THEME OF EDITION:
Border Governance
Challenges

ECHOES OF YOUTH VOICES AND CONCERNS FROM THE MANO RIVER BORDER ZONES


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WHAT IT TAKES TO DEMAND STATE ACCOUNTABILITY

Ce qu’il faut pour exiger la responsabilité

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This is the third of four editions of the BORDERLINES magazine published as part of the REGIONAL YOUTH INITIATIVE OF THE WORLD BANK CIVIL SOCIETY FUND (CSF). It is implemented by Pampana Communications with the support of the World Bank, the UNDP and the Mano River Union Secretariat.

The Magazine is among other activities of the REGIONAL YOUTH INITIATIVE intended to draw the attention of policy makers to the salient voices, views and concerns of vulnerable youth residing along the volatile post-conflict Mano River border communities which had served as intensive conflict zones and flashpoints during the war and peace keeping periods in the three Mano River Union countries of Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia.

The theme for this edition ‘BORDER GOVERNANCE CHALLENGES’ has been chosen based on the strong consideration that youths in the three countries in general and those along the borders in particular, have been the largest single group who have been most associated with conflict and peace in the Mano River Union sub-region; that governance is at the bottom of the cause of the sub-regional conflict.

During the 14-year conflict period in the sub-region, the youth constituted over 90% of the fighting forces and were mostly recycled in cross-border battles across the three countries. Even before the war, the youth were faced with wide ranging problems that hindered their individual and collective participation in governance and development. With the end of the war, there have been minimal efforts to approach the youth crisis in the three countries from a regional vantage point. Most youth support activities in the sub-region have been confined to the individual countries.

In this regard, the BORDERLINES magazine is among the rare efforts in the Mano River sub-region aimed at addressing youth concerns and welfare by looking beyond national frontiers to act within the broader framework of the Mano River Union.

Ceci est le tiers de quatre éditions du magasin FRONTIÈRES publié en tant qu’élément de l’INITIATIVE RÉGIONALE de la JEUNESSE DES FONDS de SOCIÉTÉ CIVILS de la BANQUE MONDIALE. Il est mis en application par Pampana Communications avec l’appui de la banque mondiale, du PNUD et du secrétariat de l’union du fleuve Mano.


Le thème pour cette édition est des DÉFIS DE LA GOUVERNANCE À LA FRONTIÈRE ”, qui traite des défis de politique et de la gouvernance face à la jeunesse résidant le long du volatil communautés d’après-guerre du fleuve Mano qui avaient servi de zones et de points d’inflammabilité intensifs de conflit pendant les périodes de guerre et de maintien de la paix dans les trois pays qui constituent l’union du fleuve Mano : la Guinée, de la Sierra Leone et du Libéria.

Pendant la période de conflit de 14 ans dans la sous région, la jeunesse constituée plus de 90% des forces de combat et ont été la plupart du temps réutilisé dans les batailles frontalières à travers les trois pays. Même avant la guerre, la jeunesse a été confrontée aux problèmes étendus qui ont généré leur participation individuelle et collective au gouvernement et au développement. Souvent manquant de l’information et des opportunités, les jeunesse sont devenues les cibles faciles pour le recrutement dans la guerre. A la fin de la guerre, il y a eu des efforts minimaux d’approcher la crise de la jeunesse dans les trois pays d’une position avantageuse régionale. La plupart des activités qui soutiennent la jeunesse dans la sous région ont été confinées aux pays individus.

À cet égard, le magasin FRONTIÈRES est parmi les efforts rares dans la sous région du fleuve Mano visée a adresser des soucis et le bien-être de la jeunesse en regardant au delà des frontières nationales pour agir dans le cadre plus large de l’union du fleuve Mano.
What it takes for Citizens to Demand State Accountability

CITIZENS ARE THE ONES LEAST INVOLVED COMPARED TO STATE AND DONOR ACTORS IN THE CONTROL AND MANAGEMENT OF PUBLIC RESOURCES FOR WHICH ACCOUNTABILITY IS NEEDED. HENCE CITIZENS NEED EMPOWERMENT MOST TO DEMAND STATE ACCOUNTABILITY, WHICH IS WHY A RECENT WORLD BANK SOCIAL ACCOUNTABILITY STUDY FOR SIERRA LEONE EMPHASIZES THE DEMAND SIDE OF ACCOUNTABILITY, A MODEL NOW GAINING POPULARITY ALONG THE MANO RIVER BORDER COMMUNITIES, SIDIE SHERIFF AND ALBERT ANSU REPORT.

CONDIMENTS

With the clout of a statesman, the gangling man of ideas is putting across his findings to some fifty attentive emissaries of various walks of life. It is at the Kimbima hotel by the seaside of western Freetown.

In the gathering there are people in government, private business, civil society and those who work for aid organizations. There are also youth representatives from as far as the fringes of Sierra Leone’s borders with Liberia and Guinea.

They are gathered here to season the condiments of a redeemer sauce they all have committed themselves to cooking. The sauce is the Social Accountability study supported by the World Bank for Sierra Leone. Standing besides the flip chart, the resource man is in a vantage position to see and be seen by all. The sense he injects into his points, the color, voice and style he uses to drive them home, his visibility and his body language widens the radar of ears to listen.

No yawning or yearning for a break as would normally happen to most gatherings on development talk. This one is what knowledge extractors call real consultation. The gathering has been invited to pull ideas around the sauce, to season it to taste better, and call the recipe validation.

On the chart Gibril Sesay has drawn two triangles. The first he calls “Actors”. He labels each angle in bold: Government, Donors and Citizens. The other he calls “Action”, also labeling the angles: Information, Voice and Negotiation. “These are the condiments of the accountability sauce we have gathered here to season”, he says, “the triangle of actors and of action”.

According to the “triangle of actors”, he said, “citizens can demand accountability
from government, donors and themselves; government can demand accountability from donors, citizens and themselves; and donors, along the same line of reasoning, can demand accountability from the other two groups and themselves."

"Government should introduce measures to promote a more transparent and customer-oriented civil service and to break the current culture of secrecy and opacity."

“But since our study is about the demand side of accountability”, he goes on, “our findings are about how citizens can demand accountability from government, donors and themselves. This is because citizens are the least endowed in terms of control and management of resources for which accountability is needed.

“In order to do so”, pointing to the second triangle – the triangle of action, “the citizens need Voice, access to Information and the skills and platforms for Negotiation.”

**VOICE**

The study says that for citizens in Sierra Leone to be given VOICE to be able demand accountability, a number of actions should be taken. First, it says the government of Sierra Leone should implement and support citizen empowerment and rights awareness programs, underlining the notion of public power holders as duty bearers and citizens as active participants in their own governance.

