International, Freedom House and the Heritage Foundation.
The internet also provides a rich source for research, because it offers access to commentary, public debate, published and unpublished reports, libraries and archives. The web is more than simply a documentary source in its’ own right, as it constitutes the most ubiquitous form of documentary evidence in contemporary society (Gibson & Brown 2009). The use of the internet has developed over the years and offers an alternative to face to face and on the field methods and has given rise to internet ethnography (Marshall & Rossman 2011). I will utilize the websites of the aforementioned organizations as search engines like Google to conduct research. Qualitative data collection through the internet has advantages in terms of reduced costs for travel and time efficiency, and, relating to transcription (Creswell 2009). I preferred this method of data collection, t secondary using sources, as I will not travel to Liberia to pursue this study.

Taking into consideration that the research topic will require much detail, descriptive case study will be incorporated for this dissertation. Descriptive case study is important because, without good descriptions from the documents I obtain, there will be a lower chance of providing good explanations (de Vaus 2001:224). When using this type of case study, it is important that I select and arrange my facts in a way which the descriptions highlight aspects of the case study topic and also act as an interpretation method (de Vaus 2001:227). In order for the aforementioned to be carried out, certain elements of case study design and analysis will be implemented.

I am applying the inductive approach as the research focuses on aspects such as, economic development and governance will be primarily looked into. This is advantageous because a good case study builds a good account of the research, when information is gained from many levels (de Vaus 2001:220 & 227).

Moreover, concerning case study design, the use of time dimension descriptions is quite essential. Without a time dimension, an adequate explanation of the case study is not possible. For this research, I will utilize a retrospective time design (de Vaus 2001:227). This entails collecting information relating to an extended period, which in this research essentially covers 2003-till present, as well some background knowledge on the civil war (1989-2003) and pre-war (1822-1989) periods.

However, after the collection of the relevant data and information, it must be analysed, and the method which I have selected is qualitative document analysis (QDA).
3.4 Data Analysis

Data analysis consists of preparing and organizing the data for analysis and reducing the data into themes through a process of finally representing the data in a discussion (Creswell 2013:180). QDA as a variant of qualitative content analysis, is an integrated method, procedure and technique for locating, identifying, retrieving and analysing documents for their relevance, significance and meaning, and is more interested in thematic emphasis and discourse, than frequencies and statistically inferred relationships (Athleide et al. 2008:128). According to Bowen (2009:27), QDA is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents, both printed and electronic, and requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding and develop empirical knowledge. QDA involves the examination of numerous documents which contain texts which have not been written by the researcher (Athleide et al. 2008:131; Bowen 2009:27).

As a research method, document analysis is applicable to qualitative case studies and for historical approaches because, this method helps researchers understand the historical roots of specific issues and provides a means of tracking development and change. This is because, where various drafts of a particular document are accessible, the researcher can compare them to identify changes (Bowen 2009:30).

The use of QDA will also involve the examination of various documents, to verify findings, corroborate evidence as well as carry out comparative exploration and data analysis (Athleide et al. 2008:131). Historical analysis will be applied in this case, as this method analyses and interprets data with a historical base and context, such as my research topic. Systematic historical analysis enhances trustworthiness and credibility of a study (Marshall & Rossman 2011:185 &186).

The use of QDA has several advantages which include efficiency, as it is less time consuming than other research methods due to relatively easy access to documents. In addition, QDA provides exact names, references, and details of events, dates, authors and other relevant details which other research methods might not easily provide (Bowen 2009:31).

In conclusion, I have highlighted the research methodology which I will incorporate throughout the research process, how I will utilize them, as well as the reasons why I
believe they will enable me to carry out my study in the most efficient, coherent and diligent manner possible.
Chapter Four: Findings

The fourth chapter of this research study will dwell on findings, related to the research question, “Post War-Recovery and Development in Liberia since 2003”. Firstly, we shall have an overview of the root causes of the civil conflict which occurred from 1989-2003 and subsequently, the outbreak of conflicts and emergence of failed states across the African continent will be examined. Furthermore, the evolution of peacekeeping, peacebuilding and post-war reconstruction principles since the end of the Cold War will be analysed and finally, an examination of the post-war recovery initiatives in Liberia, since the cessation of hostilities, in the domains of advancing democracy, good governance and economic development will be thoroughly evaluated.

For the findings, I applied the qualitative research method. Public documents for this chapter, will be obtained from well-established and credible institutions such as; Government of Liberia, supranational and specialist organizations, like the United Nations agencies, World Bank, International Monetary Fund (IMF), African Development Bank (AFDB), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) as well NGO’s and think tanks such as The Mo Ibrahim Foundation, The Center for Global Development, International Security Network, Transparency International (TPI), Freedom House and the Heritage Foundation amongst others. Newspapers and other forms of textual print media, magazines included and their digital counterparts fall into this category. The internet also provides a rich source for research, because it offers access to commentary, public debate, published and unpublished reports, libraries and archives.

By the end of this chapter, readers should have an idea of the nature of the Liberian conflict, as well as the reconstruction efforts engaged there.

4.1 Causes of the Liberian Civil War

Liberia was decimated by 14 years of civil war, preceded by a decade of gross economic mismanagement and political turmoil. This scenario did not happen coincidentally, and this section will look at the reasons why hostilities broke out.
Although the Liberian Civil War started in 1989, the roots of the war can be traced to the settlement of the first wave of repatriated, freed black slaves in 1822, from the United States on the piece of territory which became the Republic of Liberia in 1847. These freed men and women, later known as Americo-Liberians, rather than promoting the ideals of freedom, justice, equality, and human dignity which brought them to Africa, established a mode of political and economic governance which systematically established settler domination in Liberia (Zounmenou 2008:2). For 133 years, the Americo-Liberian oligarchy created deep-seated resentment and divisions within Liberian society by establishing a corrupt and nepotistic system, which enabled all political and economic and social opportunities to be acquired and maintained by them, at the expense of the 16 indigenous tribes present in Liberia (Adebajo 2002a:21). The Americo-Liberians never constituted more than 5% of the national population and were mainly based along the coast, while indigenous or “up-country” groups were the majority and found all over the country (Adebajo 2002a:21).

The Americo-Liberian community dominated political, economic, religious and cultural life, and this was cemented through the True Whig Party (TWP), which was established in 1878 and ruled until 1980 (Ujeke 2009:20). The TWP was the only political party and assured movement up the social ladder alongside affiliated structures such as the all-powerful Masonic temples and Christian churches (mainly Baptist and Methodist). Without support from these intertwined patronage networks, it was impossible for indigenous Liberians to find a meaningful place in the nation’s political, economic, social and religious spheres (Ujeke 2009:21). President’s Winston Tubman (1944-71) and William Tolbert (1971-80) made attempts to remedy the discrimination of indigenous Liberians, through “Unification Programs”, but these were half-hearted at best and established long after indigenous discrimination had become entrenched (Adebajo 2002a:22).

Amidst growing political uncertainty, economic downturn, and rising social tensions, the indigenous Liberian population became increasingly discontent with the Americo-Liberian oligarchy which was becoming more authoritarian. On April 12th 1980, a military coup led by Master Sergeant Samuel Doe, overthrew President Tolbert, marking the end of Americo-Liberian and TWP rule in Liberia (Adebajo 2002a:26). Americo-Liberian discrimination stemmed from the perception that, indigenous people could not govern themselves, thus owing to the reluctance to countenance the idea of
an indigenous president (Ujeke 2009:22). The arrival of Samuel Doe as the first indigenous ruler, created a general euphoria, that, this would usher a period of freedom, justice and social equality. However this was short-lived, as Doe demonstrated shortly upon taking power (Ujeke 2009:25).

Samuel Doe and the first indigenous led regime in Liberia, was a mirror image of the crisis of poor governance which African nations were confronted with from the 1960’s to the 1990’s. The Doe regime quickly became brutal and was characterised by the use of assassinations, forced exiles and human rights abuses to silence and intimidate opponents, as it is alleged that, by 1985, 50 of Doe’s opponents had been killed (Adebajo 2002a:25). Doe equally became increasingly paranoid, and filled his cabinet and the army with members of his Krahn ethnic group, at the expense of other groups, namely the Gio’s and Mano’s (note, Krahn’s made up only 5% of the population) (Adebajo 2002b:45). This practice of identity politics accentuated divisions in the Liberian army and society as it appeared to be a repeat of the Americo-Liberian domination of the past.

