



INNOVATIONS FOR SUCCESSFUL SOCIETIES

BUILDING AN INCLUSIVE, RESPONSIVE NATIONAL POLICE SERVICE: GENDER-SENSITIVE REFORM IN LIBERIA, 2005 - 2011

SYNOPSIS

After Liberia's 14-year civil war ended in 2003, the government began to overhaul its security sector. The Liberia National Police (LNP), whose capacity was ravaged and reputation tarnished during the war, sought to improve its services and build the community's trust. Gender-sensitive reform at the LNP was high on President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf's agenda, given low numbers of women in the security sector and high rates of sexual and gender-based violence. Between 2005 and 2011, LNP reformers Beatrice Munah Sieh, Asatu Bah-Kenneth, Vera Manly and others led innovative efforts to make the police service more inclusive and responsive. In particular, they sought to recruit female officers at a rapid pace and to launch a Women and Children Protection Section. By July 2011, although the police service still identified shortcomings in capacity and the justice system more broadly, it could boast an increased percentage of female officers (17%, compared with 2% in 2005), 217 specially trained officers deployed in 52 Women and Children Protection Section units across Liberia, more women in leadership positions, and improved responsiveness and public image. This case chronicles police reform in a post-conflict setting, examining the challenges of promoting diversity, building capacity, conducting community outreach and awareness, and delivering services to remote areas.

Laura Bacon drafted this case study on the basis of interviews she conducted in Monrovia, Liberia, in June and July 2011, interviews conducted by Arthur Boutellis in Monrovia in May 2008, and text prepared by Christine MacAulay. Case published April 2012. A companion piece, "Building Civilian Police Capacity: Post-Conflict Liberia," addresses broader police reforms from 2003 to 2011.

INTRODUCTION

In her January 2006 inaugural address, President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf highlighted both the suffering and accomplishments of Liberian women during the 14-year civil war. "During the years of our civil war, they [women] bore the brunt of inhumanity and terror," said Johnson

Sirleaf, the first democratically elected female president of an African nation. "They were conscripted into war, gang-raped at will, forced into domestic slavery. Yet it is the women who labored and advocated for peace throughout our region." She pledged to keep women at the forefront: "I want to here and now gratefully

acknowledge the powerful voice of women of all walks of life. My administration shall thus endeavor to give Liberian women prominence in all affairs of our country. My administration shall empower Liberian women in all areas of our national life.”

Liberians listening to Johnson Sirleaf’s speech were weary from war. After food riots in 1979 and a coup in 1980, the country experienced 25 years of economic decline and political turmoil, including 14 years of armed conflict. The civil war destroyed infrastructure and halted activity at most government institutions. Liberians missed out on decades of schooling. Between 1987 and 1995, Liberia’s gross domestic product dropped 90%, one of the world’s worst economic collapses.¹ By 2005, Liberians’ average income was a quarter of income levels in 1985 and one-sixth of average income in 1979.²

Between 1989 and 2003, the war displaced nearly one million Liberians and killed approximately 250,000, out of a population of about three million.³ Militias conscripted an estimated 15,000 children⁴ and 22,500 women.⁵ According to “Talking Peace,” a study conducted by the University of California at Berkeley in 2011, 77% of the 4,501 Liberians surveyed had been displaced during the war, 35% had been attacked with a weapon, and 20% had been abducted.

Fighters in Liberia had used rape as a weapon. More than half of Liberian women were sexually or physically assaulted during the war.⁶ Approximately 75% of Liberians experienced the trauma of *witnessing* sexual assault and other types of violent assault.⁷ Izeduwa Derex-Briggs, Liberia’s country representative for UN Women, a United Nations organization dedicated to gender equality and the empowerment of women, observed: “In Liberia, you don’t have to have experienced rape to be a ‘survivor.’ All Liberians are survivors.”

Outraged at the violence that wracked their nation, Liberian women worked to accelerate the peace process. As chronicled in the award-winning documentary film *Pray the Devil Back to Hell* and acknowledged by the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize committee, thousands of Liberian women joined together in an interfaith peace movement, rallying and protesting to end the war and barricading peace talks in Ghana until negotiators reached an agreement.

After the factions signed the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement in 2003, the U.N. Security Council created the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL) and sent 15,000 military personnel as well as 1,115 civilian police officers—the largest peacekeeping mission in U.N. history. Part of UNMIL’s mandate was to help monitor and restructure the Liberia National Police (LNP), develop a training program for the police, and address violence against women and girls as a tool of warfare. High rates of post-war gender violence underscored the continuing need.

Early reform efforts drew guidance from U.N. Security Council Resolution 1325 on women, peace and security, passed in 2000, which urged countries to increase women’s representation in the security sector and take special measures to prevent gender-based violence. In 2004, the transitional leaders of Liberia’s national police created a gender policy that laid the groundwork for correcting imbalances of gender representation, setting up a gender unit, and responding to the needs of gender-based violence victims. In 2005, just before Johnson Sirleaf’s inauguration, the Liberian legislature passed a sweeping law that expanded the definition of rape to include assault by a spouse and set some of the harshest penalties in Africa for sexual assault. Advocacy for this law helped LNP leaders draw attention to the high rates of sexual violence and created a national dialogue about the importance of reporting rape.

After taking office in January 2006, President Johnson Sirleaf appointed women to top positions in the police service, including Beatrice Munah Sieh as Liberia's first female inspector general in 2006 and Asatu Bah-Kenneth as police spokesperson in 2006 and as deputy inspector general in 2007. Setting a tone for reforms, UNMIL and President Johnson Sirleaf announced a goal of 20% female police officers by 2014.

LNP leaders, together with counterparts from U.N. organizations, bilateral donors and non-governmental organizations, designed and implemented innovative programs to build trust and confidence among Liberians, especially women and children. In particular, the police worked to become more inclusive by increasing the percentage of female officers to 20%, and enhancing responsiveness to gender-based violence, including domestic violence, sexual assault, and crimes against children.

THE CHALLENGE

Building trust in Liberia's post-war police service was important but difficult. Officers lacked the capacity to investigate and follow up on cases, and the war had tarnished the police service's image. Many Liberian police officers had taken sides and used violence against political opponents and civilians during the war. John Nielsen, deputy commissioner of police for UNMIL in 2011, reflected on how police reform efforts needed to take into account this violent history. "LNP had a unit called the 'black berets,' who were accused of being rapists and murderers," Nielsen said. "And those men are still around."