Such programmes, it says, should specifically underline women’s rights and youth rights and seek to build the knowledge, confidence and civic competencies of marginalized groups.

The study says government should explore and promote emerging and culturally appropriate forms of citizen expression such as music, drama, story-telling and interactive radio programs.

The government is also urged to develop and support strategies, tools and media that are specifically adapted to the characteristics and needs of marginalized groups (e.g. promoting the voice of youth through music and radio, developing non-confrontational strategies and tools for use at village level that combine respect for elders with firmness in demanding accountability.

Given the country’s repressive past, the government is urged to take decisive and proactive steps to ensure that freedom of expression is guaranteed by law and protected in practice. This should include “whistleblower protection” legislation as part of a broader Freedom of Information Act and zero tolerance of any reported cases of infringement of freedom of expression.

The state is admonished to: (i) expand opportunities for government interaction with civil society at all levels. (ii) Support, publicize, monitor and enforce compliance with current provisions of Local Government Act 462 regarding public consultation. (iii) Consider amendments to the Act that could encourage enhanced local government-citizen dialogue, such as allowing the public to speak at council meeting; requiring public and participatory monitoring, evaluation and reporting, and; encouraging (or requiring) local councilors to participate in citizen or civil society-organized forums. (iv) Consider decentralizing local-level CSO registration to the district level (to simultaneously facilitate the registration process for local CSOs, enhance district level knowledge of CSOs, and create an opportunity for interaction and exchange). (v) Establish a public complaint mechanism at district level (as recommended in the National Anti-Corruption Strategy). Developing local taxation could also play an important role in building public ownership over local government institutions and demand for “downwards” accountability.

Government should support the development of ward committees as platforms for genuine and meaningful citizen participation, for example: raise public awareness
about the role of ward committees; reinforce measures to ensure that committee members are elected (rather than selected) and that women’s quotas are respected; encourage (or introduce quotas for) youth involvement; where feasible, encourage CSOs to assist in facilitating ward committee meetings and activities; provide training for committee members and (where necessary) travel allowance, and; consider channeling (public and donor) community development funds through ward committees as a strategy for enhancing their relevance, influence and profile.

The study recommends the introduction of guidelines and concrete measures to “level the playing field” and to promote equitable representation of women, youth, persons with disabilities and other marginalized groups in processes of public consultation and negotiation. Strategies might include using popular and accessible platforms for consultation (such as community meetings and interactive community radio); establishing clear guidelines regarding the representation of marginalized groups in formal consultations and taking concrete steps to overcome barriers to the effective participation of such groups (e.g. carefully targeted pre-consultation information-sharing, providing local language translation, ensuring physical access for persons with disabilities, etc.).

The study also recommends the promotion and protection of media freedoms, including the repealing of criminal libel laws of the Public Order Act and crackdown on cases of censorship, harassment and intimidation.

It recommends the support of community radio stations and establishing a strong national network of independent local radio stations.

Media support agencies such as the the Media Foundation for West Africa and Search for Common Ground are encouraged to undertake capacity building and continuing education programs to bolster the professional journalism. The study also recommends enforcing professional codes of ethics for the media.

Funding, training and capacity building to enhance CSO advocacy activities are highly recommended in the study. Also, supporting longer-term, single-issue advocacy campaigns that are bottom-up and people-centered and which employ tried and tested accountability tools and methods are considered highly pertinent.

The study strongly proffers the support of issue based networking and coalition among CSOs, particularly those that strengthen links between local, regional and national CSOs and between popular membership based civil society organizations and research and advocacy-oriented groups and with media outlets.

The creation of issue-based platforms for direct civil society-state interaction and engagement on key issues such as mining and human rights are highly recommended in the study.

I N F O R M A T I O N

The study says for citizens in Sierra Leone to be given ACCESS TO INFORMATION in order to be able to demand accountability, a number of actions should be taken. Firstly, government should expedite action to adopt and operationalize “Freedom of Information” legislation. This should include: (i) repealing or revising outdated laws that are inconsistent with constitutional guarantees of freedom of information (in particular, sections of the 1965 Treason and State Offences Act, official secrecy provisions of the Civil Service’s General Orders and criminal libel and other provisions of the 1965 Public Order Act); (ii) developing subsidiary legislation to guide and detail disclosure processes in specific areas of government activity; (iii) introducing systems and mechanisms for efficient
and timely disclosure, and; (iv) raising public and civil servant awareness about information rights.

Government should also introduce measures to promote a more transparent and customer-oriented civil service and to break the current culture of secrecy and opacity. These could include: (i) introducing a Code of Practice on access to government information; (ii) introducing mechanisms for proactive information sharing (such as public interest broadcasts and local level citizen’s information and advice bureaus), and; (iii) creating incentives (e.g. through formal and informal recognition and awards, job performance evaluation criteria) for civil servants to facilitate access to information as well as the imposition of sanctions on those who impede it.

Government should continue to support and implement efforts to modernize and improve information and financial management systems (such as those currently undertaken by the IRCBP and the Decentralization Secretariat), ensuring adequate attention to systems of public access and disclosure.

Government should take steps to make information and processes related to local-level planning, budgets and expenditures more open and accessible. Reinforce measures to ensure compliance transparency and financial accountability requirements of the Local Government Act (sections 81, 105, 107). Where community radio exists, government should require local councilors to use them to publicly disseminate planning, budget and expenditure information.

Government should raise the profile and public awareness of the role of District Budget Oversight Committees (DBOCs) and ensure the transparent election/selection of members and provide them with training, travel allowance and essential equipment.

Government should encourage or require the public dissemination of DBOC findings and systematize the annual implementation of the PETS. Formalize links with CSOs and community radio to render the process more participatory and to raise public awareness of PETS findings. Experiment with public displays of expenditure information (such as allocations to chiefdom and district-level facilities).

Support should be given to further efforts to develop budget advocacy (for example, in partnership with ISODEC, Ghana). Facilitate and support independent, community or CSO-led expenditure monitoring initiatives (building on experiences such as civil society monitoring of the Diamond Mining Community Development Fund and HIPC community development funds).

Government and donors should build the capacity of local councils to manage and disclose information and develop strategies and incentives to encourage councilors to share information in a more open,
proactive, and systematic manner (using popular and accessible forms of media, such as community radio and town criers).

Government should build citizen demand for information by organizing and supporting public education campaigns (at local and national levels) to inform citizens (especially women and youth) about their information rights and the types of public information available to them.

Government and donors should support the development of community radio stations and networks and support and strengthen relations between local government institutions (i.e. local councils, ward committees and DBOCs) and community radio.

Government and donors should provide financial support, training and capacity-building to enhance civil society research, communication and advocacy activities. This should include: raising awareness of information rights; information workshops on government processes, budgets, projects and documents; training in research, communication and advocacy techniques.