Corruption, economic mismanagement and a fall in output of the main Liberian exports and revenue generators; iron ore, timber and rubber, equally precipitated the regimes collapse. It was alleged Doe and his cronies, stole $30 million dollars (U.S.) over ten years, with $5.6 million found in Doe’s personal account at the defunct Bank of Credit and Commerce International, London (Huband 1998:32). However, the loss of support from the U.S., Doe’s erstwhile strongest global support base, signalled the end of his regime and served as a catalyst for the civil war. During the Ronald Reagan presidency, the U.S. administration took manifested steps to support Doe, as he perfectly served their interests in the waning years of the Cold War (Huband 1998:29). By 1985, the U.S. had granted the Doe regime $400 million in aid, and rose to $500 million by the start of the war in 1989 (Huband 1998:42). Doe was recognised by the U.S. as someone who believed they were always right, had an anti-Soviet/Libya diplomatic stance, and enabled Liberia’s hosting of U.S. strategic communications and services on its’ soil. Even when Doe won the blatantly rigged 1985 presidential elections, the U.S. endorsed him, but with the end of the Cold War, the need to support a flawed leader was no longer of importance to the U.S. (Huband 1998:27, 30, & 41). Former U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for Africa, Chester Crocker stated; “Great
powers do not reject their partners just because they smell…..had we been candid about the standards of government in Liberia, it would be very damaging to U.S. interests” (Huband 1998:27).

The political turmoil, economic mismanagement, corruption, human rights abuses and ethnic tensions, alongside external factors such as the withdrawal of U.S support, culminated in the invasion of Liberia by the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) on 25th December 1989 (Zounmenou 2008:2). This force was led by Charles Taylor and backed by regional powers such as Burkina Faso, Ivory Coast and Libya (Adebajo 2002b:46).

4.2 Failed States and Post-War Reconstruction

For nations which lapsed into conflict during this period, Liberia attained the status of a “failed state”. According to Rotberg (2004:1), nations are considered “failed”, when the government loses legitimacy amongst a plurality of state citizens and can no longer perform basic state functions. Failed states are dangerous, tense and as was the case in Liberia, conflicts usually exist between the government and various insurgent groups, alongside other forms of civil unrest (Rotberg 2004). In failed states, only limited political goods are provided by the state. Political goods include; the provision of human security, access to basic services, availability of economic opportunities to the general public and the existence of democratic debate as well as the participation in the political process (Rotberg 2004).

In Liberia, in the lead up to, during and after the civil war, these fundamental functions were either non-existent or marginally provided by the state, as citizens gradually turned to non-state actors to provide these. Central government authority is usually limited to the capital and ethnically specific areas in this case (Rotberg 2004). Crocker notes, failed states like Liberia, experience enduring conflicts which are resistant to resolution (2005:4). Because of the war and inherited pre-war structures, Liberia was entrenched with autocratic and corrupt leadership, weak institutions, low gross domestic product (GDP) levels, poor development indicators as well as an intimidated civil society (Rotberg 2004:18). In light of this, I would describe Liberia during the period from 1989-2003 as a “Fourth World” republic, on the same level as Sierra Leone.
and the Democratic Republic of Congo during their conflict years and Somalia till present. These situations are man-made and therefore, can be remedied if the right approaches and steps are taken.

Liberia set the trail of civil wars and associated instabilities across SSA, in 1989, in the immediate aftermath of the end of the Cold War (Olawale 2009). Pre-1990’s conflicts were aimed at crippling the capabilities of belligerents, but the “new wars” of the post-Cold War period, ushered an “everything-anything” form of combat, which was devastating across Africa (Olawale 2009:15). According to the “greed vs. grievance” hypothesis advanced by Paul Collier, regarding the causes of this new form of conflict, the economic agenda of profit-making incentives, which captures the greed model, displaces the more popular notions of social justice, disempowerment and ethno-linguistic marginalization which is embodied by the grievance model (Olawale 2009:4). The warlord tactics of Charles Taylor in his bid to gain executive control was simply a ploy, to obtain a gateway to material wealth and social status. Moreover, when he finally attained power, Taylor’s regime, reminiscent of previous Liberian administrations, was characterized by political repression, severe economic mismanagement and corruption, social alienation of the mass, and a high degree of personal rule unprecedented in the history of Liberia (Olawale 2009:41).

As mentioned in chapter two, since the end of the Cold War, international organizations, particularly the United Nations, have been compelled to reassess their approach towards, post-war reconstruction (PWR) and peacebuilding, due to the complex nature and increasingly devastating effects of conflicts, by embracing a host of new principles.

Hence, from the information gathered, we can now look at the steps Liberia has taken in their PWR efforts, and assess its’ efforts and accomplishments.
4.3 Democratization and Good Governance in Liberia

Since the collapse of the Berlin Wall and subsequently, the Soviet Union, there has been a popular embracement of democracy and rejection of authoritarian rule globally. Across Africa, political and civil rights are expanding, civil society is developing, media free from state control is emerging and democratic norms are taking root on an unprecedented scale (Kumar & de Zeum 2006:1). Historically, Liberia had experienced prolonged authoritarianism through the scourge of one party rule under the TWP, an overtly repressive military regime led by Samuel Doe, and the warlordism of Charles Taylor. Liberia could therefore, not be indifferent to this trend, in the aftermath of the 14 year civil war, whereby an estimated 270,000 lives were lost and whose causes, were rooted in the exclusion and marginalization of the majority of Liberians. In rebuilding a nation, which had inherited dysfunctional and destroyed institutions, the authorities were fully aware that, democratic governance would have to be infused or the risk of reversion to conflict would be greatly increased. Thus, Taylor’s departure from power in 2003 and the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement (CPA) gave Liberians their first real opportunity to embrace democratic ideals since the nation’s establishment. According to Gariba (2011), democratic governance consists of instituting; the rule of law, accountability and transparency, freedom of expression and association, development oriented leadership and responsible civil society. Lack of these elements signifies the crisis of governance Liberia experienced and the state failure it created, as competing interests for resources and opportunities were addressed through, corruption, military and other oppressive measures, rather than through justice, security and development (Gariba 2011).

In its’ new political dispensation, the government must establish democratic structures which cater for representation, participation, the rule of law and separation of powers, which in the long run will promote good governance and consolidate lasting peace (Zounmenou 2008:4). The former Liberian interim president and academic, Dr. Amos Sawyer, notes “Institutional arrangements of governance have been inherently flawed and have been a structural source of breakdown and a significant contributor to violent conflicts……..there is a need for a new institutional design which departs significantly from those which have failed” (Andersen 2007). We can therefore attribute the lack of democratic space and civic rights available to the majority of Liberians to the historical
governance structures, institutions and practices which did not enable inclusive, accountable, transparent and participatory governance mechanisms to thrive (IBIS 2013). This system can also be blamed for the corruption, mismanagement, class divisions and inequality which culminated in the civil war and years of crisis which preceded it. Post-war Liberia nonetheless, underwent its’ first period, where no dominant political institution, political paradigm, or warlord is overseeing the governance process, thus, there is truly public discourse and the opportunity for democracy to exist (Andersen 2007). The holding of free and fair elections in 2005 and 2011 were clear signs of a commitment on the part of Liberian authorities to turn the page from the past. However, this only forms part of fully instituting democratic governance, and we shall subsequently look at other steps taken to infuse this notion in post conflict Liberia.

4.3.1 Public Sector Reform and Improving State Efficiency: Mismanagement of public institutions and years of the civil crisis, created severe deficiencies in the capacity of the Liberian public sector and eroded the public’s confidence in their government’s commitment and ability to serve the people (AFT 2012). To depart from the status quo of a corrupt, inefficient, unaccountable, and non-transparent public service, the Government of Liberia (GOL) has taken many steps to remedy this situation, with the aim of instituting effective institutions and policies aimed at forging good governance in the public sector.