Before and during the war, Liberia's police were known for their poor handling of cases of sexual and gender-based violence, such as domestic abuse, child abuse and sexual assault. Deddeh Kwekwe, head of the Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Unit at the Ministry of Gender and Development, recalled perceptions of the

police before they received postwar gender-sensitivity training: "The police didn't know how to handle sexual and gender-based violence. If someone came to report domestic violence, the police would say, 'It's your fault you were beaten.' If a woman reported rape, the police would suggest she had caused it. They would make it worse, and women would be traumatized."

Fostering community trust required enhancing responsiveness, but the police faced several challenges. First, the problem of gender-based violence was massive. Rape was one of Liberia's most frequently reported crimes even though only a small fraction of cases were reported. Furthermore, the challenge of investigating and prosecuting gender-based crimes—difficult anywhere in the world because of the need for confidentiality, specialized training, and close coordination among law-enforcement agencies—was especially daunting in Liberia, where infrastructure was weak and resources were constrained. "Rape is very hard to investigate," said Vildana Sedo, the U.N. Police acting gender adviser in 2011. She said responsiveness to rape required uncommonly strong policing skills: "We want someone who is a specialist, with the requisite mindset and very serious about investigation."

Stigmas and taboos associated with rape in Liberia worsened the problem of underreporting that commonly characterized such crimes. In a study commissioned by the U.N. in 2008, only 12.5% of Liberian women who had been raped said they had reported their cases to the police. "Rape is not usually reported," said Paavani Reddy, U.N. Development Programme (UNDP) technical adviser to the Ministry of Gender and Development in 2008, "so if it is the highest-reported crime, then you imagine: multiply it by 10 or 15 times and understand what the figures are." In Liberia, as in other countries, most rapists were known to their victims and often were neighbors or family members. As a result, many

cases were settled privately. Furthermore, many Liberians did not consider marital rape or date rape a crime, so the police would need to change perceptions of what constituted sexual assault. Another contributor to the lack of reporting was that most sexual assaults were committed against children, some of whom did not have sufficient language skills, independence or knowledge of their rights to report crimes. A Doctors Without Borders report in 2006 indicated that 85% of 658 rape victims treated at its clinic were younger than 18; 48% were under 12.⁸

Lack of responsiveness was also linked to a shortage of women in the security sector. After the war, the police had very few women in its ranks to conduct the kind of sensitive investigations required for gender-based crimes, whose victims often preferred to speak with officers of their own sex.

In 2005, only 2% of Liberia's police officers were women. Increasing the number of women in the police service was difficult for several reasons. Most Liberian women were ineligible because the LNP required applicants to be high school graduates. Decades of war, weak infrastructure, and—in some parts of Liberia—a culture that did not encourage girls' education meant that relatively few women had high school degrees. According to Liberia's Demographic Health Survey of 2007, 19% percent of Liberian men and 8% of women had completed secondary school or higher.⁹

While women with insufficient schooling could not apply to the LNP, many women who had the requisite education were reluctant to apply. Regina Sokan-Teah, a member of Liberia's House of Representatives in 2011, noted that educated women did not view police work as a profession that required high-level skills and paid well. Indeed, UNMIL's Nielsen said that the opportunities for professional development in the police service were limited, as the highest-level positions were politically appointed.

Roland Foley, the LNP's chief of personnel in 2011, said: "Recruiting women within the LNP is a very challenging task. Women don't regard LNP as a profession because of the low salary, the low incentives, and their concepts and perceptions of the police." From 2005 to 2011, the starting salary for a new police recruit was between US\$92 and \$100 per month, while officers for private security companies could make two to five times as much. Another disincentive was that police officers might be deployed to Liberia's 14 rural counties, where there were few roads, schools, hospitals and other amenities. Furthermore, the war had left the security sector with a legacy of violence that deterred many would-be applicants, both men and women.

Another fundamental challenge for the police in its efforts to recruit women was that Liberia's security institutions were traditionally male-dominated, and established structures were geared toward men. Past leaders of the police—all men—often viewed women as support personnel. Female police recruits were sometimes seen as more fit for communications or office positions than for work in fast-action or tactical operations groups. Overt signs of male domination were common: police headquarters lacked separate bathrooms for men and women until the mid-2000s. The UNDP's security sector reform specialist, Napoleon Abdulai, offered another example: After the war, when LNP procurement officers—all of whom were men—ordered police uniforms in bulk for a batch of new female officers, they ordered bras in only one size.

An overarching challenge for the police was trying to achieve goals while undergoing massive and continuing changes in structure, leadership and personnel. After the war, almost all police officers were either relieved of duty or forced to resign, reapply and retrain. Furthermore, acting LNP leaders during the transitional government (2003-05) handed power to the new administration in 2006. Many of the leaders who

oversaw initial reforms during the transitional government left before or during the implementation stage, and leadership continued to shift frequently in the new administration. As a result, LNP suffered from relatively low stability and institutional memory during its reforms.

FRAMING A RESPONSE

Despite numerous challenges, by late 2005 and early 2006, the reform moment was clearly at hand. Broad changes in Liberia's security sector had shaken up the police and created the opportunity for leaders to address the police service's lingering reputation for violence and inadequate treatment of women. Donor countries, especially Norway and Denmark, were committed to investing in gender mainstreaming efforts, and LNP officers could work alongside and learn from U.N. peacekeepers and police. Perhaps most importantly, a committed female president provided powerful political will.

Three veteran LNP officers—all women—played important roles in determining the focus and strategy of subsequent reforms: Beatrice Munah Sieh, Asatu Bah-Kenneth and Vera Manly.

Munah Sieh had served in the police service for 18 years before fleeing the war with her three sons in 1996. After working as a special-education teacher in the U.S., she had returned to Liberia in 2006 when the president appointed her to serve as inspector general.

Bah-Kenneth had joined the police service in 1985, serving first as a patrol officer and filing clerk. Before her appointment as deputy inspector general in 2007, she held several leadership positions in the LNP, including head of the Community Services Section, first head of the Women and Children Protection Section, and spokesperson and commissioner for press and public affairs. In 2009, Bah-Kenneth was transferred to the Ministry of Justice as assistant minister of administration and public safety.

Manly had started as a police cadet in 1993 and rose through the ranks. After the war, she had entered the first class of police trainees and graduated in 2005 as the “most motivated recruit.” Some of Manly's post-training positions included assistant team leader in the criminal investigation unit, chief training officer at the National Police Training Academy, and chief of the Women and Children Protection Section.