Government and donors should promote and support communication and alliance-building between different types of CSOs (e.g. operational v. and advocacy-oriented) and CSOs active at different levels (local through to national).

**NEGOTIATION**

The study says for citizens in Sierra Leone to be given negotiation skills in order to be able to demand accountability, a number of actions should be taken. Firstly, the government should clearly affirm the obligation of public officials and other holders of public resources to account to citizens. The study recommends the launch of a coordinated nation-wide public education campaign, through community radio, school curricula and in collaboration with opinion-formers (such as religious leaders, traditional authorities, celebrities, respected business people and politicians) to raise awareness of citizen rights, promote values of public transparency, integrity and accountability and break embedded traditions of patronage and corruption.

Donors are urged to support efforts aimed at demonstrating to government actors at local and national levels, as well as other key societal actors, the important concrete benefits of social accountability. Publicize, for example, experiences where social accountability initiatives have resulted in: concrete improvements in public service delivery, greater political stability, and increased tax revenues.

Involving traditional authorities in social accountability initiatives and build capacities to exploit avenues within traditional processes for promoting social accountability practices. For example, organize sensitization and training workshops for traditional authorities (as well as religious and community leaders) on human and civil rights and accountability.

Government and donors are urged to provide funding, training and capacity-building to encourage and support civil-society led social accountability initiatives. This should include: exposure to social accountability strategies, tools and experiences from other countries; financial support to pilot new initiatives; support to sustain, expand or scale-up existing initiatives, and support for information-sharing, coordination and collaboration efforts among CSOs implementing social accountability activities.

Government and donors are urged to explore opportunities for rendering existing “supply-side” accountability mechanisms more effective through enhanced civic engagement. For example, the oversight role of Parliament could be enhanced by strengthening MP-constituency links (including allowances for constituency travel and the organization of public consultations) and encouraging civil society contributions to the work of parliamentary committees. Accountability institutions
such as the Office of the Ombudsman, the ACC, the PETS and DBOCs could all be rendered more effective through greater public outreach, information-sharing and engagement with citizens/CSOs.

Government and donors are urged to establish an agreed framework for public consultations and government-civil society collaborations including guidelines to ensure that: participants are selected/elected in a transparent manner; relevant background information is made available to all parties; the level of influence and expected outcome of the consultation or deliberation is mutually understood, and; feedback and follow-up processes are clearly defined. Such a framework and terms of engagement might best be developed by a joint task force composed of key government and civil society representatives and chaired by a respected and “neutral” facilitator (building on proposals currently under development by the ENCISS program).

Government and donors are urged to explore possibilities for formalizing “demand-side” social accountability mechanisms, especially in the key sectors of health, education, mining, and justice by introducing mechanisms for systematic citizen monitoring, evaluation and feedback and by creating new platforms such as joint working groups, consultative committees, roundtables, oversight bodies that bring government and civil society representatives together as “allies” in pursuit of the public interest.

Government and donors are urged to sustain efforts to strengthen existing legal structures such as the police, the judiciary and the Anti Corruption Commission to enable them adequately discharge their statutory responsibilities.

Government and donors are urged to support judicial reform programs in order to reduce court delays, fight corruption in the justice system and promote confidence in the rule of law such as those recommended in the 2005 National Anti-Corruption Strategy.

Government and donors are urged to support and expand CSO initiatives aimed at expanding access to justice. In particular, support the introduction of social accountability mechanisms to monitor justice services and the effectiveness of reform programs. Example, support to the independent monitoring of the Auditor General’s office and the publishing of statistics about the number of cases received by, reviewed and prosecuted by the office of the Attorney General.

Government and donors are urged to instigate reforms to enhance the effectiveness of the Anti Corruption Commission, for example by enhancing its powers of enforcement and prosecution; increasing resources for investigation and outreach; expanding its mandate to include periodic monitoring of the assets of public authorities and civil servants; strengthening links with parliament, and; establishing a district level presence.

At the local level, Government and donors are urged to ensure closer supervision by the judiciary to ensure the consistency and equity of rules applied by chiefs and local court officials and their compliance with the constitution and women’s and human rights provisions.

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Government and donors are urged to build on current efforts by, for example, the Timap for Justice Program to provide paralegal and legal aid support, especially to women, in rural areas.

Policy makers are urged to support participatory assessments of the content and status of customary laws as a way to “demystify” these laws and to empower people (especially women and other traditionally marginalized groups) who are subject to the jurisdiction of traditional laws to have a say in what the rules should be and how they are enforced. Decentralize and expand the mandate of the Office of the Ombudsman to include complaints against Chiefs.

Resource providers are urged to prioritize funding of social accountability and governance programs.
Dor organizations are admonished in the study to play an active role in working with government counterparts to enhance transparency and accountability and, where necessary, utilize conditionalities or sanctions to ensure compliance with certain minimum standards.

Ideally, donors are urged to develop a coherent and coordinated strategy to collectively promote social accountability in Sierra Leone. They are urged to be sensitive to the potentially divisive and disempowering impact of some forms of donor funding and promote, for example, forms of cooperative assistance and core, institution-building support.

The study proffers that donors should set an example by ensuring that their own programs emphasize and require transparency, information-sharing, participation and downward accountability.

A commonly agreed set of good practices and minimal standards in this respect would be useful, says the study. Policy attendants are admonished to provide core financial and technical support to selected civil society organizations to help them improve management and internal governance; develop capacities and skills; strengthen constituency links; ensure equitable representation among their members and leadership; enhance membership voice and participation as well as downward accountability.

And; evolve into viable and Policy attendants are also encouraged to support efforts by civil society organizations to develop a collective Code of Ethics and mechanisms for effective self-regulation, probity and accountability.
Civic Engagement in the Tri-Border Communities

DUE TO DIFFERENCES OF COLONIAL HISTORY AND A CONFLUENCE OF CONTEMPORARY FACTORS, EACH MANO RIVER UNION COUNTRY HAS A PECULIAR FORM AND STYLE OF CIVIC ENGAGEMENT WHICH IS SAID TO HAVE INFLUENCED STATE CONFIGURATION AND POSITIONING AT COMMUNITY LEVEL, GEORGE KHORYAMA AND SIDIE SHERIFF REPORT.

How citizens engage the state and how the state engages citizens became the subject of investigation early in October 2007 when a team of journalists visited the Gissi, Mende and Gbandi speaking communities along and around the common borders shared by Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone.

Due to differences of colonial and political history, each country possesses its own peculiar form and style of civic engagement; and this is found to be largely due to how the state is configured and positioned at community level.