The establishment of the Governance and Economic Management Assistance Program (GEMAP) in 2003 was a clear intention of trying to move things forward. GEMAP is a partnership between the Government of Liberia and the international community to promote accountability and transparency in fiscal and financial management, to ensure Liberia uses its’ resources in the interests of its citizens (GEMAP 2010). GEMAP gave co-signing authority to expatriate agents in an aim to improve revenue collection, expenditure control, government procurement process and other operational controls and practices in the public domain (UNDP 2010a). This program, which lasted from 2006-2010, was criticised by many, including Dr. Amos Sawyer, who billed the scheme as a manifestation of neo-colonialism as important tasks were now to be handled by foreigners (Zoumenou 2008). Opposition also stemmed from people who were entrenched in the “old way” of doing things (Chessen
& Krech 2006). GEMAP was necessary to stamp out the petty and grand corruption, rebuild institutional control of the political economy, and instil confidence amongst the international community and Liberians that corruption was being tackled (Chessen & Kech 2006). However, it succeeded to introduce new control mechanisms, competitive bidding for contracts and regulating and monitoring of resource flows (UNDP 2010a). The GEMAP model focused on state ministries, and agencies as well as strategic public corporations such as, the Liberian Ports Authority, Liberian Petroleum Refining Company, Roberts International Airport amongst others, which had been identified as institutions where mismanagement was endemic (GEMAP 2010). GEMAP has been succeeded by the Governance and Economic Management Support Program (GEMSP), a USAID supported, five year program, which has a mandate to strengthen public sector capacity, targeting Liberian government ministries and agencies which are responsible for governance (BTI 2014).

Moreover, in a bid to address corruption, the National Anti-Corruption Strategy Paper (NACSP) was drafted in consultation with the government, public corporations, civil society, private sector and international community (UNDP 2010a). The institution of the Liberian Penal Code, which criminalizes active, passive and attempted corruption, Executive Order 38, stipulating the declaration of assets, and Executive Order 22, protecting corruption whistle blowers, manifest the desire to combat this ill (Hodes 2012). The subsequent creation of the Liberian Anti-Corruption Commission (LACC), General Auditing Commission (GAC), the Governance Commission and Administrative Code of Conduct, are attempts to improve public sector employee accountability, transparency and efficiency as well underline the new zero-tolerance approach to corruption (BTI 2014). These initiatives fall under the National Integrity Forum, which is an umbrella anti-corruption organ, which also includes business and civil society organizations (BTI 2014:19). The fight against corruption has yielded positive results as indicated by Transparency International’s (TPI) Corruption Perception Index (CPI)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2010</th>
<th>2011</th>
<th>2013</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ranking</td>
<td>150/179</td>
<td>87/178</td>
<td>91/182</td>
<td>83/175</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

This index is an annual barometer which assesses the amount of corruption which exists in across the world. As a result of measures taken to address past issues pertaining to corruption and mismanagement, Liberia has improved over the years in these domains according to the CPI rankings.

There has also been an active approach to enhancing the capacity of public servants. Conflict led to pervasive and systemic human capacity deprivation, whose effects included the compromising of basic service delivery (particularly education and healthcare), promoting corruption, impeding revenue collection, and undermining the efficiency, legitimacy and authority of the state (UNDP 2010b). In addition to GEMAP, emergency programs such as the Senior Executive Service (SES), Transfer of Knowledge through Expatriate Nations (TOKTEN) and the Liberian Emergency Capacity Building Support Project (LECBS) were established (UNDP 2010b). In the short-run, these initiatives have enabled the infusion of skilled personnel, and restoration of functional capacities through the design and implementation of policies and strategies which have created an enabling environment for a functional public sector (UNDP 2010b). Long-term instruments include, the Civil Service Reform Strategy (CSRS) (IMF 2012), National Capacity Development Strategy (NCDS), but in subsequent sections we shall elaborate on this. Furthermore, the removal of 12,300 ghost workers from government payroll (UNDP 2010b) and the high profile suspension of 46 public officials in 2012 (BTI 2014), are also manifestations of the government’s desire to forge good governance at this level. As a result of such endeavours, the Mo Ibrahim Foundation, through the Ibrahim Index of African Governance (IIAG), rated Liberia as the most improved country in terms of overall governance, concerning the 2000-12 period (Mo Ibrahim Foundation 2013). The IIAG is an initiative which depicts the level of governance across African countries by evaluating the application of different elements of this notion in the researched nations such safety and security, economic performance and participation (Mo Ibrahim Foundation IIAG 2010). The rankings are a testament to Liberia’s improvement in governance.

Figure 1.2  
Ibrahim Index of African Governance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>36/53</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>36/53</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>34/53</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Civil service salaries have been raised by 200%, alongside the continued payment of salary arrears to improve efficiency and dissuade corruption (Hodes 2012). On the international stage, Liberia is a signatory of The U.N. Convention Against, Corruption and African Union Convention on Combatting Corruption (Hodes 2012). Furthermore, on September 15th, 2010, Liberia became the first West African nation to promulgate the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) (IFEX 2013). The bill was meant to give a deeper meaning to citizen’s rights under Article 15(c) of the 1986 constitution which enables free access to information, and was intended to amend many of the fundamental ills which have historically plagued Liberia (IFEX 2013). It also aims to provide citizens with access to public records, which in turn could lead to an efficient public administration, democratic enhancement and a mechanism for transparency and accountability (IFEX 2013). The attempts made by authorities have stimulated progress, but the government must continue to engage with various stakeholders, donors, civil society and the media amongst others, to communicate the sharing of information about this process, in order to ensure citizens desires and expectations are being met in this regard.

4.3.2 Political Participation and Decentralization: Historically, power was concentrated in Monrovia and essentially at the presidency, a scenario which had been in place since 1847. Although the 1986 Liberian constitution enables citizens to elect district representatives, senators of counties and the head of state, political positions at the local level, such as superintendents and commissioners are still appointed by the president (IBIS 2013). This stems from the broad powers the 1986 constitution grants the executive and in particular the Presidency, which Dr. Amos Sawyer describes as the “Imperial Presidency” (Andersen 2007). Citizens fundamental democratic and civic rights have been infringed upon based on this, and as a result, the sustained marginalization and exclusion of the majority of Liberians has persisted, as they are subjected to the dominance of the political and economic elite based in Monrovia (mostly Americo-Liberians), even when it comes to local-level governance (IBIS 2013).
In order to establish state legitimacy, efficiency and local participation, aspects which were notably absent during previous Liberian regimes, Liberians need to feel represented at various levels of decision making and in institutions which uphold the separation of powers and the devolution of responsibilities between the central authorities and local centres of power (Zounmenou 2008:4). A historically centralized system of governance has impeded popular participation, and local governance initiatives, especially in the provision of goods and services, as well as access to economic opportunities and decision making circles (AGENDA 2010). Decentralization has been advanced as a manner of breaking with this prevailing situation due to the widespread consensus that, promoting and accelerating decentralization is central to consolidating, peace and reconciliation, promoting good governance and alleviating poverty in Liberia (Ministry of Internal Affairs 2013) (henceforth, it shall be referred to as the MIA).

Decentralization occurs when government actors possessing authorities are willing to grant discretion, delegate authorities or share responsibilities with other actors, inside or outside the government and public service in order to accomplish certain tasks (AGENDA 2010). Decentralization entails the transfer of political power, authority, and resources to a legally (constitutionally) mandated and autonomous lower level of government, with corresponding and significant administrative and fiscal dimensions (USAID 2012). This process is about taking power from a central authority, to a less concentrated area of authority, or in other words, “Dispersing from the very powerful and influential to empowering the powerless and disenfranchised in society” (AGENDA 2010).

The centralized governance system resulted in a narrow economic space, and low economic activity in most parts of the country, creating a gap between Monrovia, and the rest of Liberia in terms of access to, economic and social opportunities, and human development improvements (AGENDA 2010). The discrepancy in development which this created is a major reason why, the GOL has fully embarked on advancing the decentralization agenda, in order to ensure, the greatest number of Liberians take part in local governance, enjoy equitable access to the nations resources and are beneficiaries of local development policies (MIA 2013).
Government has approved and launched a policy on decentralization and local governance, aimed at facilitating popular participation, local initiative, greater transparency and accountability, especially in the provision of public goods and services (AFT 2012:108) This policy is known as the National Policy on Decentralization and Local Governance (NPDLG) which was launched in January 2012, although it was established in 2009 (MIA 2013; USAID 2012). The NPDLG was created to provide guidance to the process of decentralizing power, authority, functions and responsibilities from central to local authorities. It stipulates that, administrative institutions in the counties be revised, restructured and harmonized to implement a responsible and responsive system of local governance and public administration, to ensure accountable and transparent management of local resources (MIA 2013). The Liberia Decentralization Support Program (LDSP) established in April 2013 and fully aligned to the NPDLG, is a five year GOL initiative, set to run from 2013-2017, with the objective of supporting decentralization of political, administrative and fiscal governance in Liberia (UNDP 2013a). In addition, the Liberia Decentralization Implementation Plan (LDIP) was also created to facilitate this process, which is being coordinated from the National Decentralization Secretariat of the MIA. This umbrella organ will coordinate decentralization activities, donor support and reforms, as well as support capacity building, change management and monitoring and evaluation of the process (MIA 2013). Furthermore, the UNDP, United Nations Capital Development Fund (UNCDF) and European Commission established the Liberia Decentralization and Local Development Program (LDLD), whose rationale was to help the government develop policy and institutional frameworks for elected local government and decentralized public service delivery (UNDP 2013b). The logic behind this was modelled on past UNCDF experience, with local development programs elsewhere in Africa and Asia (UNDP 2013b).