U.N. advisers provided crucial support and counsel in formulating responses to gender-related problems, bringing a wealth of perspectives to Liberian reformers. Joanna Foster, a Ghanaian who served as UNMIL senior gender adviser during the transitional government, helped lead many of the initial efforts. Charles Awini, Carol Doucet and Ibrahim Idris—UNMIL advisers from Ghana, Canada and Nigeria, respectively—supported later reforms.

LNP leadership also worked closely with the U.N. Police to frame future action. Nielsen, UNMIL deputy police commissioner, said, “This mission has 39 different nations contributing police officers and, therefore, [39] professional perspectives on policing.” Several high-level U.N. Police officials sat with LNP counterparts in LNP headquarters from 2005 to 2011 to provide on-the-job training and guidance, including six U.N. Police officers assigned to the Women and Children Protection Section. One of these officers who made particular strides was Vildana Sedo of Bosnia-Herzegovina, who served as acting U.N. Police gender adviser and worked closely with Liberia's police to improve responsiveness to sexual assault, domestic violence and crimes against children.

Addressing the dual goals of recruitment and responsiveness, LNP leaders and their partners ultimately decided they needed to change traditional norms in the police service regarding the role of women and the crime of rape. This would involve creating innovative recruitment opportunities for women and building a

specialized section to improve responsiveness to crimes against women.

Importantly, reformers realized that the challenges they confronted were intertwined and that their responses should be as well. Patricia Kamara, assistant minister of Liberia’s Ministry of Gender and Development, and the LNP’s Vera Manly believed that having more female police officers would strengthen the police’s responsiveness to gender-based crimes. Reddy, UNDP technical adviser to the Ministry of Gender and Development, noted that Liberia’s Poverty Reduction Strategy linked the issues of recruitment and responsiveness. She identified two key goals of the Liberian government regarding gender and the police: first, increasing the number of women in the security sector, and second, ensuring that men and women had equal access to security-sector services. “Those were the two focus areas,” Reddy said. “It is both institutional reform as well as an operational reform that we were proposing.”

The Liberian government’s reforms to enhance gender equity were part of a larger plan to improve governance countrywide. UNMIL’s Nielsen observed that the president was “aware of the fact that Liberia, like much of the region, historically has a ‘big man’ culture. It’s tribal in that sense. And that’s the change that’s wanted. ... I don’t think [women] are quite as cruel as the big men have proven themselves to be here, so there’s more logic to this than gender equity. ... The logic is: You get better governance than they were getting before if a large portion of decision makers within their governments are women.”

Liberian government officials went on study trips and came back with new ideas. Napoleon Abdulai, security sector reform adviser at the UNDP, said: “In Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Mali, you have many more women in higher positions in the security sector who make decisions. They’re not leaders in a ceremonial sense. They control budgets.”

Abdulai noted that Liberian officials did not perceive the extent of male domination in Liberian institutions until they traveled and returned as “apostles for gender mainstreaming.” He recalled that Saah Gbollie, Liberia’s House of Representatives national security committee chairman, came back from a trip to Ghana fired up to make changes. “They went to Ghana to the police headquarters,” Abdulai said, “and realized that what gender experts were saying in Liberia was actually being implemented there.” Gbollie had seen that the Ghanaian police service provided separate toilets for men and women, and that women received longer maternity leave than in Liberia. The Ghanaian police also provided supplementary education and scholarships to women, who were sometimes excluded from such opportunities during their youth. “People thought that it was because of the president and international community that we were pushing these things,” Abdulai noted. “But when you go out, you see what gender experts were saying. Then you see it in reality.”

LNP leaders and their partners looked to Sierra Leone as a particularly good model of building police responsiveness. Kadi Fakondo, a high-ranking police officer from Sierra Leone, had established Domestic Violence Units—later known as Family Support Units—to address domestic violence and sexual exploitation and abuse. In 2005, inspired by this innovation, UNICEF worked with leaders from the LNP and U.N. Police to secure funding for a new Women and Children Protection Section, and invited Fakondo and one of her colleagues to train the section’s first officers.

To frame all of these recruitment and operational reforms, LNP officers worked closely with international and domestic partners. The governments of Norway and Denmark, as well as the Norwegian Refugee Council and other donors and agencies including UNDP and UNICEF—all of which prioritized projects that focused on

gender and development—helped develop ideas and generate gender-sensitive initiatives. LNP officers and their UNMIL partners worked with their counterparts at Liberia’s Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Health and Social Work, Ministry of Gender and Development, Ministry of Education and several NGOs to create coordinating mechanisms, such as weekly and monthly meetings, to follow up on cases of gender-based violence. A document guiding reform efforts was Liberia’s National Plan of Action for Gender Based Violence, developed from 2004 to 2006 by the Ministry of Gender and Development in collaboration with the World Health Organization and Liberian ministries and agencies.

GETTING DOWN TO WORK

Armed with inspiration from other nations and guidelines that laid the groundwork for action, reformers at the LNP and UNMIL knew they needed to act boldly to achieve their goals: 1) to multiply the percentage of women in the LNP to 20% through rigorous recruitment efforts and role modeling; and 2) to enhance responsiveness to gender-based violence through a specialized unit.

Recruiting women

In 2005, backed by the LNP gender policy adopted a year earlier, LNP and UNMIL officers launched a countrywide recruiting drive that targeted women at high schools and universities, in village discussions, and in rural gathering places throughout Liberia’s 15 counties. Amelia Itoka, head of the LNP’s gender unit in 2011, remembered standing outside the Ministry of Education with a megaphone, encouraging Liberians, especially women, to apply for positions in the LNP. Roland Foley, head of LNP personnel in 2011, explained that over time the LNP improved its recruitment strategy to emphasize the incentives for young women to join

the police service, including education at the National Police Training Academy, lodging and meals during training, uniforms and decent salaries.

Beginning in 2006, the inspector general, Munah Sieh, as well as LNP’s gender, personnel and community services units, worked to showcase the growing numbers and importance of women in the police service. Top LNP women acted as role models in the recruitment effort. Bah-Kenneth recalled, “We had university meetings where university students wanted to become police officers, but they thought they would just remain right there [at a low professional level]. So I had to give them an example. I was at the police when I graduated from the University of Liberia, so immediately I was promoted to the rank of captain. So I told them, ‘If you are already a graduate of the university, you are not going to start from down there.’”

Nielsen stressed the importance of female role models such as Munah Sieh. “I’m a believer in this; I became a convert in this,” he said. “The first IG [inspector general of the police] was a woman. And it was a good thing. Children learn what they see. So having an IG in the hallways—a woman, and she made a point of having senior women around her—changed the perspective of the men at the top of the LNP, especially the young officers coming up. So you were building respect.”