On the Sierra Leone side, state structure is observed to be three-layered which, according to Councilor Kanneh of Buedu, are “central government appointees based in Kailahun, elected local government representatives spread across the district and traditional rulers including tribal authorities headed by paramount chiefs”. But “the legitimacy of these layers of government”, he says, “depends significantly on the degree of trust from citizens”.

October 2007 emphasizes that trust and state legitimacy in Sierra Leone can be achieved by “creating public and national ownership of government. If the Sierra Leone State has spread across the district and traditional rulers including tribal authorities headed by paramount chiefs”. But “the legitimacy of these layers of government”, he says, “depends significantly on the degree of trust from citizens”.

The country report on Sierra Leone released by the Seventh African Governance Forum held in Ouagadougou from 24th through 26th

“We the women are mere on-lookers in the game development” - says Finda Ansu

Borderlines Is seed sponsored by the World Bank Civil Society Fund under its Regional Youth Initiative
state officials hardly trust civil society. A lot of studies point at mutual suspicion between citizens (especially youth) and the state”. The report further reveals that “the recent general presidential and parliamentary elections reveal a sharp ethnoregional divide along south-east and north-western lines. This divide which has serious implications for national cohesion and
development is now seen as the new challenge for the new government”.

The report recommends that “creating legitimacy and trust in Sierra Leone can be done by establishing strong participation mechanisms and by defining the roles and relationships of different spheres of government. Sustaining legitimacy and trust includes the development of a management and administrative and political culture based on the rule of law, transparency and information sharing, ethical behavior as well as professional conduct sustained by the integrity of leadership”.

On the Liberian side of the border, the state is represented by the County Superintendent and District Commissioners appointed by central government as well as traditional chiefs and tribal governors “who wield far less powers than their counterparts in Guinea and Sierra Leone”, observes youth leader in Koindu, Falla Gborie. Added to that, state structures in rural Liberia, including the border

“Liberia’s political system is influenced by its American heritage; Sierra Leone by the British system and Guinea by the French. Citizens sandwiched between the three countries - though belonging to the same ethnic group – are prone to be influenced by their respective colonial heritages. But their idiosyncrasies, mannerisms, norms and believe systems are fundamentally the same.”

communities in question, were observed to have been more devastated by the war than was the case in Sierra Leone. According to a US Congressional research report on Liberia published on www.opencrs, “Liberia’s economy and state structures remain devastated by war”. This position is buttressed by the Universitat Potsdam report titled Processes of State Collapse in Liberia, “Since the end of the year 1989 Liberia has been ravaged by a bloody civil war. It has almost completely destroyed the state structure of Liberian society. The state and almost all political institutions were stripped of credibility and legitimacy. During the war it was easy for the warlords of the various factions and their mostly young supporters to seize power and the remaining resources of the country. They established a radical free market system with the help of internationally operating companies and banks, protecting it by terror”.

On the Guinean side, state actors consist of appointees from central government with strong local considerations and with heavy powers vested in the security forces. According to an online website Guinea Economic Analysis, “local executive power is entrusted to governors of administrative regions and to prefects of administrative centres who are appointed directly by the President”. The same report states that Guinea is divided into “8 regions (Zerekore, Kankan, Faranah, Labe, Mamou, Kindia, Boke, Conakry), 33 prefectures, 38 city communes, 302 rural communes”.

Apart from the administrative and self-government bodies, the report says there are also “functioning councils of elders. They are widely respected and play an important role in solving local conflicts and arguments. The social-political weight of the local "clan aristocracy" is also noticeable. All these circumstances have an inevitable impact on the
political aspect of the interrelations between different Guinean nationalities”.

If development has to come about as a fruit of a social contract between citizens and the state, then it becomes necessary to understand the implications of citizen organization and positioning to deal with the state in this highly volatile and vulnerable youth-proliferated tri-border community.

Unlike the variation of state configuration in the individual countries, citizens of the three countries constitute one people and have no remarkable differences in their modes of dealing with the state. This is not to say that the monoculture community is not influenced by the different political cultures of the three countries. In line with this reality, Councilor Kanneh of Buedu puts it in a subtle way, “we are one people, but coping with three political systems, each having its own expression of western civilization”.

Liberia’s political system is influenced by its American heritage, Sierra Leone by the British system and Guinea by the French. Citizens sandwiched between the three countries - though the same Gissi speaking – are prone to look and behave more Liberian when they are in Liberian territory, more Guinean when they are in Guinea and more Sierra Leonean in Sierra Leone. But their mannerisms, norms, idiosyncrasies and belief systems are essentially the same.

How citizens engage the state and how the state engages citizens in each country among the Gissi speaking people now becomes a matter of cross-pollination between endogenous and exogenous values.

A recent World Bank Study on the Civil Society Landscape in Sierra Leone says “the vast majority of people live in rural areas and their daily lives are governed by indigenous customs and traditions and are organized into patrilineages, sodalities, labor gangs and traditional savings schemes known as osusu associations”. “These” the study says, “provide the basis for interaction and inter-mediation between ordinary people and chiefs in the course of meeting local political, economic and other challenges. In essence, whilst the forms of these structures for interaction may be different from western forms of civil society, they nonetheless perform roles that approximate those that civil society groups in the West perform. These groups build the social capital and moral pacts necessary for influencing, countervailing or participating in the political, social and economic governance of local societies”.

Amara Karamoh Kamara of Nongowa, Guinea, and Jaclyn Andrew of Foya in Liberia are both in full agreement with the above description of how the state is configured and organized to deal with society in their respective countries.

Learning Center

Tips on Civic Engagement

Civic Engagement is the drive and contribution by citizens to shape ideas, energy and action for the common good of the community or society. It is effective if Civic Engagement is capitalized on citizens’ energy to gather together representative of various segments of the community. Civic engagement creates win-win solutions to controversial community issues while engaging citizens in the political life of their community. It creates genuine public forums for face-to-face interaction while complementing the traditional decision making activities of agencies, courts, and legislatures. It generates solutions that are fairer, more efficient, and better informed. Civic engagement is demonstrated by a personal ethic to cultivate service, fostering engagement in community or state and leaving a legacy of positive change.
Hands Apart, Silent Voices and Dormant Energy

THE PEOPLE OF WAR RAVAGED KOINDU NEED STRONG VOICES AMONG THEMSELVES TO BUILD TRUST FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION. THEY ALSO NEED CATALYSTS TO LIFT THEIR ENERGIES TO A HIGHER HEIGHT FOR COLLECTIVE ACTION. ALPHA AMADU BAH REPORTS.

My October 2007 trip to war-ravaged Koindu was a disappointment. I was shocked to find a town completely different from the lively and smart looking Koindu of the good old days. It took me no time to see the tears on the face of every damaged building crying for rescue from anywhere and anyhow.