In the broader context of governance, decentralization can promote; political openness, participation, administrative and bureaucratic capacity and efficiency, alongside societal tolerance (AGENDA 2010). From an economic standpoint, decentralization enables allocative-efficiency in the distribution of resources, to the benefit of more citizens. This ensures bottom to top and sustained development which was onerous with a centralized governance system in place (AGENDA 2010).
4.3.3 Justice and The Rule of Law: Justice and the rule of law are issues which need to be addressed. The absence of democratic culture and a dearth of good governance prevented Liberians from experiencing these ideals, throughout the course of the nation’s history. In a bid to emerge from the status of a “failed state”, the authorities have made it a priority that these two facets are well established in society (Mbadlanyan & Onuoha 2009).

The establishment or re-establishment of justice and the rule of law, is a necessity for engendering sustainable peace and security in post-conflict societies, because, as Koffi Annan notes “It is by reintroducing the rule of law and confidence in its’ impartial application that we can hope to resuscitate societies shattered by conflict”. This assertion suggests the establishment of justice and the rule of law, is critical for sustainable peace security and democratic governance to reign (Mbadlanyan & Onuoha 2009). There is a high demand throughout Liberia, for institutions which will maintain law and order, satisfy local demands for justice and cultivate the legitimacy of justice institutions (USIP 2009).

The fact that the judiciary was at the behest of the TWP, military government, warlords and the unlimited power claims attached to such regimes, requires the entire judiciary to be rebuilt (BTI 2014). Through the coordinating efforts of the Ministry of Justice (MOJ) in consultation with the MIA and Judiciary, the Law Reform Commission was charged with reshaping Liberia’s legal system (AFT 2012). Moreover, institutions such as the Louis Arthur Grimes School of Law, the James A.A Pierre Judicial Institute, the Liberian National Bar Association and Liberian National Police Training Academy will also be incorporated into this reform process (AFT 2012). The Professional Magistrate Training Program complements the other structures which have been put in place (IMF 2012). Justice reform in relation to post-conflict governance and peace-building must be done in a manner which consolidates peace, strengthens the fledgling democratic political process, and increases state authority and legitimacy in the eyes of citizens (USIP 2009:81 & 83).

Persistent weaknesses in the judiciary, such as prolonged pre-trial detention (80% of detainees) inadequate funding and lack of coordination between the courts and police have been identified. Poor management of the judiciary and corrupt practices by judges, jurors, ministry administrators and police undermine the dispensation of
justice. Therefore, more efforts must be engaged to eradicate these constraints and consolidate justice.

4.4 The Economic History and Development of Liberia

For this section, we shall have a concise look at the economic history and development of Liberia, from its’ integration into the global economy, through the years of political crisis, up to the start of the civil war.

4.4.1 Historical Background: By 2009, Liberia was ranked the third poorest country globally in terms of GDP per capita, and the country’s political, economic and social history since the 1950’s offers the consequences of “growth without development” or lack of inclusive growth (World Bank 2012a). From 1955-75, Liberia enjoyed a sustained growth spell of 7%, which made it ahead of other African nations and second only to Japan and Germany in that domain, during that period (World Bank 2012a). This was due in large part to President Tubman’s post-World War II, “Open Door Policy” and “Unification Program” which respectively encouraged foreign direct investment (FDI) in Liberia, and integrated indigenous Liberians, albeit minimally, into the political, economic and social configuration of the nation (Liebenow 1969). This growth was propelled by activities in enclave sectors such as, timber, rubber and iron ore, the latter of which, by 1967, Liberia had become the largest producer in Africa, and highest exporter in the world of (Liebenow 1969). This led to a GDP per capita of $840 (U.S) by 1972, however, this growth and apparent success, masked serious issues regarding poverty, and inequality within society (World Bank 2012a).

Growth from extractive sectors had been the backbone of development for nations like Norway and Canada in the North, as well as Chile and Malaysia in the South, and resource exploitation had done the same in Liberia. It provided a valuable source of local direct and indirect employment, foreign exchange and technological transfers (Le Billon 2005). Although these activities created employment as well as construction of physical, economic and social infrastructure, the Liberian authorities were soon faced with problems, such as a drop in global commodity prices, reduction in FDI, and renewed unemployment, as workers were laid off when infrastructure and support facilities were completed (Liebenow 1969). This scenario was a manifestation of “Dutch Disease” or the “Resource Curse”, whereby high growth generated from
extractive sector rents, is followed by a fast decline and large income inequalities (World Bank 2012a).

The economy’s overdependence on resource rents led to reduced competitiveness of non-extractive sectors (agriculture, manufacturing, and services) and challenges in macroeconomic management due to volatility in commodity prices (World Bank 2012a). Moreover, Liberia was experiencing “growth without development” meaning “Observable economic change was not complemented by structural changes in lines of production, by adoption of more efficient techniques in the economy or government, by the significant involvement of domestic personnel in anything other than the unskilled labour category, or by new social achievements and new levels of economic aspiration” (Liebenow 1969). The development of foreign-owned concessions took place within enclave situations, where there was very little interdependence between these activities and other sectors of the economy. In addition, the heavy reliance on foreign skills and capital, prevented a “Liberianization” of the national economy. It is believed the Americo-Liberian oligarchy not pursuing inclusive growth, through economic diversification in broad based sectors such as agriculture and manufacturing, plus characteristically absent rational planning, was deliberately to prevent indigenous persons from gaining economic power and keeping them firmly under minority control (Le Billon 2005; Liebenow 1969:176, 181, & 182). This exercise also led to increased poverty and inequality, as by 1974, a mere 3.9% of the population controlled 60% of national income, there was a paltry 25% national literacy rate and formal employment stood at 15% (World Bank 2012a).

The dualistic economy persisted and began to unravel from the mid 1970’s, as consumer price increases, plummeting commodity revenues, alarming unemployment, coupled with growing political strife, economic repression and social exclusion characterised this period (Radelet 2007a). The 1979 “Year of Ferment” was the last straw, and instigated the April 1980 coup which brought Samuel Doe and the People’s Revolution Council (PRC) to power (Pham 2004:76 & 77). Doe’s arrival on the scene signalled Liberia’s steep descent into chaos, and ushered a decade of sustained economic mismanagement and dictatorship (Radelet 2007a).

Natural resources are public-owned and generate large rents which can be used to consolidate political control and promote corruption and poor governance, notably
through what is known as the rentier-state effect, whereby, rents are used to shore up support through patronage. Doe used dwindling iron ore revenue to support internal security and ward off pressure, as well as reward supporters from his Krahn ethnic group, affiliated Mandigoes and co-opted America-Liberian technocrats (Le Billon 2005). Despite increasing public sector employment from 18,000-56,000 between 1980-83, increasing military and civil service salaries by 150 and 100% respectively, and attracting an estimated $5 billion (U.S) in private American investment (Pham 2004:81 & 89), due to corruption and mismanagement, the Liberian economy was progressively collapsing.

Charles Taylor eventually ousted Doe in 1990, after launching a rebellion against his regime the previous year. As a warlord, he profited significantly from illicit trade in Liberian resources and upon being elected as president in 1997, fully embraced the Liberian executive tradition of enjoying “the spoils of politics” through self-enrichment and political patronage. He allegedly made $75 million per year from resource rents during the crisis years (Adebajo 2002b). Another example was the Strategic Commodities Act (2000) which declared “The President of the Republic of Liberia is hereby granted the sole power to execute, negotiate and conclude all commercial contracts or agreements, with any foreign or domestic partner” (Le Billon 2005). Such scenarios put Liberia in a precarious economic position which we will examine in depth in the next section.