In January 2007, India sent an innovative all-female Formed Police Unit to serve as part of UNMIL. The unit guarded officials, supported LNP training and security efforts, and served as role models for Liberians, visiting villages and speaking in schools and colleges about their experiences. Rakhi Sahi, commander of the Indian Formed Police Unit in 2007, said, “Besides achievements as a police officer, I think the biggest accomplishment that I can talk about is building up the confidence of the Liberian

women. ... Women as well as men in Liberia look up to us," she said. "For them, it is a very unique feature that women can take up arms and stand on the roadside and protect them."

By early 2007, police leaders and their partners realized their recruitment efforts were falling short. Although the percentage of women in the police had more than doubled to 5% from 2% two years earlier, the 20% goal was far off. According to Sylvia Bisanz, community-relations adviser at the U.N. Police, a significant part of the problem was that many women did not have the required high school education. In response to this obstacle, LNP leaders—in partnership with the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Gender and Development, the Ministry of Justice and UNMIL—designed a three-month Education Support Program held at Stella Maris Polytechnic in Monrovia. The goal was to enable women between the ages of 18 and 35 who had completed at least ninth grade to earn the equivalent of a high school degree and enter police training.

The first step of the Education Support Program was to determine female applicants' educational level and to assess their ability to learn the required material. The West African Examination Council (WAEC), a Lagos-based group that provides examinations for five countries in the region, administered an aptitude test to interested women who had dropped out of high school. In the first cohort, fewer than half of the 350 applicants were accepted for the program. During the next three months, the 150 female police aspirants underwent intense schooling six full days a week. The program provided trainees with lunches and stipends for transportation, as well as housing stipends for trainees from outside Monrovia. Tutorials consisted of 11 subjects, including English, math, science, history and geography. The instructors, who were mostly Liberians and other West Africans, administered progress exams every month. After the three

months, the institute conducted final exams followed by official exams administered by the WAEC. Successful candidates then followed the standard procedures to enter basic police training at the academy.

According to UNMIL's operations coordinator, Ibrahim Idris, the U.N. Police and the LNP intentionally separated the women's educational program from the formal recruitment process. Education Support Program graduates had to go through the same recruitment procedures as other officers. "We try to detach [the Education Support Program] from the academy so it doesn't look as if we are cutting corners," Idris said. Upon completing the high school certificate process, he noted, women "start afresh" with the police's other entry requirements.

While the Education Support Program was in session, some trainees arrived to training late or left early, either because they were unaccustomed to classwork or because they had obligations outside of the program. Several women became pregnant or had child-care demands that threatened their ability to attend classes. Other trainees were asked by their husbands to choose between their family and their training. About 10% of women dropped out or failed the course. To curb absenteeism, program coordinators started checking attendance several times a day. Partners secured funding so that a local orphanage could care for trainees' children during class time, and the U.N. created an add-on course to provide a second opportunity for those who failed.

According to an UNMIL gender mainstreaming report¹⁰, the first 29 classes of LNP trainees (150 per class) had an average of only four female recruits per class. Classes 30 and 31 had slightly larger numbers of women (25 and 33, respectively), likely due to the police's recruitment campaigns. But the Education Support Program drastically changed proportions of female applicants. As a result of the three cohorts in the program between 2007 and 2008,

more than 300 women joined LNP training classes, significantly increasing female enrollment.

New unit to build responsiveness

Although training for all Liberian police officers incorporated gender-sensitive training, the LNP also created a special unit, the Women and Children Protection Section, dedicated to responding to reports of domestic violence, sexual assault and crimes against children.

In 2005, UNMIL selected trainees for the new unit from male and female graduates of basic police training. Each batch of trainees consisted of 25 LNP officers, some of whom were new to the police, some of whom (like Bah-Kenneth) were LNP veterans who had to repeat basic training through the deactivation and security reform process.

Sponsored by UNICEF, Fakondo and Joseph Vandi came from Sierra Leone to Liberia in 2005 to train the first two batches of LNP Women and Children Protection Section officers. Fakondo and Vandi's training included instruction in topics such as creating case reports for crimes of domestic violence and sexual assault, investigating reports, collecting evidence and maintaining confidentiality. Fakondo and Vandi emphasized the importance of building the community's confidence by protecting victims, even if perpetrators or acquaintances with power tried to derail the case. They also ran training-of-trainers sessions for the first two batches.

The Women and Children Protection Section began operations in September 2005 with a staff of 25 from the first batch of trainees. The section's organizational structure included a director, deputy director, chief of administration, chief of operations, chief investigator, the heads of three crime squads, and several investigators, officers and support staff. Two of the section's three squads—the juvenile unit and the sexual assault unit—had been independent LNP operations, while the third, covering domestic

violence, was new. Bah-Kenneth, who had been in the police service for two decades, was in the first batch of trainees for the Women and Children Protection Section and was named to head the section.

Bah-Kenneth's first task was to fill other leadership positions in the section. She selected a man as her deputy to preserve a gender balance. To build skills and minimize tensions, she assigned leadership positions to the former heads of the juvenile and sexual assault units, which had been independent in the LNP before being folded into the new section.

She next needed to solve space and confidentiality issues. The section's original single-room building next to LNP headquarters was too small for the 25-member staff and lacked provisions for the kind of confidentiality required for reporting and investigating sensitive cases. UNMIL agreed to provide tents, partitions and office supplies to fill these gaps until a new headquarters building was completed.

Bah-Kenneth helped deploy section officers and units across Liberia, building new units with financial support from the U.N. Eight months after the section became operational, Women and Children Protection officers were stationed in six counties.

As the first head of a new and high-profile operation within the LNP, Bah-Kenneth had to make sure Liberians knew about the Women and Children Protection Section. With the support of counterparts and funding from UNICEF, UNMIL and other donors, her team designed awareness campaigns, including leaflets, posters, school visits, community meetings, billboards and radio shows. Section officers engaged with journalists on a regular basis to make sure their services were publicized. Bah-Kenneth noted that the section was also particularly active during its early months in winning 2005 passage of Liberia's broadened and toughened law on rape. "We were part of the awareness program that led to that bill

being signed,” she said. “We did a street parade demonstration where we mobilized women from different organizations. It was a very big mobilization toward that rape law.”