The town had vivid and painful scars of the war. In the centre I was greeted with carcasses of a burnt fuel station, two burnt mosques, a burnt market and numerous burnt houses. The uninhabited houses had grown tall grasses, some taller than the houses themselves and those habited had worn-out paints with so much dust on them that it was difficult to discern whether they had ever been painted.

Graffiti on buildings clearly betray their authors by their subject matter: ‘RUF nor go disarm if papay nor cam’, ‘bloody civilian’, ‘AFRC-RUF people’s army na di boss’. These were underscored by drawings of guns, war tanks and combat-ready soldiers.

The sole health post in Koindu has one health officer, a nurse and two midwives, grossly inadequate for the health care needs of Koindu. Many Koindu residents have to rely on Foya Hospital, better equipped in personnel and drugs, seventeen miles away in Liberia for medical services. Patients travel from Koindu to Foya hospital every day under distressful transportation difficulties. Mostly, in the absence of vehicles, patients in emergency conditions were laid in hammocks and carried to Foya on the shoulders of youths on foot.

The rugged gravel roads are indescribably deplorable. A thirty-four mile drive from Kailahun to Koindu takes over two hours. Reaching Koindu from the provincial town of Kenema is even worse, taking a whole day with over sixty ditches, each no

“I was bewildered when I learned that people had returned to Koindu since the war ended five years ago and still could not come together to at least do a facelift on some of the stark nightmarish war relics as others elsewhere had done to their war ravaged villages and towns during their first year of return without outside help.”

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less than four feet deep and twenty yards long. Water and sanitation facilities are equally deplorable. There is only one functional hand pump provided by GTZ and one waste management site in a township of over 7000.

The most organized youth group in Koindu is the Toli Youth Organization established in 2002. This group holds general meetings fortnightly and what in local parlance is called Blow Mind sessions, meaning “Say Your Mind” sessions to address urgent matters. The group’s main source of finance is personal assistance from patrons in the town. Other groups which include: Sisters Unite, Trader Association and Transparency, Accountability and Participation (TAP) seem to be merely nominal organizations. They have no offices, hardly meet or organize community activities.

The youths traditionally provide certain community services. According to Falla Gborie, its chairperson, Toli Youth Organization normally provides free labor for activities such as road construction, farming and cleaning exercises. He cited the repairing of ditches on the roads linking Koindu, Kailahun, Yenga and Foya in 2003 as an accomplishment of his organization.

So far the local authority has been striving to get funding for projects aimed at improving its condition from the central government as well as donor agencies. “Within the past three years”, says Councilor Tengbeh, “we have been able to construct two guest houses, twenty market stalls, a solid waste management site and a community centre with support from the National Commission of Social Action funded by the World Bank”.

The Councilor said, “the construction of these structures was made possible also through the cooperation of a ten-man youth strategic team set up for each of the projects”. This team, the Councilor explained, “was mainly responsible for providing labor supervision and other requisite services needed for the work”.

But, seldom do the youth efforts seem to receive a helping hand. “We need our elders in local and central government as well as their development partners such as NGOs to help us come together and work for development of the town”, Falla Gborie said.

“We the women are also mere on-lookers in the game development”, lamented Finda Ansu. “We need to be empowered to stand by our male partners in developing our community.”

Despite all the appeals and lamentations, there seems to be low community mobilization skills and collective will to effect significant improvement on the outlook of this war ravaged town.

I was bewildered when I learned that people had returned to Koindu since the war ended five years ago and still could not come together to at least do a facelift on some of the stark nightmarish war relics as others elsewhere had done to their war ravaged villages and towns during their first year of return without outside help.

Clearly the people of Koindu desperately need more and stronger voices to build trust for collective action. They need some catalysts to lift their energies to a higher and sufficient height for collective action. More organizations like Toli Youth Organization and financial resources are needed to restore Koindu to its pre-war status with basic services and infrastructure operational.
Ce qu’il faut pour exiger la responsabilité
PAR MOHAMED SIDIE SHERIFF ET ALBERT ANSU

WOMEN NEED VOICE

Avec la puissance d’un homme d’État, l’homme dégingandé des idées transmet ses constatations à une cinquantaine d’émissaires attentifs de divers secteurs. C’est à l’hôtel Kimbima au bord de la mer, à l’ouest de Freetown.

Dans le rassemblement il y a les gens dans le gouvernement, les commerçants privés, des représentants de la société civile et de ceux qui travaillent pour des organismes d'aide. Il y a également des représentants de la jeunesse venant d'endroits aussi loin que les frontières de la Sierra Leone, du côté du libéra et de la Guinée.

Ils se sont recueillis ici pour assaisonner les condiments d'une sauce à rédempteur qu'ils se sont commis à préparer. La sauce c'est l'étude sociale de responsabilité soutenue par la banque mondiale pour la Sierra Leone. Se tenant debout tout près de tableau de conférence, l'homme de ressource est en position avantageuse à voir et voir par tous. Il a réussi à prendre l'attention de tout le monde par la manière dont il fait ses points, sa couleur, sa voix et son style, sa visibilité et sa langue de corps.

Dans le rassemblement aucun bâillement, aucune geste ennuyeuse comme arriverait normalement à la plupart des rassemblements sur l'entretien de développement. Est celui-ci ce que les extracteurs de la connaissance appellent vraie consultation. Le rassemblement a été invité pour tirer des idées autour de la sauce, de l'assaisonner pour goûter mieux, et appelle la validation de recette.

Sur le diagramme Gibril a tracé deux triangles. Le premier il appelle des « acteurs ». Il marque chaque angle : Gouvernement, donateurs et citoyens. L'autre il appelle « action », marquant également les angles : L'information, voix et négociation. « Ce sont les condiments de la sauce de responsabilité que nous nous sommes réunis ici pour assaisonner », il dit, « la triangle des acteurs et de l'action ».

Selon la « triangle des acteurs » il les a dit « citoyens peuvent exiger la responsabilité du gouvernement, des donateurs et d'eux-mêmes ; également le gouvernement peut exiger la responsabilité des donateurs, des citoyens et d'eux-mêmes ; et les donateurs. De la même façon le gouvernement peut exiger la responsabilité des deux autres groupes et d'eux-mêmes. »

« Mais puisque notre étude est limité à la demande de la responsabilité », il
continue, « nos résultats sont au sujet de la façon dont les citoyens peuvent exiger la responsabilité du gouvernement, des donateurs et d'eux-mêmes. C'est parce que les citoyens sont moins dotés en termes de commande et gestion des ressources pour lesquelles la responsabilité est nécessaire.