4.4.2 The Post-Conflict Scenario: Liberia experienced 14 years of civil war, preceded by over a decade of economic mismanagement and plunder. The economy experienced a cumulative 91% decline in GDP from the peak in 1979, to the all-time low in 1996. The next closest decline was 54%, from 1992-94 in Rwanda, making Liberia, the largest post-World War II national economic collapse (Radelet 2007a). Public finances were equally in a dire state, as the government posted annual revenues of $80 million and $130 million dollars respectively in the financial years 2005/6 and 2006/7 (Radelet 2007b). Liberia also contracted a massive external debt of $3.7 billion dollars, and an overall debt of $4.5 billion dollars, whose Net Present Value (NPV) was equivalent to 800% of GDP, 3000% of it exports, and 28 times more than government revenue (Radelet 2007b). The majority of the debt was contracted
by the irresponsible Doe regime, which stopped servicing loan payments in the mid 1980's (Radelet 2007a).

By 2010, GDP per capita stood at $240 dollars compared to $1,765 at the apex in 1979 (AFT 2012), while 63.8% of the population or 1.7 million people lived in poverty, and 47.9% in extreme poverty (World Bank 2010). Exports had also dropped from $486 million dollars in 1978 to $10 million dollars by 2004 (Radelet 2007a). High unemployment especially among women and the youth is prevalent in addition to employed persons engaged in vulnerable employment situations. Up to 70% of school infrastructure was destroyed or damaged, which has severely curtailed the national skill base, as a generation of Liberians did not attend school during the conflict years (PRSP 2008). Human capital is also in shortage, as skilled and semi-skilled Liberians, died or fled to other countries during that period, a testament to this was, only 51 physicians were resident in the nation at the end of conflict (PRSP 2008).

Infrastructure, particularly roads and electricity was in disrepair and needed to be reconstructed and rehabilitated in order to enable economic recovery, poverty reduction and peace consolidation. To rebuild the structurally destroyed Liberian economy, the government and other stakeholders have taken a host of steps to address these overlying deficiencies with urgency.

4.4.3 Economic Recovery Strategic Plans: One of the most critical issues for Liberia’s recovery and consolidation of peace is to establish the foundation for rapid, inclusive and sustainable growth (Radelet 2007a). Inclusive growth enables equitable access to opportunities, markets and resources, a situation which has not occurred in the past, and would create a country-wide improvement in living standards (World Bank 2012a).

The Liberian authorities have put forth four major strategy papers, the 150 Day Action Plan (2006), the Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (IPRSP 2006-8), Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper (PRSP I 2008-11), and the Agenda for Transformation (2012-present). We shall have an overview of the last three.

A. Interim Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper: This policy document was established in 2006, in order to build upon the progress and correct the mistakes of the 150 Day Action Plan instituted in the aftermath of the Sirleaf
inauguration (IMF 2007). The Liberian Reconstruction and Development Committee (LRDC) was created in March 2006, as the country’s chief development coordinating body and provided overall policy guidance and necessary political will to govern the IPRSP preparation and implementation process (IMF 2007). The IPRSP was based on four pillars; enhancing national security, revitalizing the economy, strengthening governance and the rule of law, and rehabilitating and delivering basic services (IMF 2007).

B. Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper: This articulated the government’s overall vision and major strategies for moving toward rapid, inclusive and sustainable growth and development during the period of 2008-2011. Specifically, the PRSP would be implemented between April 1, 2008 and June 30, 2011 (the end of the 2010/2011 fiscal year) (PRSP 2008). The PRSP builds on the Government’s first 150-day action plan and IPRSP and has been formulated through broad-based consultation with Liberian citizens in cities, towns and villages throughout the country, members of the business community, civil society groups, the Legislature and international partner organizations (PRSP 2008). Just like the IPRSP it is based on the same pillars and is under the stewardship of the LRDC.

C. Agenda for Transformation: The Agenda for Transformation (AFT) is the Government of Liberia’s five-year development strategy. It follows the three-year (2008-2011) Lift Liberia Poverty Reduction Strategy (PRSP), which transitioned Liberia from post-conflict emergency reconstruction to economic recovery (AFT 2012). The AFT will not deliver transformation by the end of the next five years. Rather, it is the first step toward achieving the goals set out in Liberia RISING 2030, Liberia’s long-term vision of socio-economic transformation and development. The AFT articulates precise goals and objectives and corresponding interventions that move Liberia closer toward structural economic transformation, prosperity and inclusive growth (AFT 2012). The objectives of the AFT include promoting peace, security and rule of law, infrastructure development and economic transformation, human development and governance and public institutions (AFT 2012).

The initial recovery efforts have yielded fruits, especially in terms of economic growth as the statistics below demonstrate;
Figure 2.1  Liberian Economic Growth

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Liberian Economic Growth Trajectory</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>7.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2009</td>
<td>4.6% (Due to global economic recession)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>5.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2011</td>
<td>7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The chart shows since the arrival of the Sirleaf administration in 2006, positive economic growth has been registered in Liberia, which means there had been an increase in economic activity. Although rapid growth has been attained, others aspects relating to economic recovery such as macroeconomic management, infrastructure development, mineral resource exploitation, economic diversification, capacity and skills development, still need to be addressed alongside the constraints in achieving them. These will be discussed below.

4.4.4 Constraints, Remedies and the Way Forward: The Liberian economy is growing, but there are several constraints, which have prevented optimal economic productivity, as well as resolutions advanced, to correct this state.

(A) Macroeconomic Management and Policy: The state of Liberian finances was in complete shambles after the war, and as a result, an innovative scheme, GEMAP, was initiated to establish the foundation for economic reconstruction. As we earlier noted, GEMAP was an innovative mechanism which aimed to improve governance and management in domains such as revenue collection (GEMAP 2010). GEMAP’s success was well documented in its’ first years of implementation, despite initial criticism.
The Liberian government has more than doubled its' revenue, ensuring that, there is now more money available to pursue development objectives. Liberia had an outstanding debt of 4.5 billion dollars in 2005, but, in 2010 they were admitted to the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC) which enabled this debt to be cancelled (AFDB 2013). Key frameworks passed included, the Public Financial Management Act, Performance Management Act, Public Procurement Concessions Act (2005), the Liberia Revenue Code, new Mining and Petroleum Acts, and the institution of an Integrated Financial Management Information System (AFDB 2013) (Hettinger & James 2014). Liberia established the Liberia Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (LEITI) and was later the second nation globally to be admitted to the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) and also merged the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Planning (Hettinger & James 2014).

The result of these actions has been reduced debt burden, lower fiscal deficits, increased budgets and an overall improvement in economic governance.

(B) Infrastructure Development: There is limited physical infrastructure Liberia especially electricity, roads, ports and railways. A structural electricity shortage exists, as production was halted during the war, and provision limited to the use of personal generators. Electricity production capacity has been increased from, 0-23 megawatts (MW), since the Sirleaf administration took charge (AFT 2012). Unfortunately, this is

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Government of Liberia Revenue (In U.S Dollars)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>80,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006</td>
<td>130,000,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2007</td>
<td>200,000,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Zounmenou 2008
limited mostly to Monrovia where there is 10% access while, nationwide, access stands at 2% (AFDB 2013). Electricity costs are amongst the highest globally as a kilowatt (KWH) costs $0.54 dollars (U.S) and this has led to constraints in establishing, industrial, medium-sized and small scale business opportunities, alongside preventing an overall improvement of Liberians lives (Hettinger & James 2014). Suggestions to improving this situation include, rehabilitating the Mount Coffee Hydropower Plant (60-80MW) constructing three fuel plants (38MW), plus, improving electricity transmission, the distribution network and developing a regional transmission line (Hettinger & James 2014).

Transport infrastructure, particularly roads, is regarded as the most important factor in forging economic recovery. Only 6% of Liberia’s roads were paved at the end of the war, and they are essential for maintaining peace and security, job creation, enabling the exchange of goods and services, providing access to schools and hospitals, as well as improving overall governance (via decentralization) (Radelet 2007a). Poor roads, especially in rural areas and during the rainy season, prevent the aforementioned facets from being realized and hamper efforts to reduce poverty and improve human well-being. Liberian authorities and their partners have been able to address this situation by constructing 2500 km of paved and laterite roads since the war ended (AFT 2012).