The section also helped conduct outreach with other police units. For instance, the Community Policing Unit organized weekly community-discussion trips that included representatives from the Gender Unit, the Personnel Unit and the Traffic Patrol Unit. Section officers joined these outreach sessions, explaining how to report crimes and preserve evidence. The Norwegian Refugee Council’s gender-based violence program worked with the police and others to devise a “Sexual and Gender-Based Violence Referral Pathway.” The pathway, which was depicted on brochures, posters and LNP presentations, publicized proper reporting channels so that victims, police, hospitals, counselors and courts understood victims’ rights and reporting options. In clear language, it emphasized that rape survivors should never pay bribes or fees for reporting.

Changing cultural norms was an important responsibility of the Women and Children Protection Section. Many Liberians did not realize that rape, especially marital rape and statutory rape, was a reportable crime. Bah-Kenneth noted that most Liberians did not know how to preserve evidence or where they could go for help. With help from UNMIL, the Women and Children Protection Section posted billboards around Monrovia with messages like “Rape is a Crime” and “Against my will is against the law,” and coordinated a “Stop Rape” campaign that culminated in an event at the sports stadium, with songs, skits and speeches by Liberian leaders and public figures. Through campaigns such as these, the Liberian public became increasingly aware of laws against rape and where to seek help.

Growing public awareness led to increased demands on the Women and Children Protection

Section. After lost, abused and exploited children started to spend nights at the section’s facility, Bah-Kenneth recommended that they be transferred to another location where they would be protected from further violence or stigmatization. “We could not keep survivors at the charge of quarters with us,” she recalled. “And there was no good place for accommodation. So when we recommended that, UNICEF saw the need to fund a safe home. And that safe home really helped us.” Between 2005 and 2011, the government, UNICEF, UNMIL and the New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD, a program of the African Union) built seven homes for children and women, with the goal of eventually having them all over the country.

After Bah-Kenneth left the Women and Children Protection Section (WACPS) in 2006, her successors continued to develop the section. Vera Manly, who led the section beginning in 2010, was hailed by colleagues as a particularly effective leader. She helped to expand on reforms and integrate more trained officers into stations around the country. Korlu Kpanyor, an officer from the fourth batch of trainees and head of the section’s juvenile unit, noted that Manly also helped solidify the roles and staffing of the three crime squads. “When WACPS was first formed, everyone was doing everything together, all types of cases,” Kpanyor said. “Vera said that we needed more separate sections and direct responsibility, so now we are all affiliated with one squad: juvenile, sexual assault or domestic violence.”

As in most Liberian institutions, the Women and Children Protection Section needed capacity building and training. Many officers lacked the skills needed to write cogent reports, investigate crimes effectively, and follow up on investigations. Manly tried to encourage a high standard through social pressure. For instance, during a meeting of

line managers in July 2011, each officer reported to Manly sexual assault, domestic violence and juvenile cases from the past week. When a few officers could not answer Manly's follow-up questions to her satisfaction, she carefully explained what they should have done, and then dismissed them from the meeting because they had botched their investigations.

Manly instituted periodic refresher courses to ensure that section officers maintained their skills. The three-day refresher courses enabled all section investigators to revisit important aspects of their training, such as the sexual- and gender-based violence referral pathway. She recommended that these sessions rotate from county to county to ensure that section operations did not become too centralized in the capital city. To supplement refresher training, the Norwegian Refugee Council offered section officers courses based on the Ministry of Justice's handbook on prosecuting sexual and gender-based crimes.

Accurate record keeping was crucial to the section's many activities: collecting victims' statements, reporting cases to partners, coordinating investigations and following up. Manly, together with Sedo, the acting UNMIL gender adviser for the U.N. Police, improved record keeping by creating a new system for case management and a detailed case record book. The two women also improved the coordination and data analysis and management system. Manly explained, "We have a system that is working, a proper filing system. We have a proper database of cases. On a monthly basis, we have data of all the cases reported from the various units in Liberia. That is compiled together, and made into a report. The data analysis is given to some of our partners, like UNICEF, the U.S. Embassy, the Ministry of Gender and Development, etc. ... Our database system is working. We have a recording system. All the units of the squad are efficient and working."

By July 2011, 217 section officers were stationed in 52 police stations spread across all of Liberia's 15 counties.

OVERCOMING OBSTACLES

During the reforms, LNP leadership encountered unexpected hurdles involving bottlenecks in the justice system.

The Women and Children Protection Section's caseload grew as Liberians learned that they should and could report rape to the police. By 2009, a backlog of more than 100 cases had developed. Although the backlog partly reflected the difficulties of investigating new allegations of crimes that had taken place years earlier, it was also a by-product of a slow-moving justice system. Police officers did not always coordinate well with prosecutors, and officers did not always have the technical capacity to follow proper procedures. Sometimes their investigations were not thorough enough, or they did not collect enough evidence to support the case in court.

In February 2009, leaders at Liberia's Ministry of Justice took two steps, both of which were designed to address the police's obstacles in responding to gender-based violence.

First, the ministry established Special Court E, a fast-track mechanism intended to overcome Liberia's backlog of sexual assault cases. To protect privacy, the court's *in camera* hearings took place in the judge's chambers, with participation limited to the judge, a clerk, the witness or witnesses, and lawyers.

Second, the ministry created a Sexual and Gender-Based Violence (SGBV) Crimes Unit to counsel victims, improve police officers' ability to run investigations, coordinate police officers and prosecutors, and train prosecutors to tackle cases involving sexual violence and build public awareness. The SGBV Crimes Unit, as the unit responsible for prosecuting SGBV crimes, linked the police to the courts. Set apart from the

Ministry of Justice and police headquarters for confidentiality reasons, the SGBV Crimes Unit building was constructed with money from the Peace Building Fund managed by the U.N. Population Fund. Partners on the project included the UNDP, the U.N. Refugee Committee and the Ministry of Justice. The SGBV Crimes Unit became operational in April 2009.

Felicia Coleman, a Liberian lawyer, was the founding head of the SGBV Crimes Unit. Her staff included two senior prosecutors, three junior prosecutors, five case-liaison officers, two victim-support advocates, and administrative staff. Coleman noted that the SGBV Crimes Unit “works very closely with the police in the investigation, charging and prosecution of sexual violence” and explained that the unit was a pilot project to provide a rapid response to complaints of sexual assault, abuse and exploitation in order to justly and fairly hold perpetrators accountable and provide psychosocial support to victims.