« Pour faire ainsi », Gibril dit, en indiquant à la deuxième triangle - la triangle de l'action, « les citoyens ont besoin de la voix, de l'accès à l'information et finalement il faut que les citoyens aient la dextérité et les plateformes pour faire la négociation. »

VOIX

L'étude indique que pour donner la VOIX aux sierras léonaises qui les permettront d'exiger la responsabilité, un certain nombre d'actions devrait être prise. D'abord, il indique que le gouvernement de la Sierra Leone devrait mettre en application et soutenir l'habilitation de citoyens et redresse des programmes de conscience, en soulignant la notion que les dirigeants qui détiennent le pouvoir doivent être responsables aux citoyens et les citoyens devraient se considérer comme participants actifs à leur propre gouvernement.

De tels programmes, il indique, devrait spécifiquement souligner les droits des femmes et les droits de la jeunesse et les chercher à établir la connaissance, la confiance et les compétences civiques des groupes marginalisés.

L'étude indique que le gouvernement devrait explorer et favoriser l'émergence des autres formes d'expression qui sont culturellement appropriées pour l'expression de citoyens telles que la musique, le drame, la conte et les programmes interactifs à la radio.

Le gouvernement est également encouragé de développer et soutenir les stratégies, les outils et les médias qui sont spécifiquement adaptés aux caractéristiques et aux besoins des groupes marginalisés (par exemple. favorisant la voix de la jeunesse par la musique et la radio, développement des stratégies non conflictuelles et des outils pour l'usage au niveau de village qui combinent le respect pour des aînés avec la fermeté dans exigeante de la responsabilité.

Etant donné le passé répressif du pays, le gouvernement est invité de prendre des mesures décisives et proactives pour s'assurer que la liberté d'expression est entièrement garantie par loi et protégée en réalité. Ceci devrait inclure l'adoption de la législation « de protection de whistleblower » (en tant qu'élément d'une plus large liberté d'acte de l'information) et la tolérance nulle de cas rapportés qui empiètent sur la liberté d'expression.

L'état est averti d'explorer et d'augmenter les opportunités pour avoir une interface et une échange entre les citoyens, le gouvernement et les organisations de la société civile au niveau local. ……..

L'étude recommande l'introduction des directives et des mesures concrètes qui favorisent la représentation équitable des femmes, de la jeunesse, des personnes avec des incapacités et d'autres groupes marginalisés dans les processus de la consultation et de la négociation publiques. Les stratégies pourraient inclure l'emploi des plateformes populaires et accessibles pour la consultation (telle que les réunions de la communauté et les programmes interactifs dans les radios communautaires) ; établissant les directives claires concernant la représentation des groupes marginalisés dans des consultations formelles et en prenant des mesures concrètes de surmonter des barrières à la participation efficace de tels groupes.

L'étude recommande également la promotion et la protection des libertés de médias, y compris l'abrogation des lois criminelles de diffamation et soutenir le développement des radios communautaires et l'établissement d'un réseau national fort des radios locales indépendantes.

Aidez des organismes qui soutiennent le média (tels que la Commission indépendante de médias, fondation de médias de l'Afrique de l'ouest et 'Talking Drum Studios') pour entreprendre le renforcement de capacité et les programmes de formation permanente pour soutenir la professionnalisme des journalistes et leur
capacité d’entreprendre le journalisme investigateur ; Soutenez l’établissement et l’application d’un code professionnel de l’éthique.

Fournissez le placement, la formation et le renforcement de capacité pour augmenter des activités de recommandation des organisations de la société civile.

L’INFORMATION

L’étude indique pour que les citoyens aient ACESS À L’INFORMATION afin d’être capable pour exiger la responsabilité, un certain nombre de mesures devraient être prises. Premièrement, le gouvernement devrait expédier l'action pour adopter et mettre en application la législation de « liberté de l’information ». Ceci devrait inclure:

(i) abrogeant ou mettant à jour les lois périmées qui sont contradictoires avec des garanties constitutionnelles de la liberté d’information;
(ii) développer la législation subsidiaire aux procédés de révélation dans des secteurs spécifiques d’activité de gouvernement ;
(iii) l’introduction des systèmes et des mécanismes pour la révélation efficace et opportune, et ;
(iv) soulevant la conscience de fonctionnaire public et au sujet de leur droit à l’information.

Le gouvernement devrait également présenter des mesures qui favorisent une fonction publique plus transparente pour casser la culture de l’opacité et de faire les choses en secret. Ceux-ci devraient inclure :

(i) présentation d’un recueil d’instructions sur l'accès à l'information de gouvernement ;
(ii) présentation des mécanismes pour le partage d’informations proactif et ; (iii) créer des incitations (par exemple. par la reconnaissances et les récompenses formelles et informelles, les critères d'évaluation de rendement au travail) pour que les fonctionnaires facilitent l'accès à l'information aussi bien que l'imposition des sanctions sur ceux qui l'empêchent.

Le gouvernement devrait continuer à soutenir et mettre en application des efforts de moderniser et améliorer l’information et les systèmes de gestion financiers.....

Le gouvernement devrait prendre des mesures pour faire l’information et des processus liés au budget national et aux dépenses plus ouverts et accessibles. On le suggère : (i) publier des informations essentielles (national et régional) des budgets dans une langue et un format qui est accessible aux citoyens ; (ii) exigent des fonctionnaires publics de déclarer leurs capitaux ; (iv) forment un groupe de travail (de gouvernement et de représentants civils de société) pour explorer des manières pour améliorer l'accès aux données sur des transferts de public aux dépenses dans les secteurs d'intérêt de public prioritaire ; (v) présentent les mécanismes formels pour que des citoyens et les organisations des sociétés civiles transforment des entrées en des politiques budgétaires et des discussions.

Le gouvernement devrait prendre des mesures pour faire l'information et des processus liés à la planification, aux budgets et aux dépenses plus ouverts et accessibles. Là où la radio de la communauté existe, le gouvernement devrait exiger des conseiller locaux de les employer pour diffuser publiquement la planification, le budget et l’information de dépense.

Le gouvernement devrait encourager ou exiger la diffusion publique des résultats de ‘DBOC’ et systématiser l’exécution annuelle de ‘PETS’.

L’appui devrait être donné pour développer la recommandation de budget (par exemple, dans l’association avec ISODEC, Ghana).

Le gouvernement et les donateurs devraient établir la capacité de conseils
locaux de contrôler et révéler l'information et de développer des stratégies et des incitations pour encourager des conseillers à partager l'information d'une façon plus ouverte, plus proactive, et systématique (en utilisant les formes populaires et accessibles de médias, tels que les radios communautaires et des porte-parole).