Emergency upgrades were also made at the Port of Monrovia and Roberts International Airport. Given the dilapidated condition of the port structures, it was reasonable to expect system facility or equipment failures or collapse to occur at any given time. The port being the supply line of the country both in terms of food and fuel, any disruption in the port services would have led to increased commodity prices (especially of rice and fuel) and, thus, jeopardized stability. The Transport Sector Strategy was equally initiated to deal with infrastructure deficits in this domain (IMF 2012). The great urgency of refurbishment and repair at the airport stemmed from the fact that, safety standards were so compromised, passenger safety was at risk (World Bank 2013). Total infrastructure investment for 2012, was earmarked for $2.2 billion, with 1.4 billion for roads and $500 million towards energy (Clark & Rosales 2013). These key interventions have motivated Liberia’s steady economic recovery, while also addressing many of the problems which have historically hampered local economic development.
Natural Resource Exploitation: This has traditionally formed the backbone of the Liberian economy namely through mining, forestry and commercial agriculture. Mining activities were focused on iron ore, which contributed at least 60% of export earnings and 25% of GDP from 1960-80 (PRSP 2008). Timber and rubber exploitation were also crucial economic activities, with the latter, constituting 95% of Liberia’s exports from 1997-2002 (IMF 2010). Other non-negligible resource contributors are gold, diamonds and palm oil, however, we shall focus on the aforementioned largest growth generators. Despite their significant contributions to the Liberian economy, these sectors have not had an overall positive effect on society.

These activities were exclusively operated by foreign-owned concessions, but while they generated high growth, because these are capital intensive enclaves, very little formal employment was created, and few direct or indirect links with other parts of the economy were created (IMF 2010). Furthermore, resource revenue was poorly managed and utilised for corrupt practices or to fuel illegal activities, major reasons why, the U.N banned log and timber exports in 2003 (PRSP 2008).

In the aftermath of conflict, Liberian authorities are looking towards these sectors to provide much needed foreign direct investment (FDI), government revenue, and job opportunities which will stimulate poverty reduction (Radelet 2007a). The good news is that, the GOL has embarked on some reforms and we must commend the Government for such initiatives. However, these reforms require an uncompromising political will; a political will which comes in, when one confronts the impediments and constraints to implementation, and that includes a governance system driven by patronage. Decades of Liberian patronage, was embedded in the notions of neopatrimonialism and prebendalism, whereby, state resources, provided the ruling elite, their families and allies with funds to fuel corruption, repression and clientelist networks (Van de Walle 2001). This created adverse economic performance, as state revenue was not used towards providing public goods and encouraging human development but rather, for survival in power and enrichment (Van de Walle 2001). The creation of and adherence to mechanisms and institutions such as GEMAP, LEITI, EITI, Public Procurement Concession Commission, Public Procurement Concessions Act, and admission to the Kimberly Process requirement amongst others, are signs of such commitment and will (Hettinger & James 2014).

Since the lifting of sanctions on timber and logging activities in 2006, the Forestry Development Authority (FDA) which aims to balance conservation, community and
commercial uses in implementing forestry policy and the passing of the Forestry Reform Act, were created (PRSP 2008).

The discovery of oil in 2012, presents new challenges, but the Petroleum Law and National Petroleum Company of Liberia (NOCAL) are instruments which aim to put exploitation of this resource, to the benefit of the nation. The overall aim of these initiatives is to ensure there is transparency and accountability relating to exploitation of and management of natural resources, thus, signalling another break from past practices.

As a result of these measures, Liberia has attracted $16 billion in FDI commitments, mostly from foreign concessions such as ArcelorMittal and Firestone Rubber Company, while the prospect of oil production will increase this potential to attract such investment and possibly growth (AFDB 2013). Sweden, Norway, Finland and Australia are nations which have demonstrated how natural resources can be used to stimulate pro-poor growth (World Bank 2010). However, overdependence on traditional sectors, makes Liberia’s economy undiversified and susceptible to the external shocks associated with such activities, which was noted when I made reference to Dutch Disease. Strategic interventions which will enable an intergenerational asset transfer, such as a price stabilization fund and ensuring value chain addition is pursued, are some suggested steps (World Bank 2010a). Greater emphasis on this point shall be made subsequently.

D. Business Environment, Competitiveness and Economic Diversification:

Liberia’s economy still remains structurally untransformed, with exports, growth, and revenue generation driven by a few traditional primary sector domains, and this has hampered the development of other sectors such as manufacturing and the services (World Bank 2010a). The Liberian private sector consists of large foreign owned companies which operate concessions, the tertiary sector in Monrovia which is formal and works with government, and foreign aid agencies, but the bulk of activity lies in informal micro and small enterprises and rural subsistence agriculture (AFDB 2013). There are ways though, to help transform this state of affairs.

The desire to create linkages in the private sector could be embraced through low skills service provision in domains such as; transportation, security, catering, and procurement of services. These moves would increase
employment and could build capacity, to stimulate involvement in other labour intensive ventures like construction, public works and agriculture (Hettinger & James 2014). In addition, increasing value added capacity in the enclave sectors, timber (woodworks), palm oil (refining potential), rubber (low-cost goods) would encourage downstream processing activities (Hettinger & James 2014). Such a scenario would help to develop a labour-intensive manufactured exports economy, and establish the foundation for long term income growth, employment, and poverty reduction, in the same manner countries like Malaysia, Indonesia and Costa Rica have done (Radelet 2007a).

In addition to physical infrastructure deficiencies, access to financing, the regulatory environment, property rights, contract enforcement, and lack of international trade opportunities, are additional constraints to private sector development and economic diversification (AFT 2012:61). The creation of the Liberian National Investment Commission, Liberian Better Business Forum, Liberia Business Registry, National Industrial Development Financing Organization (NIDFO), a Commercial Court and the Land Commission are amongst the landmark institutions created to remedy these constraints (Hettinger & James 2014) (AFT 2012:61). Established institutions such as the Ministry of Commerce and Industry (MOCI), Central Bank of Liberia, Liberian Chamber of Commerce (LCC) have also been earmarked as drivers of positive change (AFT 2012). The establishment of County Development Agenda’s and District Development Committees, are manifestations of how decentralization might be able to stimulate economic activity at the local level, which has been erstwhile neglected in Liberia, as these structures now provide support in such areas.

In terms of accessing regional and international opportunities, this will be done by reintegrating the Mano River Union Initiative which aims to strengthen trade and relations between, Guinea, Ivory Coast and Sierra (AFDB 2013). While traditional partners like the E.U and United States, notably through the Africa Growth Opportunity Act with the latter, plus the growing amount of trade with Asia are manifestations of the desire to embrace the internationalization Liberia’s economy (AFDB 2013) (Hettinger & James 2014). The results of these engagements so far are quite positive according to various statistics obtained.
The Heritage Foundation (2014) ranked Liberia as 138th freest economy in the world and 30th out of 46 for SSA, the nation’s highest ranking thus far and graded as “economically free”.

Figure 2.3  
**Heritage Foundation Economic Freedom Index**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Economic Freedom Index Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>52.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>49.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Heritage Foundation (2014)

The Economic Freedom Index is a classification which determines how well or not, economies implement and embrace business friendly policies to ensure economic freedom.

The annual World Bank “Doing Business Report” has also indicated over the years, the improvements in the Liberian business environment. This is according to categories such as; ease in obtaining construction permit, access to electricity, and ease of starting a business amongst others (Doing Business 2008)

Figure 2.4  
**World Bank Doing Business Report Rankings**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Doing Business Report Ranking (Out of 189 countries)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>170</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>154</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>151</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2014</td>
<td>168</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The World Bank “Doing Business Report” Although Liberia notably emerged as one of the top 10 business reforming economies in 2010, the nation’s position has regressed and authorities must implement the suggested resolutions to ameliorate this situation.
E. Employment: In 2010, 1,091,000 persons were employed (IMF 2012). Furthermore, the National Employment Policy which created 217,120 community jobs from 2006-2010 (IMF 2012), the Liberia Youth Employment Program (LYEP) that has invested $75 million in youth employment, as well as the Youth Employment Skills and Training Program (YES), with both platforms creating 3000 and 2088 jobs respectively (Hettinger & James 2014) have helped to improve national employment prospects. The Education Reform Act was passed in 2011, making primary and secondary school education free and compulsory till age 15 (BTI 2014). To complement these efforts, it is critical to strengthen vocational and skills training to build capacity and enhance the skills of Liberian workers over the short and medium-terms. The Government plans to refurbish and equip four existing multi-lateral high schools and two existing vocational and technical institutions. The focus of programs at these high schools and institutions will be training for fields for which there is demand for workers, including such fields as plumbing, auto mechanics, and construction and computer services (PRSP 2008:145). The urgency to develop innovative solutions and encourage “brain gain” is imperative for Liberia to build its’ human capital base, which will, help drive the economic recovery which the nation so badly needs (UNDP 2010a). Despite these positive showings, according to the Liberia Labour Force Survey (LLFS) 2010, 78.8% of Liberians find themselves in vulnerable employment, but along gender lines, 88.8% of females and 68.8% males are in this situation, demonstrating, women have a marked disadvantage (ILO 2011). Moreover, only 19% of Liberians are engaged in formal employment (IMF 2012).