Although the joint initiatives of the Special Court and the SGBV Crimes Unit were promising steps to overcome obstacles, reformers expressed disappointment that more cases were not tried and convicted. By 2011, the justice system remained sluggish, and many described it as broken. From its founding in February 2009 through July 2011, the SGBV Crimes Unit was able to try only 16 of approximately 200 cases through Special Court E, eight of which ended in convictions ranging from seven years to life imprisonment. Manly expressed her opinion about the fast-track court: “It’s been very slow, from my own analysis. If you look at the statistics now, we have pretty close to 200 cases that have not been heard—180 to be precise—and, for me, it’s slow.”

Coleman, head of the SGBV unit, explained that there were many difficulties and challenges in the prosecution of rape cases, even with Special Court E. Complaints often came to the police or

the unit long after the evidence had been destroyed, rendering investigation and conviction more difficult. In rare cases when complaints were reported immediately, there was no forensic laboratory to analyze the evidence. Furthermore, she noted, “Most victims are children, and perpetrators are mostly family members and those known to the victim, so people don’t want to prosecute.” Additionally, “finding witnesses is almost impossible,” Coleman said. The broader problem, she said, was that a single court or crimes unit was unable to solve these sorts of obstacles. “The entire criminal justice system needs to be reformed,” she asserted. “The jury system needs to be overhauled. ... The challenges are enormous and run across the entire system: the jury, the court, old laws, witnesses, the communities.”

Anna Stone, a lawyer working as the project manager for the Norwegian Refugee Council’s sexual and gender-based violence project, agreed that the justice system remained broken in Liberia. The major bottleneck for Special Court E, in Stone’s assessment, was that judges and juries could hear only one case at a time, and that sometimes cases could last as long as a year. Stone said: “What we need to have is not another building or specialized court. We need more judges. ... You’ve only got one judge [of Special Court E]. ... One judge! When she’s sick, the court stops functioning. A second judge who is familiar with the special procedures of Criminal Court E is needed.” Stone noted the SGBV unit had a backlog of more than 100 cases even when it was established: “It’s almost like the crimes unit was set up to fail, which I think is just really unfair, because potentially it could be amazing. It could be a really great resource for Liberia.”

Although Liberia undoubtedly needed a holistic approach to reforming its justice system, the LNP was taking small steps to improve its part of the equation. Vildana Sedo, acting U.N. Police gender adviser and U.N. Police officer at

the Women and Children Protection Section noted: “LNP has made huge progress. The problem is that the criminal judicial system is unable to support what LNP achieves.”

ASSESSING RESULTS

By July 2011, the LNP had made major strides, but there was still much to do. The police could demonstrate preliminary results in terms of numbers and perceptions. A 2010 article on women in security in the African financial newspaper *Business Day* said that Liberia was “an unexpected role model” because of its rising numbers of women in the security sector. The article also reported that “forceful women’s voices and presence are enhancing the work of the special court dedicated to hearing sexual violence.” Sedo, acting U.N. Police gender adviser, summed up LNP’s progress on responding to sexual and gender-based violence: “They’re doing a good job given the challenging circumstances and resources they have.”

Increasing numbers of female officers

From 2% female officers in 2005, the police increased its proportion of female officers to 17% by 2011 (723 female officers out of 4,198). This percentage was higher than the roughly 5% of women in the Armed Forces of Liberia but lower than the approximately 33% in Liberia’s Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization. In comparison, approximately 25% of Ghana’s police service was female in 2011.¹¹

Furthermore, the LNP succeeded in having women at the highest levels, with 26 women in LNP’s senior level positions in 2011, ranging from lieutenant to deputy inspector general. (Marc Amblard replaced Beatrice Munah Sieh as inspector general in 2009. In 2011, Munah Sieh was under investigation for irregularities in the appropriation of LNP uniforms.) Another signal that the LNP was on track to meet its goals is that those privy to strategic discussions indicated that

the 20% goal might be increased to 33% women for Liberia’s second Poverty Reduction Strategy, which would set national goals from 2012 to 2017.

However, some reforms were not as effective as hoped. First, women were poorly represented in the LNP’s specialized or elite forces, such as the Police Support Unit (PSU) and Emergency Response Unit (ERU). Of the 523 operational PSU officers in July of 2011, only 31 (6%) were women. Of 324 ERU officers in 2011, only 19 (6%) were women.

Furthermore, while the number of female police officers was rising, there were few female police officers deployed outside the capital, Monrovia. For instance, of the 71 female Women and Children Protection Section officers deployed around the country in 2011, only five (7%) were in rural counties.

Another problem was that the LNP had not created a comprehensive directory of its officers to track retention, attrition, training, and promotion. As a result, it was impossible to determine whether women officers were being promoted at the same rate as male officers. Anecdotally, several LNP officers and partners noted that women were not rising in rank at the same rate, especially the female graduates from the Education Support Program. The LNP’s Gender Unit, founded on paper in 2005 and in practice in 2008, theoretically should track such data, but the unit lacked capacity and was still in start-up mode in 2011, when it was just beginning to craft a strategy and action plan.

The Educational Support Program received mixed reviews. Champions of the program believed it provided an accelerated professional gateway for young women who were not able to complete high school. For instance, UNMIL’s office of the gender adviser published a report that said, “The ESP recruitment effort has promoted equality for women and girls in Liberia by providing education, sustainable income,

improved security, and new sense of women's rights." Shipra Bose, senior gender adviser at the UNDP, believed that the program could be used as a model for increasing women's participation in other sectors within Liberia. Others acknowledged that the Education Support Program boosted the number of women in the LNP, and that the increased rates of women could not have been possible without the program.

However, many expressed reservations. Abba Gadegbeku Williams, deputy commissioner of the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization, offered her assessment: "They were looking for numbers and not quality ... and so they didn't find the best." She also noted that some resented the program. "Men, in general, some of them resented the idea that they were not given the opportunity." Many men also missed out on education during the war, so some men felt bitterness that women were fast-tracked into positions that they, themselves, desired. Williams also questioned the decision to look for new female recruits rather than tap into the LNP's pool of experienced women, who had to leave the police for the deactivation process. "The United Nations should have upgraded the skills of those that were dropped, instead of looking for new recruits who didn't have experience on the job."

Some believed the program had been created in a desperate effort to reach the goal of 20% women in the police service, and, as a result, prioritized numbers over quality. Many worried that the LNP, including the women who went through the program, suffered as a result. Nielsen, UNMIL's deputy commissioner of police, said that the program created a "caste system" and that it did a "disservice" to trainees. "They issued GEDs, high school equivalencies," Nielsen said. "The problem with a high school equivalency is that it only gives you a piece of paper that says you're literate; it doesn't mean you can read it. Which is all well and good in itself, but then we come along and develop a merit-

based promotional policy with a written exam. So, we brought these women into an organization where there were preexisting women who *did* have high school or college degrees, and immediately began the process of a caste system. The ones who did have those things looked down on those who didn't. The real problem is, we condemned those young women to a career as a patrolman, because they can't read and write. ... How can they compete? They can't."