Le gouvernement et les donateurs devraient soutenir le développement des stations et des réseaux de radios communautaires et soutenir et renforcer des relations entre les établissements de gouvernement local. Le gouvernement et les donateurs devraient fournir l'aide financière, la formation et le renforcement de capacité pour augmenter la recherche de la société civile, la communication et les activités de recommandation. Ceci devrait inclure : soulèvement de la conscience des droits de l'information ; ateliers de l'information sur des processus des budgets, des programmes et des documents de gouvernement ; s'exerçant dans des techniques de recherches, de communication et de recommandation.

Le gouvernement et les donateurs devraient favoriser et soutenir la communication et ils devraient avoir une alliance entre différents types d’organismes des sociétés civiles.

NÉGOCIATION

L'étude indique pour donner aux citoyens de la Sierra Leone l’habilité de faire la négociation afin d’être capable d’exiger la responsabilité, un certain nombre d’actions devrait être prise. Premièrement, dans le contexte de la bonne gouvernance et aux programmes de droits de citoyens, le gouvernement devrait clairement affirmer l’obligation des fonctionnaires publics (et d’autres personnes confiés avec les ressources publiques) de rendre compte aux citoyens.

Lancez une campagne coordonnée nationale sur l’éducation publique, par exemple, à travers les programmes des radios communautaires, les programmes d’études d'école et en collaboration avec des personnes qui sondent l’opinion des gens (tels que les chefs religieux, les autorités traditionnelles, les célébrités, les personnes d’affaires respectées et les politiciens) pour soulever la conscience des droits de citoyens, pour favoriser des valeurs de...
transparent public, intégrité et responsabilité.

Des donateurs sont invités à soutenir les efforts visé à démontrer aux acteurs de gouvernement aux niveaux locaux et nationaux, aussi bien que d'autres acteurs sociaux principaux, les avantages concrets importants de la responsabilité sociale. Donnez de la publicité, par exemple, aux expériences où les initiatives de responsabilité sociale ont abouti à l’amélioration concrète de la livraison de service public, d’une plus grande stabilité politique, et des recettes fiscales accrues.

Impliquez les autorités traditionnelles dans des initiatives sociales de responsabilité et établissez les capacités d'exploiter des avenues dans des procédés classiques pour favoriser des pratiques en matière sociales de responsabilité. Par exemple, organisez les ateliers de sensibilisation et de formation pour des autorités traditionnelles (aussi bien que les leaders religieux et de la communauté) sur des droits humains et civiques et la responsabilité.

Le gouvernement et les donateurs sont invités pour fournir le placement, la formation et le renforcement de capacité pour encourager et soutenir des initiatives sociales de responsabilité suggérées par les organismes des sociétés civiles. Ceci devrait inclure : exposition aux stratégies sociales, aux outils et aux expériences de responsabilité d’autres pays ; aide financière pour piloter de nouvelles initiatives.

Le gouvernement et les donateurs sont invités à établir un cadre convenu pour des consultations publiques et des collaborations entre le gouvernement et les sociétés civiles comprenant des directives pour assurer que : des participants sont choisis/élus d’une façon transparente ; l’information de fond appropriée est rendue disponible à toutes les parties ; le niveau de l’influence et des résultats prévus de la consultation ou la délibération est mutuellement compris, et ; les procédés de rétroaction et de suivi sont bien définis. Un tels cadre et toute ses obligations pourraient mieux être développés par un groupe de travail commun composé de représentants clés du gouvernement et la sociétés, et présidé par un facilitant respecté et « neutre »

Le gouvernement et les donateurs sont invités pour soutenir des efforts de renforcer les structures légales existantes (telles que la police, l’ordre judiciaire et la commission d’anti-corruption) pour leur permettre en juste proportion de décharger leurs responsabilités statutaires. Soutenez les programmes juridiques de réforme afin de réduire la retardé dans la cour, combat la corruption dans le système de justice et favorise la confiance en règle de loi (comme ceux recommandés dans la stratégie nationale d'Anti-Corruption de 2005).

Le gouvernement et les donateurs sont encouragés à soutenir et augmenter des initiatives des organismes des sociétés civiles visées à augmenter l'accès à la justice. En particulier, soutenez l'introduction des mécanismes sociaux de responsabilité pour surveiller des services de justice et l’efficacité des programmes de réforme. (Par exemple, soutenez la surveillance indépendante du bureau d’auditeur général et publier les statistiques au sujet du nombre de cas reçus, passés en revue et poursuivis par le ministre de justice.)

Le gouvernement et les donateurs sont invités à inciter des réformes pour augmenter l'efficacité de la commission d'anti-corruption, par exemple, en augmentant ses puissances de l'application et de la poursuite ; augmentant ses ressources pour la recherche et pour faire ses activités de plein air ; extension de son mandat pour inclure la surveillance périodique des capitaux des services publics et des fonctionnaires ; renforcement des liens avec le parlement, et ; établissement d'une présence des gens dans les régions.

Au niveau local, le gouvernement et les donateurs sont invités pour assurer une
surveillance plus étroite par l'ordre judiciaire pour assurer l'uniformité et les capitaux propres des règles appliquées par des chefs et des fonctionnaires de cour locaux et de leur conformité à la constitution et aux dispositions de droits de l'homme. Construction sur des efforts courants (par exemple, par ‘LAWCLA’ et le programme de ‘Timap for Justice’) de fournir l’appui para légal et d’assistance judiciaire, particulièrement aux femmes, dans des secteurs ruraux.

Soutenez les évaluations participatives de contenu et du statut de lois usuelles pour démasquer la mystère associée avec ces lois et pour autoriser les personnes (particulièrement des femmes et d'autres groupes traditionnellement marginalisés) qui sont sujettes à la juridiction des lois traditionnelles pour avoir une voix dans des discussions qui les concernent. Décentralisez et augmentez le mandat de l’Office de l’Ombudsman pour inclure des plaintes contre des chefs.

Des donateurs sont invités à donner la priorité à la responsabilité sociale et au bon placement de la bonne gouvernance. Ils devraient jouer un rôle actif en travaillant avec des contreparties de gouvernement pour augmenter la transparence et la responsabilité et, en cas de besoin, utilisent des conditionnalités ou des sanctions pour assurer la conformité à certaines normes minimum.

Dans le meilleur des cas, les donateurs devraient développer une stratégie logique et coordonnée pour favoriser collectivement la responsabilité sociale en Sierra Leone.

Les donateurs devraient placer un exemple en s’assurant que leurs propres programmes soulignent et exigent la transparence, le partage d’informations et la participation de citoyens. Un ensemble des provisions généralement convenues de bonnes pratiques (et de normes minimales) à cet égard serait utile.