The measures suggested, are meant to guide Liberia’s economy to the path of growth, prosperity and sustained employment. Through the development of the private sector, using resources leveraged from FDI, investing in infrastructure for economic and job creation, while addressing fiscal and monetary issues for macroeconomic and improving agriculture and forestry to expand rural participation and food security, Liberia will become a better place (Ministry of Commerce and Industry 2013).
Post Script: The Ebola Virus Disease

The Ebola Virus Disease (EVD) since its’ outbreak in Liberia, in March, has registered 6822 cases and 2836 deaths as of November 12, making Liberia the hardest hit nation by this scourge (WHO 2014). Measures such as the 90 day state of emergency, quarantines, and border closures (The Guardian 2014), have been inefficient, and reactions from citizens such as hiding patients, invasion of treatment centres and clashes with police, reveal the lack of trust Liberians have in the health care system and authorities during this period (Pailey 2014). Liberia had only 51 doctors at the end of the civil war and a severe shortage of affiliated healthcare practitioners (PRSP 2008), but the EVD outbreak has not only claimed patients, but 92 health workers in Liberia (UNDP 2014), most notably, Dr. Samuel Brisbane, the nation’s top Ebola expert who died in July (The Guardian 2014). We have noted the social impact of EVD, as Liberia has the highest incidence of infection, and registered a 58% fatality rate till present, but the economic impact has been and is projected to be enormous as the EVD crisis persists.

Despite its’ post-conflict fragility and poor social conditions, Liberia had been enjoying stable economic growth and management, along with efforts to improve public sector governance and natural resource management. Growth was estimated at 5.9% for 2014, but has been cut to 2.5% (3.5% reduction), due to EVD (World Bank 2014). The EVD crisis has effected all sectors of the economy, as fall in output due to the withdrawal and discontinuation of activities by major companies, such as; ArcerlOrMittal and China Union, and the quarantine restricting movement of workers has led to reduced exports and fall in revenue, particularly in the mining and agriculture fields (World Bank 2014a). A similar drop in activity has been experienced in the manufacturing and services sector, while food security is becoming a problem, as Lofa County, the nation’s breadbasket has been placed under quarantine. In the short-term, EVD outbreak is expected to cause a $93 million (4.7% of GDP) budget shortfall for 2014, but in the medium term will cause a 4.2% fall if there is rapid containment of the
disease, while an 11.7% GDP drop would result from a slow containment and stimulate regional contagion (World Bank 2014a).

Unfortunately, the EVD crisis can reduce the multitude of gains which Liberia has attained across the board, since the end of conflict in 2003 (Vigilante 2014). Due to the fact that, this situation has not come to an end, I cannot give an overall analysis. It was not possible at this stage though, to write a comprehensive report on Liberia, without making reference to this present situation
Chapter Five: Findings, Recommendations and Conclusion

5.1 Findings and Recommendations

Post-conflict nations have an alarmingly high risk of reversion to conflict, and in the first decade after hostilities, 40% of these nations slip back into fighting (Collier 2007). Liberia, has been able to surpass this 10 year threshold, despite the fact it inherited a legacy of poor economic policies and governance. This has been due in large part, to the adoption of distinctive economic policies and political reform, which have enabled the nation to register success in advancing democracy, generating employment and improving livelihoods.

5.1.1 Governance and Economic Reform: Governance reform has been fully engaged in Liberia and the plethora of frameworks and policy instruments now available, has produced positive results and enabled Liberia to be ruled more in accordance with institutions, rather than according to the will of individuals or a ruling clique. According to a 2012 survey, trust in public institutions ranges from 62-87% for “just a little”, “somewhat” or “a lot”, while 11-35%, believe they shouldn’t be trusted at all (Afrobarometer 2013a). This demonstrates a growing relationship between the state and citizens, which was previously non-existent. Unfortunately, corruption still bears its ugly head, despite improvements, as 77-88% of Liberians, perceive corruption is a widespread phenomenon among public officials (Afrobarometer 2013a). For instance, the LACC has only secured two convictions since it was established in 2008, mainly because it can only prosecute allegations when the MOJ declines this option. The Senate also rejected a bill to give the LACC more freedom to prosecute corruption (Human Rights Watch 2014). The GAC, has submitted many reports detailing mismanagement and corruption, but the MOJ has investigated or pursued very few of them (Human Rights Watch 2014).
President Sirleaf, has also been accused of nepotism, as three of her sons hold strategic government posts including; President of NOCAL, Deputy Governor of the Central Bank and Director of the National Security Agency (Freedom House 2014). I believe that if these instruments are to be fully implemented and attain their prescribed objectives, they must be accorded more power, independence and resources, otherwise, Liberia will not fully remedy past ills, and regress.

Liberia has experienced sustained and robust economic growth since the end of conflict and if Liberia can maintain an 8% growth rate until 2017, poverty could drop to 41%, while a 5% growth over the long-term will spur a drop to 20% by 2030 (World Bank 2012b). This is extremely important as 63.8% of Liberians still live in poverty (World Bank 2010). For this to occur, Liberia must promote inclusive growth, but at this stage, growth is still generated predominantly from natural resource exploitation. This might be problematic as past issues of mismanagement in this domain, are reoccurring, despite the multitude of reforms in this sector.

Since 2009, only 2 out of 68 contracts in this field have been in compliance with national laws (Freedom House 2014). Logging contracts continue to be allocated to questionable companies that lack the necessary money or capacity. An example is the awarding in 2008 and 2009 of concessions to the Malaysian timber giant Samling, a company with a long track record of destroying tropical forests and abusing local communities, through an allegedly flawed bidding process (Hodes 2012). In addition, it is widely believed NOCAL lacks the resources and capacity to oversee oil operations and the oil sector (Hodes 2012).

Massive investments have been ploughed into the Liberian economy too, but unlike in the past, authorities must ensure the benefits trickle down to improve citizen’s lives. Public authorities must work alongside multinationals like Firestone, ArcelorMittal, Sime Darby (oil palm) and ExxonMobil amongst others, which operate in the country. Such partnerships should ensure investments are made in education to improve skills and training at the primary and secondary level, to ensure a reduction of poverty and inequality (World Bank 2012b).

Although 1,019,000 Liberians are employed (60.5% of population), 78% are engaged in vulnerable employment (ILO 2011). Diversifying the economy to the extent, growth, will be driven by agriculture, services and light manufacturing and industry, will reduce poverty and inequality, as these are labour intensive areas which have more forward
and backward linkages and draw more poor people into their activities (World Bank 2012b).

Overall, Liberians judge their living and economic conditions have improved over the years according to the Afrobarometer index.

**Figure 3.1 Economic Condition Perceptions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fairly Bad/Very Bad</th>
<th>Fairly Good/Very Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>58%</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Figure 3.2 Living Condition Perceptions**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Fairly Bad/Very Bad</th>
<th>Fairly Good/Very Good</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2008</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2012</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>50%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Afrobarometer 2013b

These graphs are surveys which display Liberians perceptions about the economic and living conditions which prevail in Liberia. The graph shows some degree of satisfaction from citizens, but this does not mean the overall objective of improving livelihoods has been attained, but rather, it's on the right track.

**5.1.2 Healthcare and Education Provision:** Healthcare provision forms an integral part of improving livelihoods, and good governance and economic growth, can assist in achieving this. It is noteworthy, 80% of Liberian health facilities (242 out of 293) were destroyed during the war (Rubenstein 2009) and only 51 doctors had Liberian residence (PRSP 2008). Despite these challenges, Liberia has manifested improvements in healthcare provision which have led to a manifested rise in life expectancy compared to past generations, as the numbers below testify.