Others, such as Bose at the UNDP and Bah-Kenneth at the Ministry of Justice, warned that the female graduates of the Education Support Program could become a liability to the LNP if not further trained and mentored, or that they might have extremely high rates of attrition.

Although many criticized hasty recruitment and lack of follow-up, the LNP's general reform efforts to include more women helped change societal and cultural norms. Williams, the Bureau of Immigration and Naturalization officer who served as a LNP officer in the 1980s, said: "When we were at the LNP, there was no such thing as the word 'gender.' ... The issue of gender didn't come to Liberia, even though it did exist after the war. Everyone started hearing the word: gender, gender, gender." For instance, when the LNP began its postwar reforms, it started disaggregating its human resources data by gender. The National Police Training Academy, for example, started keeping track of all new recruits both by total number and by gender. By 2011, the leaders of the training academy were very conscious of how many women were in its training classes and its Police Support and Emergency Response units; classes were listed by total numbers and by numbers of men and women. In another example, the LNP headquarters and training academy featured posters that sensitized officers to gender issues. For example, one poster showed a picture of a woman hitting a man, with the message, "This, too, is gender violence." Another poster read:

“Violence against any sex or age is gender violence.”

Nielsen also commented on how the LNP and Liberia as a whole had changed since the war. “This is a gender-sensitive nation,” he said. “This president is very conscious of this. This [UNMIL] is a gender-sensitive mission. The SRSG [Special Representative to the Secretary General, the head of UNMIL] is gender sensitive. The three most powerful people in this country are women: the president, the SRSG and the U.S. ambassador. It’s not something any of us can ignore, nor do we want to.”

Women and Children Protection Section

Many Liberians and their international partners considered the Women and Children Protection Section a success. By July 2011, 12 batches of approximately 270 officers had been trained, 217 of whom were operational. (The other 53 had transferred to other sections or left the LNP.) The section had a presence in 52 units (of 191) in all 15 counties across Liberia. As part of the community policing effort, the section and others made weekly outreach trips to schools and communities. Vera Manly, section head in 2011, mentioned that countries such as Zimbabwe and Namibia were looking to the Women and Children Protection Section to see how the section prosecuted “persistent non-support” cases in its domestic violence unit.

William Mulbah, deputy director of training at the National Police Training Academy, said that although people used to never report sexual assault or domestic violence to the police, now “if there is a problem, people go to the Women and Children Protection Section first.” A U.S. Embassy officer noted that, by 2011, the Women and Children Protection Section was “highly regarded.” Furthermore, the Liberian community was more aware than ever about the rights of women against sexual crimes. Officials at the Ministry of Gender and Development, as well as

taxi drivers and other non-government officials, noted that most Liberian women were not afraid to confront potential perpetrators by threatening to take them to the Women and Children Protection Section.

Like the rest of the LNP, the section faced resource limitations. Bah-Kenneth recalled, “The constraint was logistical, especially vehicles. I personally used my taxi. I had a taxi that I used to use to take victims to the hospital, because I felt victims could not ride with other passengers. Especially if you talk about confidentiality, you cannot expose victims in such a condition.” Officers’ deployment in 52 units across the country meant communities were closer to help than in the past, but some Liberians still had to walk hours to reach the nearest section office.

Manly, who led the section several years after Bah-Kenneth, described similar resource constraints. “Transportation is a major challenge,” she said. “Some of the counties, you have to walk three to four hours to go to a crime scene, which is very difficult and causes a problem for our officers there.” Most section officers did not have motorcycles or cars, and often roads were not passable. Manly also noted that her section lacked communication resources, such as cellphones and computers. Most officers outside of Monrovia reported cases to Manly through hard copy, via UNMIL vehicles passing through, or by calling or sending cellphone text messages to Manly, her deputy chief of section or her chief of operations.

Manly also explained a problem of incentives: “Incentives for officers to do the work and go to the counties are lacking. One of our major challenges is a decrease in manpower, because officers have left this section to go to other units.” Her officers did not receive an extra bonus for their specialized training, whereas members of specialized units like the Emergency Response Unit and the Police Support Unit enjoyed higher salaries and greater access to per diem payments.

Anna Stone, project manager of the sexual and gender-based violence project at the Norwegian Refugee Council, noted that while Women and Children Protection Section officers earned approximately US\$100 per month, officers in other specialized units could make more than \$200, including bonus and per diems. Not surprisingly, some of the best Women and Children Protection Section officers transferred to the ERU and PSU.

However, some critics said the Women and Children Protection Section had more resources than other units at the police. For instance, in some rural counties, the section sometimes had a motorcycle or car or better facilities than other units within the LNP. Kpanyor, head of the Women and Children Protection Section's juvenile unit, noted that LNP officers had an inflated perception of the section's resources: "Other police officers feel we have been sponsored by donors and think that we have extra wages for the work we do. They think there is a special fund for WACPS investigators, and then they go to WACPS training and realize there isn't."

Measuring whether the overall rates of gender-based violence fell as a result of the reforms was impossible. Every official working on this reform noted that it would always be difficult to know real rates of violence. However, reporting was on the rise, including the number of people reporting rapes that happened years ago. Many believed high rates of reporting indicated enhanced trust in the LNP.

UNMIL's deputy commissioner of police, Nielsen, provided his assessment: "They say in the U.N., 'there are no failures, only limited successes.' And this mission is a success." Nielsen also provided a vivid picture of how community perceptions of the LNP were changing: "As our inspector general likes to say, 'I want our children to run *to* the policeman, not away from them.' And they do."

REFLECTIONS

After its civil war ended, Liberia had strong momentum for gender equality, which bolstered similar efforts at the LNP. With a female-led peace movement that helped stop the war, a newly-elected female president, a female inspector general of police, gender-sensitive donor nations, and a United Nations mission with a mandate to incorporate gender mainstreaming in security sector reform, reformers at the LNP had a unique window of opportunity that may not be found in other nations looking to improve gender sensitivity and responsiveness. However, reformers learned key lessons from which others could benefit.