Le gouvernement et les donateurs sont invités pour fournir l’appui financier et technique de certains organismes des sociétés civiles pour les aider à améliorer les systèmes internes de la gouvernance et de gestion ; développez les capacités et les habilités ; assurez la représentation équitable (parmi leurs membres et leaders)

Encouragez et soutenez les efforts par les organismes des sociétés civiles de développer un code collectif de l’éthique et des mécanismes pour l’autorégulation efficace dans le secteur.

CHILDREN NEED VOICE
CHALLENGES FOR NEW LEADERSHIP TEAMS IN FRAGILE STATES

IN THE WORLD BANK CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT BRIEFS No 21 OF MAY 2007, ELLEN JOHNSON-SIRLEAF, PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA, SHARES LESSONS FROM HER EXPERIENCE IN THE GOVERNANCE OF A POST-CONFLICT AND FRAGILE COUNTRY. SUCH LESSONS CAN ALSO BE OF IMMENSE VALUE TO THE LEADERSHIPS OF SIERRA LEONE AND GUINEA WHICH ARE BOTH POST CONFLICT AND FRAGILE IN THE MANO RIVER BASIN.

Fragile states exist in many forms. Some are newly emerging from civil conflicts with the attendant stresses that are evident in political destabilization and economic downturns. As a result, such nations grapple with the complex and multifaceted challenges of lifting themselves from conditions of war to conditions of peace, healing, recovery, security, stability, and socioeconomic opportunity for its citizens. Other fragile states lose sustainability or efficacy in their political and socioeconomic order and system.

Fragile states, in either form, are generally characterized by acute poverty,
weak and unsteady political institutions, broken socioeconomic infrastructure, and a political culture in which impunity reigns.

These states experience and languish under bad governance systems where the rule of law and fundamental tenets of democracy are disregarded, where public service is unaccountable, corruption is rife, and infrastructure is dysfunctional. These conditions imply economic stagnation that creates hopelessness and despair and leads to lawlessness, indiscipline, and crimes.

These conditions provide the basis for change. It is an opportunity for leadership, for renewal, and for reform. Change and transformation in this respect means a break, formulating a vision based upon new concepts and structures. This requires leadership that is courageous, unafraid of risks, unafraid of criticism, unafraid of labels, and unafraid to challenge itself and the members of the teams that work with it—to be creative and innovative, and to look forward to the future. It is a leadership that inspires, motivates, guides, and leads its people toward a common vision and a common national purpose. A new leadership that accepts responsibility, listens to its people, but does not lead primarily because pollsters say this or that decision is right. Yet, a leadership that never is indifferent or inattentive to the opinions and demands of its people, leading a team and a nation out of a protracted period of conflict when institutions, systems, processes, and human capacities are at their weakest, demands more than just the traditional and textbook traits of leadership.

These traits must be supplemented and matched by effective management and at times technical know-how and skills. It is not enough to just lead; the leader also needs to undertake hands-on management roles, making room for tasks to be done. This is so, not only because of the absence of adequate managerial competences, but also due to the increasing expectations of the people, which usually outpace available resources.

Lessons from Experience

Let me share a few lessons learned from my experience in leading a post-conflict country. As some of you might know—until very recently, thanks to our international development partners—my country, Liberia, was labeled a failed state, not a fragile state, but a failed state. But the differences between a fragile state and a failed state are semantic, rather than real and meaningful. As a post-conflict nation, Liberia has had and continues to have many challenges.

The first step in addressing these challenges—in providing the leadership—was to assemble the right team: women and men with the required qualifications, the right attitude, the integrity, commitment, competence, and will to make sacrifices for their nation.

It is important to take a broader view of the national leadership system when building national leadership capacities. Leadership roles and responsibilities are distributed at various levels of decision making as well as in different parts of the country and productive and social sectors. Failure to see and address the total picture appropriately could lead to gaps in the leadership chain and ultimately weaknesses in the delivery of both public and private goods and services.

This realization brings to bear the constant need for reinforcing a leadership-team approach to governance and performance.

To take the view that a one-size-fits-all leadership model exists and simply replicate that model from country to country could spell disaster. A number of issues need to be factored into any adopted model.

First, human development levels differ among countries. Second, cultural structures and social systems of those to be led are not homogeneous among countries. Third, levels of governance capacities are not
the same. What is, however, important in defining a model is the sharing of knowledge and best practices and supporting each other’s national governing models within a global governance framework that is intended to lift our peoples out of poverty and enhancing their participation in the development process and its benefits.

Irrespective of the level, sector, or region at which leadership roles are played, a delicate balance must be found between those factors that are within and/or outside the direct control of the leader. Dealing effectively with decisions made by other leaders outside of the internal leadership team, particularly regarding the associated outcomes of those decisions, calls for a unique form of innovative and purposeful leadership.

The extent to which capacities are developed to bring into balance external and internal factors in the decision-making process would determine the level of success or failure of a particular leadership team. The ethics base of leadership also cannot be ignored.

This is the critical aspect of leadership, which imposes a sense of responsibility, accountability and equity on those who lead to earn respect and acquire authority.

The consciousness of ethics forces the setting of standards and requires leaders to lead by good example, particularly when it comes to demonstrating and imparting honesty, tolerance, participatory democracy, work ethics and understanding.

**Liberia’s Capacity Development Challenge**

Recognizing the role of poverty in the Liberian conflict, the requirements of the Millennium Development Goals, as well as the urgent need to lift Liberia from the ashes of war to conditions of peace, reconstruction, development, and renewal, my administration has launched an interim poverty reduction strategy as the bedrock of its policy direction.

The interim poverty reduction strategy hinges on four pillars:

- **Enhancing national security**
- **Revitalizing the economy**
- **Rebuilding infrastructure and delivering basic services**
- **Strengthening governance and the rule of law**

To discharge effectively the inherent roles and responsibilities of a leader, the necessary capacity package should contain a number of practical elements including the following:

- **The characteristic of being visibly committed to a positive vision of the direction in which the country or a particular sector or region should go**
- **The ability to articulate that vision, obtain popular buy-in, and lead your constituencies in pursuit of that vision**
- **The consistency of being in touch with those who you lead, reaching out to them and being responsive to their basic needs;**
- **The ability to purposefully engage and interact with international and domestic partners, not losing track of the shared interests of your people.**

We have undertaken the first steps in collaboration with our people and our development partners. A key response was the 150-day action plan that my government successfully concluded.

Although we have achieved some results, the road is long and challenges remain. Limited basic services have been restored, and the beginnings of democratic governance initiated. Economic performance has improved, prospects are looking brighter, and peace and security have been maintained.

These visible changes, although small in comparison to what needs to be done, have renewed hope for Liberians and created a belief that their future will be a brighter tomorrow.
The BORDERLINES initiative is seed sponsored by the World Bank and implemented by Pampana Communications with manpower support from the Mano River Union Secretariat and UNDP in Sierra Leone.