**Figure 3.3 Life Expectancy Rate**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>1970</th>
<th>1990</th>
<th>2012</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Life Expectancy</td>
<td>39.9</td>
<td>47.2</td>
<td>60.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: UNICEF 2013

Improvements in governance have contributed and the economic environment, have contributed to this situation, as 73% of the population believes authorities are taking steps towards improving basic health services (Afrobarometer 2013b), although 75%
of Liberians have no access to referral services (WHO 2006). Government needs to increase its’ implication in the reconstruction of a functional health system which provides primary care and is community-centred (Rubenstein 2009).

Education is imperative, as Dr. Ellen Johnson notes, “All the children I met, when I asked what they wanted most, said, I want to learn, I want to go to school, I want an education” (Sirleaf 2009:277). She refers to the young men and women who were deprived of an education, due to the war as the “lost generation”, and as a result, her administration, has taken steps to remedy this problem (Sirleaf 2009:277).

The institution of the Free and Compulsory Education program in 2006, abolished all tuition and fees in public primary schools, introduced a fee reduction in public high schools, and led to a 40% school enrolment increase (Sirleaf 2009:292). This measure has been followed by the Education Reform Act (2011), which provides free primary and secondary education, and makes attendance compulsory, till the age of 15 (BTI 2014). These initiatives have bred the following results:

Figure 3.4 Liberia School Attendance and Literacy Rates

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age Group</th>
<th>School Attendance</th>
<th>Literacy Rate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5-14</td>
<td>81.1%</td>
<td>52.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15-24</td>
<td>83.6%</td>
<td>79.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25-34</td>
<td>63.6%</td>
<td>58.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The combination of these efforts has led to increased school attendance and an improved literacy rate amongst the youth, compared to the past. Despite these signs of progress, in Liberia there are not enough schools, teachers, and resources to educate the nation (Sirleaf 2009:292). Another manifestation of the nation’s education crisis was the failure of nearly 25,000 school leavers for the entrance exam into the University of Liberia in August 2013. Blame was quickly attributed to the effects of the war, as well as lack of resources, but President Johnson also noted a lack of enthusiasm on the part of students as a cause of the mass failure (BBC 2013). Liberia’s present and future prospects depend on whether the population is educated, as lack of it, will constrain growth, job creation, and human development and could serve as a catalyst to revert to combat. Local authorities must concert with external
actors to improve the education system. Moreover, Adult Learning Education should be embraced, to enable people to obtain skills, which the war prevented them from acquiring and support the progress already made (Ministry of Education 2008). Greater access to education must also be made available to historically neglected rural areas, and to women, who have borne, the greatest effects of the education gap, the war created.

5.2. Conclusion

Post-war reconstruction is a responsibility which requires leadership and authority which can create space for change (Doss 2011). The end of the war and the 2005 elections marked the first time, Liberian leadership was not under the influence of the settler oligarchy, or successive dictatorships embodied by Doe and Taylor (Gberie 2011). Liberia is undergoing an adaptive phase of power, whereby, the underlying causes of conflict are tackled, and capacity is built to manage the new reality, while preventing a reversion to conflict (Doss 2011). Liberia therefore, requires transformational leadership which would act positively in the interests of the wider community, rise above historical grievances and unite compatriots behind a national vision that embraces the future, remedying past wrongs, in a non-violent manner (Doss 2011).

The need for transformational leadership stems from the past transactional leaders Liberia has experienced, who made political choices based upon whether they would derive benefits for themselves and their followers as well as their focus on political survival, rather than altruism (Peake, Gormley-Heenan & Fitzduff 2004). In this regard, President Sirleaf Johnson and subsequent Liberian leaders must develop a culture of impartiality, inclusion, openness, provision of security as well as economic opportunities to all citizens (UNDP 2010b). This is imperative, because as a society where exclusion and marginalization were entrenched, nation-building will require establishing reciprocal relations between state and society based and constructive engagement, as well as inclusive and transparent political processes (UNDP 2010b).

Liberian authorities will have to engage all sectors of society, including the diaspora. The diaspora form 450,000 or the equivalent of 12% of Liberia’s population (PRSP
Conflict, poor political and economic governance as well as the desire to pursue better opportunities are amongst the reasons behind the departure of this category (AFDB 2011). The Government is committed to developing incentives and creating the conditions for diaspora based Liberians, to return home and contribute to the country’s transformation (PRSP 2008:142). This is important not only for building national cohesion, but also, the diaspora prefer to invest in their countries in diverse ways, as $22.5 billion dollars in remittances to SSA in 2008, demonstrate (AFDB 2011). For Liberia, the diaspora has greatly contributed financially as the statistics below manifest:

Figure 3.5 Liberian Remittance Amounts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>2004</th>
<th>2006</th>
<th>2007</th>
<th>2008</th>
<th>2009</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Remittance Amount (in millions of dollars)</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>79</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: World Bank 2011

The statistics above demonstrate the financial contributions which Liberians abroad make to the nation and prove they are an important component of Liberian society which cannot be neglected. The Liberian diaspora equally has a massive array of skills which can be used in the nation’s reconstruction efforts, as 58% of their diaspora is classified as skilled (AFDB 2011). Expanding the efforts to infuse Liberia’s institutions with skills and talent from the returning Diaspora, is a key feature of the Government’s reconstruction and development strategy and this has been embraced through programs such as GEMAP, TOKTEN and SES, which were earlier mentioned, and exhibits a participatory and responsive manner of incorporating all Liberians.

Nonetheless, state leadership has the double task of delivering short term results, in order to consolidate support and in establishing faith in the long term development process by engaging citizens and stakeholders in the manner which, Liberian authorities aim to pursue such objectives (UNDP 2010b). Once more, leadership will have the responsibility of steering Liberia from the direction of transition, to sustained peace and development, while motivating citizens to actively participate in restoring
social cohesion, building the collapsed economy and creating an enabling environment, to ensure state reconnection with the society ((UNDP 2010b).

The restoration and consolidation of democracy, good governance and the rule of law, through the regular holding of elections and creation of institutions, which would prevent a repeat of past abuses by authorities, has significantly contributed to the peace and stability over the last decade in Liberia. Democracy building and establishing a mature economy in a post-conflict scenario is an arduous process, which the United States and European nations can attest to (Sirleaf 2009:302). To achieve this, reconstruction had to be inclusive and embracing in character (Sirleaf 2009:303) and this has been pursued by the various economic and social development plans, IPRS, PRSP and AFT. Liberian leadership needs to instil a bond of trust amongst citizens at home and abroad, as a means of gaining political legitimacy, and President Sirleaf, has been described as efficient and engaging in this manner (Doss 2011).

To conclude, although Liberia is facing challenges such as corruption, high unemployment, an undiversified economy and the recent EVD scare, it is safe to assert, Liberia has taken positive steps with regards encouraging development, while preventing a reversion to conflict. Liberia improved from being ranked 182 out of 187 (2011) to 175 out of 187 countries (2014) in the Human Development Index (HDI) of the U.N. Human Development Reports (HDR) for those respective years (HDR 2011 & 2014). Pursuing equitable and inclusive growth, as well as the social development of Liberian citizens, in a similar way, to the Rwandan experience¹, would greatly improve the livelihoods of Liberians. Moreover, Liberia will have to maintain good neighbourliness and good relations with its regional partners, donor nations, organizations including the United Nations, African Union, European Union, World Bank, African Development Bank and World Health Organization amongst others, to maintain their support, as Liberia transits into the developmental phase (Sirleaf 2009:304). Speaking on the theme: "Consolidating the Processes of Transformation," President Sirleaf reminded Liberians that although the country has a long way to overcome the challenges that her government inherited after long years of conflict, division, marginalization and exclusion, it will require commitment to stay the course in the fight against corruption and courage to ensure that rights and freedoms are protected. "Today, the bonds of the nation are stronger; the direction of our advance
is clearer; and the common purpose of nation-building is compelling us to reach out to each other beyond our superficial differences in tribe, age, gender, religion and associations," she said (GOL 2014). Such declarations are indicative of the progress, which the formerly war-torn has achieved and the example it can serve for other post-conflict nations.
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