First, although a program like the Education Support Program could be a powerful tool for fast-tracking a minority group into police service, such programs needed to be strong enough to prepare the trainees for service, and graduates needed support and retraining after the initial program. Sylvia Bisanz, who helped coordinate the program said: "I believe that overall the program was successful. However, prolonging it a little might be beneficial." Another coordinator of the program, Napoleon Abdulai, security sector reform adviser at the UNDP, noted that the LNP needed to invest in continuing education for the recruits coming out of the Educational Support Program. "You can't just recruit them and leave them all at the corporal-sergeant level," he said. "You want them to be role models."

Second, although external support was helpful, donor countries and U.N. partners had to be aware of sustainability issues. Vildana Sedo—the U.N. Mission's acting gender adviser—expressed concern that "hand holding," unless consciously aimed at developing sustainable capabilities, could jeopardize the LNP's ability to carry out reforms when UNMIL and others left Liberia. Representative Sokan-Teah echoed this sentiment: "They [UNMIL] want us to take

ownership of the security sector instead of leaving it in the hands of strangers. ... They will not continue to be here, they will leave some day. We need to take security into our own hands.”

Some observers believed that Liberia’s gender and policing reforms had enough internal political will to continue after the departure of outsiders. Dave Beer, chief superintendent at the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, who worked for the U.N. in Liberia, lauded Liberia’s efforts to recruit more women to the police, noting that the reforms were locally led. “This was done by the government, not by the international community,” Beer said. “[Efforts] displayed not only lot of creativity and a desire to have much more gender balance, but it was a real indicator of political will to make some substantive change.”

Third, reforms that were the most difficult to achieve were often aimed at the most challenging problems. It takes time to build inclusivity into institutions that were exclusive for decades. And cases like domestic abuse, sexual assault and child trafficking plague even the most advanced criminal justice systems. Sector-wide reform would be necessary to remove judicial roadblocks that threaten the LNP’s progress to reduce rates of sexual and gender-based violence.

Some critics noted that problems with Liberia’s justice system were much larger than one dysfunctional court and that solutions would not be found in a single unit in the police or Ministry of Justice. In a research paper published by the Norwegian Institute of International Affairs in 2009, Niels Nagelhus Schia and Benjamin de Carvalho argued that the international response to crime in Liberia was fragmented and ineffective, focusing on symptoms rather than causes. One of the anonymous interviewees in the paper noted: “Everyone looks at GBV at the expense of a holistic picture of the criminal justice system. The problem is the legal system as a whole.” Another interviewee lamented: “Why can’t

victims of rape not get justice? It’s not because they’re women; not because they’re victims of rape; it’s because nobody gets justice here!” Paavani Reddy, UNDP technical adviser to the Ministry of Gender and Development, warned that the LNP and Liberia’s entire justice system had a long way to go: “To recreate any trust in these institutions of power is going to be a long run [task].”

Finally, reformers needed to develop mechanisms to identify and overcome people who might try to sabotage reform efforts. During Kadi Fakondo’s training of the Women and Children Protection Section, she emphasized the importance of finding ways to improve investigations and responsiveness when battling difficult odds and those who try to compromise cases. Fakondo’s message inspired Asatu Bah-Kenneth to compose a song for graduation of the first batch of section officers. Bah-Kenneth explained: “Our trainers gave us a lot of reasons why we should not compromise our rape cases. ... Even if the IG [inspector general of the LNP] had an interest in the case that he wanted to compromise, you must protect.” Every Women and Children Protection Section class sang Bah-Kenneth’s song, “We are Protectors,” upon graduation from training and at section programs and gatherings.

In 2011, resources and capacity and gender imbalances continued to be major constraints in Liberia, as in many other post-conflict countries. However, it was still possible to build innovative and effective institutions. Bah-Kenneth reflected on her experience leading the Women and Children Protection Section: “As first head of the section, I planted a seed that grew up. And I’m proud of it today. And I can say that I was able to expose a lot of perpetrators during my time. ... I’m proud to say that I gave birth to that section, and now it’s moving.”

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- ¹ Republic of Liberia, *Poverty Reduction Strategy* (IMF Country Report No. 08/219: 2008), 15.
- ² *Poverty Reduction Strategy*, 15.
- ³ Republic of Liberia Truth and Reconciliation Commission, *Volume 1: Preliminary Findings and Recommendations*, 2009, <http://trcofliberia.org/reports/final-report> (12 March 2012).
- ⁴ Human Rights Watch, "How to Fight, How to Kill: Child Soldiers in Liberia," 2 February 2004, <http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/docid/402d1e8a4.html> (24 August 2011).
- ⁵ Ernest Harsch, "Women: Africa's ignored combatants, Gradual progress towards a greater role in DDR," *Africa Renewal* 19:3 (2005): 7, <http://www.un.org/en/africarenewal/vol19no3/193women.html> (24 August 2011).
- ⁶ Studies on assault against women during the war report a wide range of percentages (12% to 72%), depending on how the research questions were worded, what county the respondents lived in, and whether the violence included domestic violence. Data in this case study were derived from three sources: 1) Patrick Vinck, Phuong Pham, Tino Kreutzer, *Talking Peace: A Population-Based Survey on Attitudes about Security, Dispute Resolution and Post-Conflict Reconstruction in Liberia* (Human Rights Center, University of California, Berkeley, June 2011), 34; 2) Marie-Claire Omanyondo, *Sexual Gender-Based Violence and Health Facility Needs Assessment* (World Health Organization: September 2005); and 3) Republic of Liberia, *Poverty Reduction Strategy* (IMF Country Report No. 08/219: 2008).
- ⁷ Patrick Vinck, Phuong Pham, Tino Kreutzer, *Talking Peace: A Population-Based Survey on Attitudes about Security, Dispute Resolution and Post-Conflict Reconstruction in Liberia* (Human Rights Center, University of California, Berkeley, June 2011), 34, <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.1874025> (12 March 2012).
- ⁸ UNIFEM, *Liberia: Supporting Women's engagement in peace building and preventing sexual violence: community-led approaches*, 7, www.unifem.org/afghanistan/docs/pubs/07/DFID/liberia.pdf (20 December 2011).
- ⁹ Republic of Liberia, *Millennium Development Goals 2010 Report: Progress, prospects and challenges towards achieving the MDGs*, 15, <http://www.lr.undp.org/> (13 March 2012).
- ¹⁰ UNMIL, *Gender Mainstreaming In Peacekeeping Operations Liberia 2003-2009: Best Practice Report* (OGA: September 2010), 21, http://www.peacewomen.org/portal_resources_resource.php?id=1418 (13 March 2012).
- ¹¹ Republic of Ghana, *Ghana Police Service Official Website*, http://www.ghanapolice.info/broad_formation.htm (20 December 2011).

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